Managing National Assessment Report

Mahurangi College

April 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Mahurangi College

4 April 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 highly effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

Actions and considerations

For consideration

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

- reviewing whether the current staff and student handbooks remain fit for purpose in their current forms
- confirming schoolwide expectations for verification procedures to minimise the risk of unsound practices developing.

No action required

The school has no action items relating to the quality of their assessment systems.

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12 May 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 13 June 2018 Managing National Assessment Report The agreed action items in this report have been addressed by the school. The internal moderation monitoring process has been strengthened to provide confidence that all reported results have been quality assured; memoranda of understanding are reconciled with results reported from outside providers to ensure accuracy; and documentation was updated as required to ensure currency.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school has effective processes in place to ensure that matters raised in moderators' reports are noted, action plans developed to address any concerns and follow up undertaken to ensure that these plans are enacted.

These processes are co-ordinated by the Principal's Nominee. She meets with the relevant Head of Faculty or Department to discuss any concerns raised in external moderation reports and to develop an appropriate action plan to address these concerns. She then monitors the completion of the action plans to ensure that agreed changes have been undertaken.

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)

Self review processes are thorough, embedded at all levels of the school, well led by Senior Leaders and based on the analysis of data. Teachers interviewed during this review were self-reflective and focussed on improving outcomes for students.

Heads of Faculty prepare an annual report that analyses student NCEA achievement in the previous year and lists any faculty goals for the coming year. These reports are discussed with the Principal. However, it is during regular meetings between Heads of Faculty and the Senior Leader who is their line manager that detailed work on the implications of the reports and application of any goals occurs. These meetings are scheduled regularly throughout the year, encouraging an iterative approach to faculty review which is an effective practice.

Schoolwide goals tend to have a whole school approach with a focus on creating the underpinning culture and environment that will ensure academic success for all students. These goals relate, for example, to curriculum development and behaviour for learning.

All teachers are encouraged to be self-reflective and to use student voice surveys to inform their own practice which reinforces the culture of self-review that is evident in the school.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of 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)

Targeted student support   A current feature of the school is the initiative to engage with the parents of Kiribati students as a means of supporting improved NCEA outcomes for these students. This is an example of the result of focussed self-review and targeted goal setting.

Overall NCEA results have been consistently good for a number of years across most demographics including Māori students. This includes participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. However, Pacific students are an outlier group with lower NCEA results and less participation in STEM subjects.

The school has identified the need to better support Pacific students, many of whom come from the local Kiribati community. Improving engagement with Kiribati parents has been identified as a key focus and the school has engaged with a local community trust to facilitate this contact. This has resulted in community meetings being arranged for parents and the school under the auspices of the trust who facilitates the meetings and provides translation services. A booklet about literacy and numeracy in Kiribati has been prepared by the school, translated by the trust and made available to parents.

This initiative is in its early stages but is innovative and reflects the school's commitment to meeting the needs of all students.

Tracking of student progress supports academic success   Identifying students who are at risk of not achieving their qualification goals and the provision of specific support is a focus for the school. Consistently good NCEA results are evidence of the positive impact of this process.

It is notable that the primary responsibility for identifying "priority students" rests with classroom teachers and faculties. This is different from the focus for some other schools where lists of students of concern tend to be generated centrally and disseminated to classroom teachers. The process used by the school both encourages teachers to reflect on the needs of students in their classes and also encourages a sense of responsibility in teachers to support "their" students.

The names of students thus identified are also collated and Heads of Year have the responsibility to monitor and coordinate support. However, teachers interviewed commented that they would often seek out other teachers of "their priority students" to discuss appropriate ways to offer support.

Consider reviewing the staff and student handbooks   The school should consider reviewing whether the current staff and student handbooks remain fit for purpose in their current forms.

The information contained in these handbooks is current and accurate but appears disjointed in places with complete information on a specific topic sometimes not appearing in a single place in the document. This could lead to an incomplete understanding of an issue if the entire handbook is not read. There are also other minor discrepancies (usually the omission of some information) between the staff and student handbooks which could lead to confusion. These could be addressed by

reconfiguring parts of each handbook but it could also be an opportunity to consider whether the handbooks as a whole remain fit for purpose.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)

Internal moderation processes are thorough Senior leaders can have confidence in the credibility of results submitted to NZQA as the procedures for completing internal moderation are thorough, well understood by teachers and valued as a means to improve assessment judgements.

The results of external moderation also promote confidence in the internal moderation system. Over the past six years, no external moderation report has been received that indicates that the judgement of the assessor is "Not Consistent" with the standard. The school's encouragement of teachers to become external examination markers and to be active in their subject associations also supports the making of good assessment judgements.

Of note in all faculties and departments participating in this review was the time spent during the pre-marking phase to discuss and benchmark grades prior to teachers embarking on the marking process. This time is very well spent and provides a high level of confidence to teachers, particularly of grade borderlines, and promotes the accurate marking of assessments prior to the formal verification process.

All faculties complete coversheets and these are lodged digitally with the Principal's Nominee. Formal grade verification procedures vary from faculty to faculty but all currently occur according to NZQA expectations. However, the variability in process does have the potential to lead to practices that may stray from expectations. The school is encouraged to consider whether confirming minimum schoolwide expectations for these verification procedures is needed to minimise this risk.

The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion of internal moderation along with checks to ensure that teachers are complying with other schoolwide requirements that support fair and credible assessment for NCEA. She reviews the completion of coversheets, meets annually with faculties to review practice and conducts spot checks. At regular meetings she discusses any concerns and updates teachers on any new developments, and she holds informal discussions with individual teachers if needed. She has very good knowledge and oversight of all NCEA-related practices in the school which instils confidence in Senior Leaders that processes meet NZQA requirements.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Mahurangi 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required

- 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

- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams

  implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Mahurangi College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment

- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment

- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions

- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules

- 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

Mahurangi 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

- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored

- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements

- 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

Mahurangi 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

- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards

- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Mahurangi 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 about assessment

Mahurangi College has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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

- celebrating students' success.

Mahurangi 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 in order to gain a qualification.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Mahurangi 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.

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
- *NCEA Assessment Procedures for Staff, Mahurangi College, 2023* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student and Parent Guidelines, Mahurangi College, 2023* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the leave cover person for the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Arts
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education and Health
- Heads of Department for:
  - Biology
  - Geography
  - Media and Languages
- 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.