

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Whangaroa College**

**19 June 2019**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Whangaroa 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, 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 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 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
- *Whangaroa College Staff Handbook for National Qualifications Procedures*
- *Whangaroa College Student Curriculum and Assessment Guide 2019* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

Two School Relationship Managers met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Director of Teaching and Learning
- three students
- the Teacher in Charge of:
  - Academic Literature/Social Learning Pod
  - Digitech
  - Physical Education/ Social Learning Pod
  - Primary Learning Pod
  - Services Learning Pod/Workplace Literacy.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, the Principal's Nominee and the Director of Teaching and Learning 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

## Whangaroa College

19 June 2019

### 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

Whangaroa College has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school uses its internal review processes to identify where it can improve assessment processes and practice. This has included significant changes to school leadership and curriculum structures. Feedback from students and their families is also used to help inform review.

Student needs are met through a range of academic and vocational assessment pathways. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards the school does not have the capacity to deliver.

Staff have been provided with appropriate access to NZQA's External Moderation Application for the submission of material and to review reports. An effective response to external moderation process is becoming embedded school-wide practice.

School processes ensure timely and accurate reporting of assessment data. This data is made available through the school's student management system so that staff, students and parents can track individual academic progress. It enables students at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements to be identified and appropriate support to be planned for them. Analysis of NCEA data enables the school to review the success of course changes.

The school effectively communicates its assessment processes and NCEA information to staff, students and parents through a range of strategies.

### Areas for improvement

There was some inconsistency with expected moderation processes identified in one subject area, which did not present documented evidence of internal moderation. This is a risk to credible assessment at Whangaroa College so senior managers have agreed to more closely monitor all internal moderation practice and its documentation.

**Agreed action**

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- closely monitor all internal moderation practice and its documentation to enhance the credibility of results reported to NZQA.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

13 December, 2019

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)**

# 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 1 September 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

All action items from the previous Managing National Assessment Report have been satisfactorily completed.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The college has a documented system for responding to external moderation outcomes, which is embedded school-wide as part of its external moderation practice. The use of a *response to external moderation feedback* form supports staff to develop action plans with senior management support. Response actions include finding new verifiers, gathering grade boundary exemplars of student work to support assessor judgements and participating in Best Practice Workshops or other professional development. The success of these response actions is reviewed by senior managers and the individual teacher to determine their effect, enhancing the credibility of assessment and moderation practice at Whangaroa College.

### 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)*

Whangaroa has undertaken extensive internal review since the last Managing National Assessment visit. A driving factor was that senior management did not feel the overall needs of students were being met under previous leadership and curriculum structures. Small student numbers and limited subject options required a change in approach to increase subject options to cater to all student learning and assessment needs. Wide-spread and effective consultation with the whole college community resulted in a range of outcomes which have led to improved assessment practice and procedures including:

- a new leadership structure which includes a Director of Student Engagement and a Director of Teaching and Learning with specific responsibilities for extending the range of assessment options
- introducing Learning Modules (Mods) in the morning, which are core subject-based
- introducing Learning Pods (Pods) in the afternoon, which are project-based with integrated and individualised assessment opportunities
- a new system where students are engaged in their course selections to ensure they are appropriate to each individual's interests and future pathways
- a more collaborative approach to developing assessment programmes that cater to individuals with less focus on teaching subjects in isolation
- providing a wider range of options through introducing two semester years

- developing user-friendly resources to inform the community about NCEA, including a poster for students and families addressing frequently asked questions

These examples demonstrate that Whangaroa College is making effective use of self-review to identify on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures. It is committed to improving student achievement outcomes and assessment credibility. Review processes are supported by reflective leadership from senior management and increasing shared ownership by all teachers alongside input from the wider school community.

**No action required**

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

## 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)*

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

- providing differentiated assessment within courses, offering alternative standards to cater for differing abilities, and multi-levels within the same class
- assessing when ready, as appropriate
- applying for Special Assessment Conditions, as appropriate
- ensuring pre-existing standard-specific, authentic evidence of student achievement is available for Derived Grades should they be required
- utilising outside providers to expand the assessment opportunities for students, including for vocational pathways, and better appeal to their interests,
- providing project-based contexts for integrated assessment opportunities
- providing student-driven contexts and utilising knowledge of student experiences to enhance their engagement.

### **Whangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessments, further assessment opportunities and student appeals of assessment decisions
- reporting Not Achieved where a student has presented evidence that is not at the standard, or has had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
- complying with the requirements of the *Privacy Act, 1993*.

