

Managing National Assessment Report

Titikaveka College

May 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Titikaveka College:

- 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 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 2019* (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 each 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
- *Titikaveka College 2019 NCEA Assessment Policy* (interim Staff Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Teachers of:
 - Cook Islands Maori
 - English
 - Geography
 - Information Communication Technology, Design and Visual Communication and Visual Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- three students.

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.

Background

Titikaveka College is a secondary school on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands, for the Vaka Takitumu. It annually assesses students for New Zealand national qualifications at Level 1. At the end of Year 11 some students either transfer to Tereora College on Rarotonga or move overseas to continue with their education.

A new Senior Leadership Team of Principal and Deputy Principal were appointed at the beginning of 2019, with the Deputy Principal taking on the role of Principal's Nominee. They are committed to reviewing, and where necessary improving, existing school assessment processes and practice.

The school offers a core range of subjects including Cook Island Maori, English, Mathematics and Science. Additional choices depend on staff capability and student interests. Annually in November, the school is an examination centre for its students entered in externally assessed standards.

For many students, Cook Island Maori is their first language with English their second language.

To provide support for their management of assessment for national qualifications, Managing National Assessment external reviews are normally undertaken in all Cook Islands schools in alternate years.

SUMMARY

Titikaveka College

14 May 2019

Significant issues found

This review found a significant issue that the school must address to meet the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

The next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within two years, with a return within a year to check that the identified issues have been addressed.

The issue is the failure to follow-up on recommendations and findings from the 2017 Managing National Assessment review (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*), in particular:

- using the Curriculum, Assessment and Review committee to systematically review school assessment and moderation policies, and documentation
- documenting the completion of action plans developed in response to identified external moderation issues.

Actions required to address the significant issue

In order to address the issues the school must:

- use its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement and then action (*CAAS Guidelines 3iv*)
- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*)
- provide accurate and sufficient information to students about assessment processes (*CAAS Guidelines 2.4i*).

Areas for improvement

Robust quality assurance processes must be developed to ensure that external review findings are effectively actioned. Including a system to record who is responsible for the completion of agreed or required actions would reduce potential disruption caused by a change of personnel.

Senior Leaders should ensure that staff understand the evidence requirements for generating derived grades from practice external assessments. The grades must be based on pre-existing, valid, standard-specific evidence which meets the requirements of the standard. Previous NZQA examination papers must not be used unless modified, as they are readily available to students from the NZQA website.

The school must ensure that staff document the actions they intend to take in response to issues identified by external moderation. This will allow Senior Leaders to monitor these actions to ensure they are completed before the standard is assessed again, and evaluated for effectiveness.

Regular review of assessment communications will help to reduce the potential for teacher, student or parent misunderstandings of qualifications requirements, assessment, and quality assurance processes.

Some further steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems:

- ensure that school practice examinations can provide valid, authentic, standard-specific evidence for generating derived grades.

What the school is doing well

The Senior Leadership Team has initiated a programme of review of school assessment, moderation and communication processes to identify areas for on-going improvement. This will enable the school to build upon the systems already in place and ensure appropriate assessment practice and processes.

Student assessment needs are met by programmes designed to focus on their interests, future pathways and abilities. The use of Cook Islands contexts in assessments engages student interest and provides opportunities for genuine and authentic learning.

The Principal's Nominee, while new to the position, is providing effective support for staff and ensuring effective management and monitoring of assessment processes.

Internal moderation is an embedded process. Use of the Cook Islands' National Verification process ensures samples of student work are checked by subject specialists and feedback on grade judgements allows staff to improve their knowledge of the standards they assess.

Student assessment information is submitted to NZQA on a regular and timely basis. Students are enabled and encouraged to monitor their own progress toward a qualification through their NZQA Learner Login.

The school has effective processes for providing students with course outlines containing consistent information on the standards they will be assessed against. Face-to-face meetings are assisting the school to communicate assessment information and to develop a shared understanding of assessment policies and processes within its community.

