

Managing National Assessment Report

Kamo High School

July 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Kamo High 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 2021* (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
- *Kamo High School NZQA Qualification Guide 2021* (Staff Handbook)
- *Kamo High School Student Assessment Requirements 2021* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Leaders of Learning for:
 - Arts
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Sciences
 - Social Sciences
- 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.

SUMMARY

Kamo High School

29 July 2021

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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

What the school is doing well

Kamo High school is the largest co-educational school in Whangarei, drawing on students from a wide geographic area. The school prides itself on its passionate, caring and supportive environment, enabling students to have success in many varied pathways. The Principal, senior leadership team and Principal's Nominee are all new to Kamo High School since the last Managing National Assessment review in 2019.

The school has fully resolved the significant issues found in 2019. The school is reviewing its structures and processes to ensure they are future focused and continue to meet the needs of all students. A more clearly defined focus on student pathways is evolving, with specific roles established to support this through a Director of Pathways and Director of Learning Support. The Principal's Nominee monitors that every standard assessed has undergone internal moderation and, if required, encourages teachers to develop beneficial grade verification relationships with subject professionals outside the school. A process for following up external moderation outcomes has also been established, including documenting actions taken and reviewing the effectiveness of any changes made. The Learning Leaders have embedded these practices for quality assurance into their learning area processes and the school can be confident they are delivering and reporting credible, verifiable and valid assessments and results.

The school has a culture of sharing good practice, within and across learning areas. This approach will be beneficial in supporting their review of course structure and future direction to move towards a more locally contextualised curriculum.

Teachers consistently apply the assessment practices outlined in the teacher handbook for NCEA and are well-supported by the Principal's Nominee. Students are familiar with school expectations and NZQA requirements for assessments and qualifications and are regularly reminded of these during assemblies and whānau meetings. A clear and concise student handbook outlines these procedures and processes for students and whānau, and this is available digitally through the student portal and school website.

Students' progress is regularly tracked to help identify any students who may be at risk of not achieving their desired qualifications. Parents are informed and, in collaboration with the teachers and student, support is put in place to help the student meet their goals.

There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Kay Wilson
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24 September 2021

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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 12 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

Kamo High School has addressed the significant issues and action items identified in its last Managing National Assessment review. The school is now following up external moderation recommendations and findings, monitoring internal moderation systems and using its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement and action. NZQA can be confident in the quality of results reported for qualifications and the systems used to ensure this, and that the actions taken have fully resolved the significant issues found in 2019.

Response to external moderation outcomes NZQA moderators have reported that there has been an improvement in the school's assessor judgements against the standard.

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)

Focus on student needs The Principal and senior leadership team are reviewing school processes and the pathway options they currently offer students, with the view to creating a more localised, contextual curriculum to meet student interest and need. Two new positions, Director of Pathways and Director of Learning support, have been created to support staff and students as these changes are discussed and implemented.

Review of policies and procedures The school has reviewed its policies and procedures to improve the consistency of assessment practice. Learning Leaders have been given more responsibility for ensuring these are being adhered to and for ensuring expectations for producing credible results in their learning areas are met. A step-by-step flow chart clearly outlines the process for internal moderation across the school, with only results that have been through this process reported to NZQA. This process is monitored by the Principal's Nominee and the Senior Leadership Team.

Support for student pathways The school is in the process of reviewing the design of its courses and learning pathways to ensure they are meeting student needs. They have reduced the number of courses taken by students, from six to five at each year level in the senior school. This has resulted in reduced teacher and student workload, improved student engagement, and fewer classes are having to be combined across year levels or cancelled due to low numbers. The number of credits in each course is now 16-20 credits, with a balance of internal and external

assessments offered. These changes have enabled teachers to adjust courses to suit the learning needs of individual students and their career aspirations. The students interviewed feel they have sufficient flexibility in their courses of study to meet their goals.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and 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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- supporting Special Assessment Conditions applications with school-based evidence and encouraging students to use the support available for all internal and external assessments
- assessing when ready by monitoring student progress through feedback and feedforward conversations to determine a student's readiness for assessment.

Kamo High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment by using milestones and knowing their students
- ensuring evidence for derived grades and unexpected event grades is generated from standard-specific results from practice examinations or other appropriate assessment
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020*.

Sharing good practice Learning Leaders regularly discuss issues and challenges with staff in their learning area and with other Learning Leaders across curriculum areas, sharing ideas to improve learning and assessment opportunities. This collegial approach has helped to improve consistency of assessment practice and has resulted in a good understanding of the requirements for ensuring assessment is valid, authentic and credible.

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 2021 6.4b)

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

- selecting samples of student work at grade boundaries for verification of assessor judgements and using the discussions generated from these to select benchmarks to be used for future reference
- documenting the internal moderation process, especially the discussions about student work at grade boundaries, so these can be referred to and inform future assessor judgements
- monitoring the internal moderation process by Learning Leaders and the Principal's Nominee to ensure consistency, compliance and engagement by all staff for all internal standards.

