

Managing National Assessment Report

Tongariro School

August 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tongariro School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess; and
- to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment according to the requirements of the *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2018* (Assessment Rules).

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- requiring action from the school where an issue is identified that significantly impacts on the school meeting the requirements of their *Consent to Assess*
- agreeing action with the school where an issue has been identified that could become significant if not addressed
- making suggestions for the school to consider to enhance good assessment practice.

What this review includes

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

How we conducted this review

The review includes examination of documentation from a range of sources and interviewing key stakeholders.

Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *NCEA information for Students 2018* (a summary of key information for students)
- *Managing National Assessment Document, Tongariro School 2018* (Staff Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, the teacher of Art and Technology, a teacher of English, the teacher of Mathematics, Science and Technology, and the teacher in charge of the two Trade Academies.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Principal's Nominee at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies, next steps and to agree on any action required.

SUMMARY

Tongariro School College

9 August 2018

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*. No significant issues with the school's management of national assessment were found. The school's own review mechanisms allow them to identify and respond to most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

What the school is doing well

Tongariro School offers a range of pathways to meet students' needs. There are two well established academies supplementing traditional classroom programmes. Further choice is provided by Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu and eLearning. The school aims to see each student as an individual with particular talents and needs. The range of pathways support this vision.

The Principal, Principal's Nominee and Team Leader for Years 11 -13, provide leadership around assessment practice to teachers and initiate self-review. There is a strong focus on using data to inform decision making.

Internal moderation is becoming embedded in the culture of the school. Teachers have developed professional contacts with colleagues in other schools to verify a selection of grade judgements. They value external moderation and are becoming more engaged in using the feedback for professional learning as well as to confirm assessment decisions.

Areas for improvement

The Principal's Nominee agrees to start the monitoring of the completion of the quality assurance process earlier in the year so that any issues can be identified and resolved before they impact on the credibility of results.

The school has identified the need to ensure that any issues raised in external moderation are effectively addressed by planning actions that are measurable and monitored for completion.

There are currently no students with an approved entitlement to use special assessment conditions. The school agrees that the SENCO will gather data to enable the Principal's Nominee to make appropriate applications.

Students were unaware of the school's handout outlining key information about assessment practices, although they did understand expectations. The Principal's Nominee agrees this information is due for review and it is suggested that consideration is given to making a digital copy available on the school's website.

Agreed action

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are:

- start monitoring completion of quality assurance processes as soon as results are available
- ensure that there is a robust and effective follow up of issues raised in external moderation
- gather evidence to support applications for students to use special assessment conditions.

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25 October 2018

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 6 July 2016 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed the five issues identified in the 2016 Managing National Assessment review, with some further action identified for three issues.

- the school now has a process to respond to the outcomes of external moderation. Further refinement is required as outlined below
- the Principal's Nominee has developed effective monitoring of the completion of internal moderation and the teachers spoken with provided evidence that they are meeting the school's requirements. Some suggestions for further improvements are included in the moderation section of this report
- the handbooks are being reviewed annually to ensure they are up-to-date and students understand how to achieve the qualifications they are aiming for. Some suggestions for further improvement are discussed in this report.

The following issues have been addressed:

- most teachers purposefully select student work for verification of internally assessed standards to include work at grade borderlines, and record discussions to provide a useful commentary for future assessment decisions
- teachers now have access to the school's provider login page on the NZQA website to reflect on achievement outcomes. They are required to review each course annually and plan for improvement.

The school's actions demonstrate that the school has the capacity to make improvements in response to external review.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Principal's Nominee requires teachers to respond to issues raised in external moderation. However, the school's current process lacks sufficient rigour. To be effective, identified issues should be addressed by developing a plan with measurable actions that are to be completed and monitored by a specified time. Some or all the following can be useful strategies:

- sharing the outcomes of external moderation with the verifier
- changing verifiers where there is poor external moderation agreement
- encouraging teachers to engage with a subject cluster group or on-line forum
- participating in professional learning including NZQA's Best Practice Workshops if available
- strategically requesting standards to be included in the moderation plan so that useful feedback is received
- querying external moderator reports if the feedback is not sufficient to inform improvement
- requesting a clarification if the standard and NZQA's published material does not provide sufficient information for the teacher

- building up a set of annotated exemplars of student work in the school's own contexts to be used as benchmarks for assessment judgements.

NZQA's external moderators evaluated that assessor judgements were consistent with the standard for almost 80 percent of the standards submitted for external moderation in 2018. This indicates that the school's quality assurance processes are effective for the sample of standards submitted and indicates that the process for internal moderation is robust.

Internal review

Evidence for the school using its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures, which are then actioned. (CAAS Guidelines 3iv)

The Principal's Nominee and the Team Leader for Years 11 – 13, with the support of the Principal, demonstrate they have the capacity to identify issues and resolve them.

The school identified that students were being assessed against more credits than required for the qualification. With the agreement of teachers, the credits in each course this year have been reduced to around 18. This is expected to result in less pressure on students. Early indications are that there are clearer pathways to employment or further study with a reduced focus on simply gaining a large number of credits.