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12 July 2019

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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 2vi, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 4 April 2017 Managing National Assessment Report The school agreed to five action items in 2017. Staff confirmed that the two relating to the staff and student handbooks were addressed in 2018 by the school's Curriculum, Assessment and Review committee. However, the revised material from these reviews was lost during the transition to the new Senior Leadership Team. A third item involving staff training in the use of assessment-related data is in progress and discussed further in the data section of this report.

Two items have not been adequately addressed:

- document the action plans developed in response to identified external moderation issues
- use the Curriculum, Assessment and Review committee to systematically review school assessment and moderation policies and documentation.

None of the staff interviewed during this review could confirm completing a response form for their 2017 moderation, and there is no evidence that the school's assessment and moderation policies have been systematically reviewed, as agreed.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school's external moderation response process generally occurs at the beginning of the following year. Moderation material is submitted physically to NZQA in November through the Cook Islands Ministry of Education. Transportation delays in getting the material to moderators in New Zealand can result in moderation reports not being completed before the end of the school year. When reports become available staff are required to complete a response form, noting any actions they plan to take to address identified issues.

The Principal's Nominee has started the response process for standards moderated in 2018 and will monitor the completion of any required actions.

This year she will encourage, and assist, staff to submit work digitally for moderation as soon as grade verification is completed. This will allow a quicker return time for moderation feedback. It should also facilitate more effective staff response, because of the shorter time between assessment and moderation feedback.

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 new Senior Leadership Team has initiated review of some school assessment and moderation processes and already identified some issues. Completed reviews include those relating to:

- assessment documentation, particularly the staff and student assessment handbooks, to ensure these are current and consistent
- how assessment information is communicated to parents, with two NCEA evening meetings already completed and assessment dates notified by letters
- the storage of student assessment work, resulting in a decision to centralise storage with the Principal's Nominee for easier access and monitoring
- access to assessment forms such as the school's *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, with hardcopies now available in the staffroom
- the time available for the Principal's Nominee to perform her role, resulting in her being freed-up for one day of the timetable.

Other planned reviews are discussed in the relevant sections of this report.

The school has shown it has the desire, and the ability, to improve its practice and processes relating to assessment for qualifications.

Required action

The following action is required to ensure effective response to external reviews. The school must:

- use its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement and then action (*CAAS Guidelines 3iv*)
- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*).

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 2019 5.5)

Titikaveka College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- as far as possible within existing resources, designing programmes of learning that are focussed on their interests, needs and abilities
- adapting assessments by using Cook Islands contexts to engage their interest and ensure genuine and authentic learning
- offering varied opportunities for the collection of evidence during assessment
- extending assessment opportunities through a Hospitality course offered by the Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute.

Titikaveka College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late assessment, extensions, appeals and further assessment opportunities
- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- reporting a Not Achieved grade where a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work, or has presented evidence that is inauthentic or not at the standard
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules.

Ensure school practice examinations provide valid evidence for derived grades

Some of the evidence collected through school practice external examinations may not be valid for generating derived grades. Staff reported using unmodified NZQA papers from previous years. These are not suitable for generating derived grades because they, and their assessment schedules, can be accessed directly from the NZQA website. The school cannot be confident that the student evidence it collects from these examinations is authentic, and therefore valid.

Make special assessment condition applications The school should be identifying students who would benefit from special assessment conditions. This will help ensure that entitled students are appropriately supported. While aware that some students could potentially be eligible for special assessment conditions, the school does not presently have the expertise to identify these students and gather the necessary information to proceed with applications. It is recommended that the school seek assistance from the Cook Islands Ministry of Education, whose staff can assist with testing, facilitating applications and help the school to develop its own processes.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that school practice examinations can provide valid, authentic and standard-specific evidence for generating derived grades.

For consideration

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider:

- working with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to identify students eligible 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 2019 6.4b)

Titikaveka College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- teachers using standard clarifications and exemplars to inform their grade judgements during marking
- having samples of student work verified by subject specialists accessed through the Cook Islands National Verification process
- purposefully selecting grade boundary samples of student work for verification where the number of students assessed exceeds the requirements of the National Verification process
- monitoring that all internal moderation procedures are completed as required.

