

Managing National Assessment Report

Rangitoto College

March 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Rangitoto 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 2018* (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
- *Rangitoto College Assessment Policy 2018*
- *Rangitoto College Achievement Handbook 2018* (staff handbook)
- *Rangitoto College Senior Student Handbook 2018* (student handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, the Deputy Principal (Curriculum), the NZQA Co-ordinator, the NCEA Data Administrator, four students, and Heads of Department for English, Languages, Mathematics, Performing Arts, Science, and Social Sciences.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy 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

Rangitoto College

29 March 2018

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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

This review was rescheduled from 2016 until late in 2017, and then until early 2018 with the school's agreement because of changes in the college's Senior Leadership Team.

What the school is doing well

Rangitoto College has an effective culture of self-review reflecting the school's philosophy of a continuous cycle of improvement in meeting student needs. Strategic planning at all levels supports evidence-based assessment priorities and goals. These include improving achievement for Māori and Pasifika students, tracking priority learners and raising achievement for boys.

The school offers a wide variety of differentiation within and between courses for students. Senior Leaders approve the addition of new courses annually, based on evidence of student need.

The Principal leads a network of senior leaders, deans, Māori and Pasifika Kairuruku, and Careers leaders who work strategically to raise student achievement outcomes and allow students to meet their NCEA goals. Specialised tutor groups for all students (academic, sport and performing arts) support students to strive for excellence and manage student assessment workload with co-curricular activities. A highly effective Learning Support Department identifies and monitors those with learning challenges to empower their assessment outcomes.

Internal moderation is robust and credible. This is confirmed through rigorous internal quality assurance processes. These processes are led by the Principal's Nominee. The NZQA Co-ordinator strategically supports the role of the Principal's Nominee by making annual monitoring visits to each department to reconcile documented internal moderation and storage with actual practice. Teachers use a well-embedded system of departmental checks on grades before they submit their completed internal moderation to the NCEA Data Administrator for final checking. Evidence of these systems was sighted during the visit.

Assessor/moderator agreement rates between teachers and NZQA moderators are high. These results confirm the effectiveness of the school's internal moderation practice. Where issues are noted through the external moderation process, the Principal's Nominee co-constructs dated action plans with staff and ensures that these are completed and checked in a timely manner.

A team of senior leaders monitor and analyse NCEA student achievement data at fortnightly meetings throughout the year. They identify and track Priority Learners visually through photo galleries and through credit summaries, and provide dean's interventions for each student to allow those students to achieve their best outcomes. Findings are proactively shared with Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Department and interventions developed as appropriate.

Heads of Department interpret data to provide evidence to inform course changes. For example, the addition of new courses or variation within existing courses is based on this evidence and approved by senior leaders. In addition, departments reflect on standards offered in each course with a view to reducing the numbers of credits offered. Provision of optional credits also meets the needs of particular cohorts or individuals.

NCEA information is communicated to staff, students and their parents online, through staffing meetings, at face-to-face meetings, assemblies and via the parent portal. Assessment handbooks are reviewed annually reviewed and are mainly consistent.

Areas for improvement

The school will update one aspect of its documentation in the staff handbook under "New Zealand Qualifications Assessment Procedures for Heads of Departments" to remove conflicting information under "Assessment Opportunities". The latter provides consistent information on NZQA's requirements for further assessment opportunities and resubmission. This change will ensure that understanding of the policy on resubmission is consistent across the school. The Principals' Nominee agreed that the next step is to organise a workshop for staff based on scenarios from the 2018 Principal's Nominee's seminar.

In an additional response to the 2018 Principal's Nominee's seminar the school plans to continue to consider credit reduction where this can make a difference to student and teacher workload.

Agreed action

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

- reinforce sufficient selection of student work for internal moderation
- update the documentation on resubmission and further assessment opportunities in the school's documentation to ensure consistency.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

17 May 2018

NZQA

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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 20 August 2013 Managing National Assessment Report All five agreed action items from the 2013 Managing National Assessment Report have been addressed. Internal and external moderation and monitoring processes have been clearly documented and are effectively applied. Three aspects of communication on reporting grades, derived grades processes and the appeals policy have been updated to reflect NZQA's requirements.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a high agreement rate between teacher and NZQA moderators. This reflects its effective internal moderation processes and departmental monitoring visits. The Principal's Nominee requires staff to develop an action plan to resolve any issues identified in external moderation reports. Completion of planned strategies is monitored by Senior Management, and where appropriate, forms part of staff appraisal.

Response to data issues In 2017 the school had several standards where there was a significant variation between internal and external results. The school responded to NZQA data with a comprehensive Head of Department review of these. The review effectively identified reasons for variance, validated existing practice or supported teachers to adjust marking strategies as appropriate. New understanding about reasons for this variation has been shared within departments as professional development. In one department, a reduction of the number of external credits offered will provide for better preparation for one external standard. In another, teachers new to NCEA are supported to better understand expectations around the achievement criteria of the standard to ensure credible assessment.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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)

Continuous cycle of self-review The new Principal and restructured Senior Leadership Team have established a shared culture of ownership through the school's continuous cycle of self-review. This reflects on the effectiveness of assessment practice and meeting student needs. Effective use of student achievement information, distinct monitoring roles in the school's NZQA management team, and the flexibility of NCEA have reinforced schoolwide understanding of assessment and moderation practice and improved outcomes for students.

