

Managing National Assessment Report

Ruawai College

May 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Ruawai College

24 May 2023

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

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.

As a school with effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2021.

Actions

Agreed actions

The school agreed that four actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and Internal review	
Clarify with staff the requirements for selecting student material for external moderation.	Immediate
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Update student and staff handbooks to include that breaches of assessment rules reflects the school practice of natural justice and student appeals apply to all aspects of the assessment process.	Immediate
Clarify with staff the procedure for resubmissions so that NZQA guidelines are followed consistently.	Immediate
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Ensure that all "late results" for reporting after the close of data file submissions have been subject to the school's internal moderation process before reporting them to NZQA.	At the time of reporting late results, before the end of February 2024.

For consideration

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

- evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken in response to external moderation feedback and recording this in the shared external moderation response form.

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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

8 November 2023

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External and internal review

External review

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

Action Items from 25 July 2018 Managing National Assessment Report The school had three agreed actions from the 2018 report.

Teachers were required to arrange grade verifiers in advance of assessment and share external moderation feedback with them. Arranging verifiers in advance ensures a faster turnaround between completing assessments and results being available to students. Sharing external moderation feedback with verifiers helps to consolidate their understanding of the standard and support future grade judgements. This has been actioned, is now a strength of the school, and discussed in the Internal Moderation section of this report.

The school was to ensure that a random selection of student work was selected for external moderation. Although this action has been met, NZQA has since changed the selection requirements, which the school now needs to meet. This is discussed in the External Moderation section of this report.

The student handbook required reviewing to make it more accessible to students and provided to them near the start of the year. This has been completed and students interviewed confirmed that handbooks are provided in Term 1 at the Dean's assembly. Having clear and easy to access assessment information supports students to understand what is needed to gain a qualification, to achieve their academic goals.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The introduction of an external moderation response document has added rigour to a previously informal response process. At the time of the last review, the Principal's Nominee was reviewing the response process to ensure that teacher actions are timely, effective in resolving any issues and monitored for completion. As a result of this review, a shared digital document was implemented with all Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge that requires a response to the moderation outcome, the action taken and timeframe for completion. The document is visible to all to share best practice. To further improve the process the Principal's Nominee could require Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge to evaluate and record the effectiveness of the actions taken. Ruawai College's external moderation outcomes are historically very good.

Requirements for selection of material for external moderation need clarifying The school needs to update teacher understanding about the selection requirements for external moderation. Teachers interviewed for this review were either unsure of the latest requirement to purposefully select samples or were still using the former. Clarifying the selection requirement will improve practice, so that only the required material is selected, and sent to NZQA for external moderation. The current selection method is intended to support teacher's understanding and confidence of assessor grade decisions. Guidance for this can be found on the NZQA website.

Examination Centre Audit The 2022 Quality Assurance check of the school's examination centre identified that the examination centre is compliant.

Internal review

Evidence of 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)

Ruawai College is capable of reviewing its processes to deliver credible assessment practices and to meet the needs of its students. The school's leadership can be confident that any identified issues relating to assessment practices and quality assurance will be addressed, leading to ongoing improvement to deliver the NCEA qualification. Senior leadership sharing ownership for quality assurance and effective assessment practice with all staff, such as evaluating the effectiveness of external moderation action plans, would add robustness to their processes to identify areas for ongoing improvement.

Identified storage issue rectified The school has made an effective change to how student work is stored ensuring that it is available for external moderation. The Principal's Nominee changed the storage process after identifying that when a staff member's digital school account is shut down, the work becomes unavailable to be sent to NZQA for external moderation. All student work is now stored in the school's central drive, which the Principal's Nominee monitors and follows up when this internal moderation process is not followed. The school can now confidently meet NZQA's expectation to provide requested material and receive feedback from external moderators to help teachers further understand the requirements of the standard.