Titikaveka College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- meeting NZQA requirements to randomly select samples of student work for external moderation
- strategically requesting the inclusion of specific standards on the school's external moderation plan
- ensuring samples of student work are appropriately stored so that they are available for external moderation.

Monitoring external moderation responses As noted in the review section, the school must ensure that staff document the actions they intend to take in response to issues identified by external moderation. Senior Leaders must monitor these actions to ensure they are completed, and their effectiveness is evaluated before the standard is assessed again.

Opportunities for digital submission Using the Cook Islands Ministry of Education's NextCloud platform would facilitate file sharing for both verification and external moderation. Submitting work digitally for National Verification and external moderation is made difficult because of the issues the school has with its internet access. While all the material the school submitted for external moderation in 2018 was in a digital format, it was submitted on USB drives.

The school's Senior Leaders are keen to submit material for this year's external moderation as soon as the grade verification process is complete. Storing and sharing assessment material using NextCloud will simplify both the verification and external moderation processes and enable quicker feedback from verifiers and moderators.

For consideration

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

- using the NextCloud platform to store and share digital files with verifiers and external moderators.

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)

Titikaveka College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- the Senior Leaders tracking students' progress towards qualifications and providing support, where possible
- encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner Login to monitor progress towards meeting qualification requirements.

Titikaveka College reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- checking for, and correcting where necessary, data submission errors shown on the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- only reporting results for standards for which the school has consent to assess.

Grade verification can delay reporting results The school is working with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to reduce any delays in verification in 2019, so that all results can be reported before the due date. Until a sample of grades for a standard have been verified through the National verification process, the school cannot report student results for that standard to NZQA. Approximately six per cent of 2018 results were reported after the last data file submission date because of delays in getting material verified.

Principal's Nominee to provide staff with training on the analysis of achievement data The school has identified that many of the staff who assess for qualifications do not have access to the school's Provider Login. She has requested Education Sector Login access for these staff through the Cook Islands Ministry of Education. Once all staff have access, she will provide training on the use of the statistical data available. Being able to analyse patterns of achievement within their subject areas will allow staff to better plan programmes of assessment within courses.

School considering using the student management system to report results The Principal's Nominee is investigating submitting assessment information to NZQA through its student management system. Saving students' entries and results within the system will facilitate tracking of their achievement. It will also simplify monitoring the accuracy of the data, allowing the Principal's Nominee to reduce the number of entries in internally assessed standards that have no reported result because no assessment has taken place. In 2018, 16 per cent of internal entries had no reported result.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

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

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

Titikaveka College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive course outlines containing detailed information on the standards they will be assessed against in a consistent format
- providing support for teachers new to the school or new to NCEA
- communicating information on assessment policies and procedures to the school community through staff meetings, discussions with students, parent NCEA meetings and newsletters.

Titikaveka College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing teachers with information about assessment best practice and giving them opportunities to discuss changes in school practice or NZQA requirements at staff meetings
- teachers ensuring students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Staff and students need access to assessment handbooks Staff and students have not yet been provided with assessment handbooks for 2019. The digital copy of the revised staff handbook was lost when the previous Principal's laptop was reformatted. The digital copy of the student handbook was similarly lost.

The school's assessment policy acts as the staff handbook, and this was reviewed and updated by staff in 2018 to ensure it included the suggestions from the 2017 Managing National Assessment report.

Copies of the 2017 handbooks are available and the Senior Leadership Team have started reviewing these to ensure staff and students have appropriate, and current, information on NZQA and the school's assessment and moderation requirements. In the interim, students indicated that staff are verbally providing them with information on assessment processes and the requirements for qualifications. The Principal's Nominee is giving further support to staff and students, as required.

Required action

The following action is required to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. The school must:

- provide accurate and sufficient information to students about assessment processes (*CAAS Guidelines 2.4i*).