Review of data transfer processes The Principal's Nominee, NZQA Co-ordinator and NZQA Data Administrator have led a schoolwide data review in response to late reported results issues from 2016. The school has reviewed processes around the set-up of electronic mark books and transfer of student data to NZQA. They have minimised staff involvement so that two people conduct focussed checking to provide senior management with confidence in all results reported to NZQA; one person sets

up mark books and the other checks signed off results before transferring them to NZQA.

Mini-Managing National Assessment Audit The NZQA Co-ordinator visits each department annually to check all internal moderation processes. She explained that recent follow-up is reflected in appraisal goals for some teachers and in department storage practices for assessment materials through digital or hardcopy folders. The results of this review are discussed with the Principal's Nominee who triangulates internal moderation review information with external moderation findings at meetings of school's NZQA Management group.

Structured management teams Structured Management teams reflect the school's vision of managing cohorts within a large school environment. They allow for provision of individualised support for student achievement through acceleration, learning support, passion-learning tutor groups, learning support, provision for priority learners and groups of students new to New Zealand.

School initiated responses to improve student achievement outcomes and quality assurance include:

- reducing credits in courses to address staff and student workload and better enable students to meet their assessment goals
- introducing an annual mini-MNA audit in departments that meets NZQA's requirements for monitoring internal moderation
- decentralising the structure of the school's derived grade process so that deans are the first point-of-contact. Staff professional development supports this change and makes this system more accessible to students
- conducting a full review of the school-based evidence system for special assessment conditions to better resource testing, staffing to administer assessment, and evidence-gathering strategies. This reduces financial barriers to the identification of students requiring special assessment conditions
- conducting a review on the individualisation of assessment programmes for students as required, based on their student medical or other individual needs
- reviewing tracking processes to ensure that students who are flagged as requiring literacy or numeracy through the Kahui Ako – Community of Learning are provided with appropriate support to meet their needs from years 9 and 10 and prepare them for NCEA. This aims to better provide equity for students entering the NCEA system, especially for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, or those who require numeracy support
- developing the assessment induction and support programme for new staff to provide a network of support through two specialist classroom teachers and twenty other teachers with sound understanding of NCEA assessment practice
- reviewing assessment induction processes for teachers new to New Zealand to ensure they develop their understanding of standards-based assessment practice and can award valid grades to students
- trialling digital external examinations to meet student assessment needs by providing a future focus for some NCEA external assessment.

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 2018 5.5)

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

- offering students a range of methods to present internal assessment evidence including portfolios of oral, visual, digital and written evidence
- supporting Māori and Pasifika Kairuruku, and Careers leaders to work strategically to raise student achievement outcomes for Māori and Pasifika students, and supporting students to meet their NCEA goals
- extending students' academic aspirations by supporting student entry into New Zealand Scholarship, through identification of accelerated learners, and provision of tutorials for students ready to engage with this challenge
- identifying accelerated learners and offering a limited range of standards to challenge them in Year 10
- providing mentoring through deans and a senior leader to support every senior student through course selection towards meeting their career goals and aspirations
- identifying, tracking and supporting Priority Learners to individualise programmes to meet student needs through the Deputy Principal's Greenhouse Tracking System
- identifying students who would benefit from special assessment conditions by adequately resourcing the collection of school-based evidence for all students

Rangitoto College has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic evidence using a range of appropriate strategies during the assessment process
- managing missed and late assessments and appeals
- providing information to students about derived grades and gathering standard-specific evidence of student achievement to support applications
- 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
- investigating and resolving breaches of assessment rules
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 when returning student assessment and maintaining exemplars.

Mentoring special interest tutor groups The school structures its tutor groups around special interest groups, so that each student is matched with an academic, sporting and performing arts tutors according to their interests and aspirations. This allows them to explore common understanding over learning and assessment through their shared subject interests. The school reports that this is effective in supporting students to meet their assessment goals.

Professional Learning Groups explore evidence-gathering techniques

Professional Learning Groups have inquired into innovative ways to collect evidence and shared examples schoolwide. Teachers interviewed provided examples of varied evidence-gathering practice. Students explained that this meets their needs. It reduces workload by better connecting their assessment with their learning. Some examples include collaboration across subject areas, for example, digitally-adapted evidence being used across Accounting and Economics, for assessment of two standards. One student described using the ideas studied in a History assessment that contributed towards a creative writing portfolio submission for NCEA Level 3 English.

Differentiated course design varies assessment focus The use of different contexts to engage student interest is effective across several departments. For example, in English student interest is engaged through a creative, non-fiction or literature-based focus. Students interviewed during this review explained that this variation effectively engages their interests and supports their assessment outcomes.

Agreed action

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

- update the documentation on resubmission and further assessment opportunities in the school's documentation to ensure consistency.