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

- adequately storing student work, both physically and digitally, to ensure it is available when required by NZQA
- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan, especially if changes have been made that they would like feedback on.

Embedding internal moderation processes The school has consistent and robust practices to check that all internally assessed standards are quality assured. Staff interviewed follow a common process for carrying out internal moderation, recording this on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* that gets stored with the student work. This cover sheet is available digitally and includes links to the standard, assessment materials, clarifications and any previous moderation feedback.

The Principal's Nominee views this documentation before results are sent to NZQA and monitors that the process is completed for all standards. The Principal's Nominee has access to all internally moderated work stored both physically and digitally in learning areas. The next step would be to look at a standardised way for storing digital work so that it is easy to access for all staff, especially those new to the school.

Use of verifiers from other schools reviewed The school is encouraging staff to find external grade verifiers where a reciprocal arrangement with responsive timeframes can be established. Currently, students in some learning areas experience delays in the return of grades due to grade verification happening externally, which impacts on tracking student progress towards qualifications.

Response to external moderation improving teacher practice Learning Leaders and the Principal's Nominee have noticed an improvement in teacher response to external moderation. Staff now seek clarifications or appeal external moderation feedback if they do not understand, or disagree with, the feedback given by the moderators. They are encouraged to seek professional learning through NZQA's

best practice workshops, and join subject cluster groups, to improve their knowledge about the standard and confidence in making assessor judgements. Learning Leaders are keen for all staff to access the resources available through Pūtake, the NZQA assessor support platform for moderation. Here they will find familiarisation activities and support for making assessor judgements, further improving their knowledge and confidence.

Digital submissions for external moderation increasing More staff are assessing digitally and therefore submitting their randomly selected sample of student work to NZQA digitally. This has made it easier for them to send work when it has been completed, and receive feedback from the moderators, before the school's final submission date in October.

For consideration

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

- developing a standardised school-wide system of storing digital work for easy access by all teachers and the Principal's Nominee.

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)

Kamo High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- analysing achievement data and presenting this to the Principal and Board of Trustees, focusing on what went well, what did not go well and why
- using data analysis and student voice to inform course structure, and learning area and school-wide goals, to improve student success.

Kamo High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- encouraging students to check the accuracy of entries and results through the student management system, student intranet and NZQA Learner Login, and report any errors or omissions
- checking Key Indicators to ensure the school holds Consent to Assess or an appropriate relationship with an external provider for all standards for which results have been reported and to address any data issues.

Effective tracking of student progress Teachers make grade predictions, using their knowledge of the students and from the work completed to date, to improve the tracking of student progress. Students at risk of not gaining a qualification are identified and parents are informed. Teachers discuss how to support these students to have success and strategies can include attending the Homework Hub and help with time-management and study skills.

Improved Learner Login rates Student login rates have improved each year since the last MNA review, which is of particular benefit to those doing NCEA digital examinations at the end of the year, where an active login is important. Dedicating time during whānau meetings gives the students an opportunity to register and log on to NZQA through the NZQA website. The students interviewed noted they use the NZQA Learner Login to check their results in mid-January when results are released, and qualifications awarded.

Improve monitoring of Memoranda of Understanding with external providers

The Principal's Nominee needs access to the Memoranda of Understanding held between the school and all external providers they are engaging with. The school has all current Memoranda of Understanding stored in a central location and this would strengthen the process of reconciling these with reported results from external providers and ensure the correct provider code is being used.

For consideration

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

- improving the system for reconciling Memoranda of Understanding for external providers.

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))

Kamo High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- students and whānau to monitor NCEA progress through the parent portal, student intranet and NCEA Learner Login
- reporting regularly to whānau and students on progress and next steps towards qualifications
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Kamo High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- discussing processes in staff meetings, especially any changes to assessment practice
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to students and whānau digitally through the student intranet and website
- regularly reminding students about assessment procedures and what they need to gain a qualification during assembly and whānau meetings.

Student handbook reviewed The school has reviewed the NCEA handbook given to students and whānau to ensure it is concise and at a reading level suitable for their students. The next step is to use language consistent with that used by NZQA for breaches and further assessment opportunities, which will help remove any confusion around these processes.

Review of course information planned A review of course information is planned, to align the information given to students and whānau by creating a common template to be used throughout the school, including information about pathways. The plan is to use what is produced by their student management system in the subject selection booklet and documentation for course outlines. This will address current inconsistencies among learning areas in information about course structure and assessment communicated to students.

Induction of staff new to the school The school needs to consider how they will support Learning Leaders with inducting new staff who start during the school year. There are sound processes for inducting new staff at the start of the year that can be modified for use at other times of the year. This will help all new staff to quickly become familiar with school processes for NCEA assessment and ensure consistency.

For consideration

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

- using language consistent with NZQA in the student handbook
- developing a common template for course information to be used by all learning areas, providing consistent information to students and whānau

- developing a process to support Learning Leaders inducting new staff during the school year to ensure school processes for NCEA assessment are applied consistently.