The school has changed the way it teaches and assesses literacy and numeracy in the two academies. Analysis of results identified that many of these students were not meeting the literacy and numeracy requirements to gain an NCEA. As a result, the teacher in charge of the academies uses vocationally based contexts to assess the students. The teacher commented that the students are more engaged when they see the relevance to their planned careers.

Teachers are adopting digital technologies for teaching, learning and assessment. Students report using Google Docs and Google Classroom in many of their lessons. The school's management is encouraging teachers to take a cross-curricular approach to teaching and assessment. This is enabling differentiation and a more student-centred approach.

The school uses data to make changes and improvements. All teachers are required to complete a review at the end of every year including analysis of outcomes, reflections on achievement and planned changes. The outcomes may be changes in the standards assessed, using different contexts or assessing in different ways. With small cohorts, trend analysis can be inconclusive, however, the school aims to make decisions based on the best evidence available.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that there is a robust and effective follow up of issues raised in external moderation.

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence for assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2018 5.5)

Tongariro School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- individualising programmes and providing differentiated assessment within courses
- using the strengths of the teachers to offer a variety of options within a course
- offering two academy streams, one in trades and primary industries, and a Services Academy to enable students to follow meaningful pathways towards employment
- extending the range of courses available to students using Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu and eLearning through the Virtual Learning Network
- participating in NZQA digital English trials so students can be assessed in a way that best suits them
- gathering evidence in a variety of ways, including using Google Docs and videos to enable students to demonstrate achievement
- assessing when ready where manageable.

Tongariro School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals of assessment decisions
- providing conditions that allow students to present authentic work
- ensuring credible evidence is available for derived grades if required
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Māori engagement and success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects The Principal's Nominee has noted the lower participation and achievement in STEM subjects for Māori students than for students of other ethnicities. While the school has faced challenges over the last few years in attracting and retaining suitable staff to be able to offer a range of STEM subjects, it will continue endeavour to address the differences. Currently, students can study Digital Technology, Mathematics and Sciences. It is suggested that the school tracks student achievement in STEM areas. Careers New Zealand recommends that students should study English, Mathematics and at least one Science subject, particularly if they don't have a specific career in mind.

Identifying and supporting students entitled to use special assessment conditions The school has made no applications for students to use special assessment conditions in the last two years. To ensure that identified students receive appropriate assistance, the Special Needs Co-ordinator should gather other data such as whether the use of a reader, a writer, computer or extra time enables a student to better demonstrate achievement. This school-based evidence could support future applications. The literacy teacher intends to carry out further testing of students in Years 9 and 10.

For many assessments, teachers are gathering evidence of achievement in ways that do not disadvantage students who require additional support with written work. This includes videoing oral presentations and performances, and completion of practical tasks.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- gather school-based evidence to support applications for students to use special assessment conditions.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2018 6.4b)

Tongariro School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- encouraging teachers to purposefully select work for verification to include work at grade boundaries
- using subject specialists to verify the assessment judgements for the selected sample of student work
- monitoring a sample of standards to check that all expectations have been met.

Tongariro School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- inviting teachers to request standards to be included in the external moderation plan
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- providing teachers with access to the external moderation application and encouraging them to submit work digitally.

Closer monitoring of internal moderation required The Principal's Nominee annually checks a sample of moderation documentation from each teaching area to ensure that all the quality assurance process have been completed. In 2017, this was done in the last term. This means that should a question arise about assessment quality, an absence of evidence may not be apparent until it is too late to remedy. The Principal's Nominee agrees the process will start much earlier in the year. It is suggested that from 2019, monitoring starts as soon as final results are available. In addition, adding an annual attestation by teachers that all standards have undergone internal moderation, along with reconciling this with actual practice, would further strengthen the process.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- start monitoring the completion of the internal moderation processes as soon as results are available.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- requiring teachers to formally attest near the end of the year that the results for all standards have been quality assured.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Tongariro School effectively:

- uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:
 - the Year 11-13 Team Leader tracking progress and arranging additional support for students at risk of not achieving a qualification
 - providing students with information about their progress towards qualifications
- reports accurate achievement data by:
 - ensuring there are minimal late entries for externals
 - checking the Key Indicators and resolving any issues.

Support students to register for their NZQA Learner login The school should consider how it can further assist students to realise the importance of registering for, and using, their Learner login. Only 60 percent of the students being assessed for National Qualifications registered and used their NZQA Learner login in 2017. Without registering, students cannot check the accuracy of the results being reported for them, request reviews or reconsiderations for external examination papers or order copies of their Record of Achievement and/or qualification certificates.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- how it can further assist students to register and use their NZQA Learner login.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Tongariro School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure
- supporting teachers new to the school.

Tongariro School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing teachers, students and parents with information about key assessment processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- providing information to students so they can understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Student NCEA information handout could be more effective Easy access to information in appropriate language helps teachers, students and their parents to have a common understanding. The NCEA assessment information handout contains essential information for students. At two sides it is easy to read, however, it should be reviewed to check that language is appropriate for the audience and the order is logical. It is suggested the school considers having it available digitally or in classrooms to give students easier access.

Students could not recall having seen the handout, instead, relying on their teachers to inform them and answer any questions.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- reviewing the student handout and how it is made available.