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 2018 6.4b)

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

- ensuring staff are provided with clear expectations on the school's internal moderation procedure
- critiquing assessment material before use as appropriate
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a purposefully-selected sample of marked student work
- documenting each step of the internal moderation process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, including noting discussions at grade boundaries
- digitally submitting the completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* to the Data Manager and the Principal's Nominee to confirm internal moderation is complete before submitting grades to NZQA
- storing exemplars of student work at grade boundaries for future reference with particular attention to supporting staff new to NCEA
- making effective senior management annual monitoring visits to each department to check the moderation procedures and storage of students work

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

- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- encouraging teachers to appeal moderation decisions to develop their understanding of the standard
- valuing external moderation feedback to modify tasks, improve understanding of the standard and inform future assessment decisions.

Strengthen robust internal moderation through use of sufficient sampling to reduce workload Some teachers interviewed for the review are not strategic in selecting a sufficient sample of student work for internal moderation.

Some staff verify many more samples than is required. NZQA requires selection of a sufficiently sized sample for staff to be confident that results reported are at the standard. While all samples are selected purposefully, and at grade boundaries, sufficiency depends upon consideration of additional factors such as the experience of the teacher, external moderation history and whether teachers are using a new task. Some Heads of Department identified that they could reduce the number of samples of student work verified. This could help to reduce workload without compromising the current robust process.

- reinforce sufficient selection of student work for internal moderation.

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)

Rangitoto College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school wide and department strategic goals based upon longitudinal and comparative analysis of achievement data and discussions with the Principal
 - providing teachers with “On Your Marks” data to help staff track trends and comment on barriers and enablers
 - teachers analysing achievement data to inform current year courses and programme design
 - effectively supporting students to review their progress data and reach academic or vocational goals by tracking their own progress through the student management system
 - ensuring students are informed about and have access to financial assistance
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking Key Indicators are error-free before file submissions are made to NZQA
 - having students sign off the accuracy before teachers check results, and scanning these sheets for final checking by the Data Manager before they are reported to NZQA
 - holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers and checking these against results reported against external provider codes
 - assisting all students to gain access to their Learner login and the NZQA app and encouraging them to check any discrepancies in results with their teachers.

Data analyst provides accurate data to Heads of Departments to support analysis The school’s data enquiry process, led by the Principal’s Nominee, identified that some Heads of Department are more skilled at accessing and analysing data than others. To ensure better equity of access the school has appointed a Data Analyst to provide accurate and accessible data to staff and support them with answering any data question they may have.

Data analysis supports effective course design Comparative and longitudinal data analysis through “On Your Marks” has helped staff to track barriers and enablers through their annual reports to the Principal and the Board of Trustees. to student achievement so that teachers also have access to standard-by-standard analysis and this is considered in departments throughout the year. This is applied through effective course design.

An example is the Science Department which has reduced the number of standards assessed to allow more time for learning. Another subject area has changed the balance between internal and external assessment to better prepare students. Teachers explained that their analysis shows each of these strategies is better meeting student needs.

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))

Rangitoto College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive standardised information on assessment practice in their course outlines and making this available online
- annually reviewing communications to ensure they are current
- supporting teachers new to NCEA to understand and use standards-based assessment through an induction process
- arranging effective succession-planning to ensure that institutional knowledge of NCEA is not person-dependent

Rangitoto College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment practices and procedures to the school community through accessible handbooks and publishing policies online
- checking whether teachers, students and parents understand and can follow processes by regular end-of-topic evaluations and responding to these by making changes to better meet student needs
- providing staff with opportunities to understand assessment initiatives and processes through regular staff, department, Head of Department and Curriculum Leader meetings
- regularly surveying that all NCEA students understand what they need to achieve to gain their qualification through tutor and mentoring discussions and Deaning interventions.

Clarification of resubmission opportunities required Two teachers interviewed were unclear about the meaning of the terms resubmission and a further assessment opportunity, and their use. There are conflicting statements in the staff handbook. The section on Assessment Opportunities includes accurate information on further assessment opportunities and resubmission. However, the section detailing procedures for Heads of Departments needs to be updated. It currently requires that "any opportunities are offered to all". This statement should be removed from the school's documentation to ensure there is a consistent understanding of the difference between resubmission which is only for students at a grade boundary who have made minor errors they are capable of correcting, and further assessment opportunities, which can be offered to all. The Principal's Nominee plans to change this definition and ensure staff understand the provisions of the NZQA Mythbuster on resubmission.

2018 reporting review to provide better continuous support to students A team of teachers is currently conducting a full review of the current reporting structure to better report summary data to students and parents. The staff handbook notes that 2018 is an interim year for reporting. The new system aims to provide more continuous and dynamic reporting that will make tracking student progress easier for teachers, reduce staff workload, and allow for early intervention where this is appropriate. The Senior School Term 3 report in 2018 is expected to better represent the new style data reporting that reflects all NCEA internal results with pared-back

supportive comments that encourage performance in the November external assessments. The full new reporting system will be implemented in 2019.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- update information on resubmission and further assessment opportunities in the staff handbook to ensure consistency.