Literacy and Numeracy classes meet student needs A whole school focus on literacy and numeracy is addressing the needs of students to meet the co-requisite requirement of the upcoming change to NCEA. In 2023, classes for literacy and numeracy were introduced for Year 9 and 10 students to improve their ability in these areas. Testing and data analysis identified that students would require additional teaching and learning specifically focused on these skills and competencies to meet the co-requisite requirement of the changed qualification. The classes will develop the students' literacy and numeracy skills to better prepare them for the upcoming co-requisite requirement for NCEA. Teachers are encouraged to specifically teach these skills in their subject areas to support and reinforce student learning.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023).

Update school documentation required Staff and student handbooks require updating to reflect current practice and NZQA guidelines for breaches of assessment rules and student appeals. Procedures for breaches of assessment rules should follow the principles of natural justice. Whereas this is the school's practice, it is not reflected in its documentation. This information should be updated so that the practice is transparent to all and clear to new staff to the school.

Information about student appeals also needs updating. Students can appeal any aspect of the assessment process, including decisions about breaches of assessment rules and missed and late assessments. This information should be included in the school's assessment handbooks, so that students are aware of their entitlements and assessment is fair and consistent school-wide.

Clarify resubmissions with staff The procedure for the resubmission of student work requires clarifying, so that it is applied appropriately, to support fair assessment practice for all students. This review found a practice giving students a large amount of time between receiving their work back and then doing the resubmission, so that they could prepare for it. This is contrary to NZQA guidelines that the resubmission should be provided as soon as possible after the student has received the work back from the teacher. Allowing a few days to prepare means that authenticity cannot be assured and suggests that the error or omission was neither small nor minor. A further assessment opportunity may be appropriate in this situation. Clarifying the procedure and guidelines for resubmissions with staff will help ensure that the practice is consistent across the school. *The Myths: #4 Resubmissions*, available on the NZQA website, can provide further information.

Tracking and monitoring supports students to achieve qualification goals The school has effective tracking and monitoring processes to help ensure students reach their qualification goals. Staff meetings in May and September are held to predict the number of credits each student is tracking towards in their subjects. The Principal's Nominee collates the data and shares this with all staff, using a traffic light system to identify students at risk of not gaining a NCEA qualification or University Entrance. Staff then work with identified students and, when needed, whānau to set goals, provide support, and monitor their progress towards achieving them. The process supports the school's goal of striving for excellence, which encourages students to achieve their potential.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023).

Using external grade verifiers for internal moderation is a strength Developing the regular use of external verifiers across all subjects has strengthened the school's internal moderation processes. An external grade verifier ensures that a person with subject specific knowledge is used for the moderation process when none is available within the school. This is particularly important for sole-charge teachers, which are common in small schools. In the recent past, for various reasons Ruawai College has struggled to find external verifiers and arranging verifiers before commencing assessment was an action point of the previous report. Since then, strong relationships have been developed with schools within the region and with regional subject associations. The Teacher Accord Days have been particularly useful in creating these relationships. These connections have also proven useful when responding to external moderation feedback and planning next steps. Verifiers help to ensure robust quality assurance and the reporting of credible results.

Quality assuring late results The school must ensure that all results are quality assured before reporting them to NZQA. Ruawai College offers either a further assessment opportunity or an additional standard to students who are just short of meeting the requirements for University Entrance. However, the school could not give assurance that any late results for an additional standard had gone through the moderation process before reporting them to NZQA. Although there is a tight timeline for reporting these results, they must meet the school's and NZQA's moderation expectations. Applying the school's internal moderation process to late results for additional standards will resolve this issue and confirm the credibility of all results reported.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

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

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital examinations.

Ruawai College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

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

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

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

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Ruawai College reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data
- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results

- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families and whānau about assessment

Ruawai College has effective processes and procedures for:

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes.

Ruawai College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Ruawai 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 and whānau.

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 effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022* (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 *NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023*.

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- 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's consideration 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 five 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
- *Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy, Ruawai College 2023*
- *NCEA Assessment 2023, Ruawai College 2023 (Staff Handbook)*
- *National Certificate of Education Achievement (NCEA), Ruawai College 2023 (Student Handbook)*.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Learning for:
 - Arts
 - Mathematics and Statistics
 - Physical Education
 - 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.