**Providing individualised assessment with small student numbers** Whangaroa College provides individualised assessment opportunities in programmes that students opt into called learning pods (Pods). The Pods are timetabled to operate in the afternoons and allow for assessment in different subject areas to be conducted using a common context, with a multiple teacher approach. Students choose their Pods according to their interests, with assessment across standards from a range of subjects related to the context. The Pods are designed to engage students and allow assessment across a wide range of standards depending on individual assessment needs and future pathways. They allow for multi-level and integrated assessment, individualised learning and a wider range of subject assessment to take place.

### **Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) provision**

Achievement in STEM subjects for all students at Level 3 has been poor over recent years. Senior managers continue to search for alternative ways to offer meaningful Science and Mathematics programmes to their senior students acknowledging a lack of capacity in these areas. A positive recent initiative has been the introduction of a rotational STEM course for vertical groups of Year 7-10 students. Continued efforts



to recruit staff who can deliver senior STEM standards should ensure that the work being done at the junior level can be further developed.

**No action required**

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

## 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)*

### **Whangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- having all assessment materials critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and provide students with the opportunity to present evidence at all grade levels
- teachers using exemplars and standard clarifications to inform their grade judgements during marking
- requiring staff to document the completion of all steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- the Principal's Nominee collecting and checking copies of all cover sheets to monitor teachers' internal moderation processes
- using subject specialists from within and beyond the college to verify grades awarded to a sample of student work.

### **Whangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work for moderation to NZQA requirements
- empowering staff to submit assessment material digitally and providing them with appropriate access to the NZQA External Moderation Application for submitting work and for viewing and querying moderation reports.

**Develop a school system to securely store digital assessment material** As the school continues to increase the amount of digital submissions for external moderation, it should develop a school-wide digital storage system, along with protocols for its use. Staff interviewed have developed their own systems for storing digital assessment material. The Principal's Nominee is currently developing standard procedures for digital submission of external moderation, including protocols around secure online storage. This will ensure all digitally produced assessment material can be readily accessed, if required, for external moderation, when teachers exit the school or when exemplars are required to help with future grade judgements.

**Effective internal moderation processes to be documented and embedded by all assessors** Most teachers understand and follow the school's robust internal moderation processes, but they need to be fully embedded and documented by all. This review identified inconsistency with one subject area that did not present documented evidence of internal moderation, in line with the school's expectations. Senior managers have agreed to monitor the satisfactory completion of internal moderation and the secure storage of documented evidence with student work. This will ensure that evidence is available in its entirety for external moderation purposes and that teachers are in a better position to respond to moderator feedback and review practice. This will also enhance the credibility of results reported to NZQA.

**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:

- closely monitor all internal moderation practice and its documentation to enhance the credibility of results reported to NZQA.

**For consideration**

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

- developing a system to ensure digitally produced assessment material is securely stored.

## 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)*

### **Whangaroa College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- senior managers monitoring achievement, to identify students at risk of not achieving and intervening as appropriate
- ensuring that non-participation is minimised at all NCEA levels
- analysing data to review the success of recent teacher-role and structural changes within the senior school
- setting achievement targets and reporting on them to the Board of Trustees.

### **Whangaroa College reports accurate achievement data by:**

- submitting frequent and timely results to NZQA
- checking for, and where necessary, correcting errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

**Decrease in 'No Results Reported' data** Whangaroa College has significantly reduced the number of 'No Results Reported' in 2018 compared with the previous two years. This reflects closer monitoring of student achievement and teachers managing assessment in accordance with their assessment calendars.

The school reported 10 percent of its internal results late in 2018, which is mainly due to results files from outside providers being received after the 1 December deadline. The school intends to address this issue with its providers to ensure that student achievement data is as complete and up-to-date as it can be throughout the whole year. This will assist students and parents to accurately monitor students' achievement progress.

### **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 of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))*

### **Whangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake and assessment guides that are simple and effective
- communicating consistent, up-to-date and easily accessed assessment information to staff, students and their families
- supporting teachers new to the school by including regular input from the Principal's Nominee in their induction programmes
- capturing 'student voice' at the end of courses, to inform change.

### **Whangaroa College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- engaging the wider whānau through a range of strategies including conferences, parent-teacher-student interviews, hui with the Whānau Advisory Group and various online communications
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- ensuring students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification through the Form Teacher, classroom teachers, the Principal's Nominee and the Director of Teaching and Learning.

### **Recent changes in direction have strengthened communication with whānau**

The process of gathering community voice when redesigning the curriculum within the school, has led to improved communication with whānau. The establishment of a Whānau Focus Group that meets regularly with school leaders allows NCEA and achievement related information to be discussed through wider whānau networks within the school community. This has led to increased engagement by whānau and the opportunity to have greater input and understanding.

### **No action required**

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.