

# Managing National Assessment Report

**Birkenhead College**  
May 2022

# **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

## **Birkenhead College**

**26 May 2022**

### **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 2021*.

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 to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2020.

### **Actions and considerations**

#### **For consideration**

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

- planning for the impact of the upcoming changes to assessment as a result of the NCEA Change Programme, particularly external assessment occurring during the year
- developing a digital storage policy for samples of student work selected for external moderation
- reviewing the effectiveness of the processes used to ensure that students can readily access the content of the student handbook.

**No action required**

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



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28 July 2022

**NZQA**

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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 27 July 2017 Managing National Assessment Report** The agreed items for action listed in this report have been completed by the school. These were to:

- clarify the requirements of the school's internal moderation monitoring system in the staff handbook
- update the staff and student handbooks for consistency and accuracy
- develop a system to check that all Memoranda of Understanding with external providers are reconciled with reported results.

**External moderation processes and response to outcomes** The Principal's Nominee has developed an effective practice to ensure that Heads of Departments take action as a result of external moderation reports, and to then follow up to ensure that these actions are completed. This provides confidence to Senior Management that any needed changes are made.

The Principal's Nominee reviews all moderation reports and discusses any items of concern with the relevant Head of Department who must develop an action plan. This is submitted to the Principal's Nominee who later follows up to ensure that the required actions have been completed.

### 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)*

**Review processes are well-established** The processes for review are well-led by Senior Management, occur at every level of the school and are informed by the analysis of data. These effectively inform schoolwide and departmental goals.

The school has contracted a data expert to provide an analysis of yearly NCEA achievement data. This data is provided to each Head of Department who must then prepare an annual report with analysis and goals. The report is discussed by Senior Management and some Heads of Department deliver a presentation to the Board of Trustees.

It was evident from discussions with Heads of Departments that the review process does not end with the submission of the annual report. A culture of continual self-review for improvement is well-established in the school. Senior Management each act as line managers for a group of Heads of Department and meet regularly with them to review progress and discuss any concerns.

Senior Management develops annual schoolwide goals informed by the analysis of data and which further inform the goals set by departments. The current focus of the

school relates to Māori and Pacific achievement with a particular emphasis on University Entrance.

**Consider impact of upcoming changes to assessment** Senior Management is encouraged to consider what the impact of the upcoming changes to assessment will mean both for teaching and learning, and for the logistics of running external assessment during the year.

The school has yet to participate in any of the pilots for the new achievement standards nor for the new literacy and numeracy co-requisites. Students have previously participated in digital external exams with success and this provides some confidence in the school's IT systems to manage these exams.

However, one of the implications of external assessment being held throughout the year is the potential logistical impact. Not only will this have a significant effect on the planning of the school calendar, but teachers (the Principal's Nominee and others) will need to become proficient in the digital exam platform, Assessment Master. The school's engagement in the digital practice exams later this year will aid in this process.

## 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)*

**Comprehensive system to monitor student progress** A feature of the school is the thorough and integrated system for monitoring students' progress towards achieving their qualification goals and providing appropriate support when needed. The sustained student achievement rates are evidence of the success of this process.

At Senior Management level, an overall profile of potential student achievement is developed early in the year which includes the use of predicted grades provided by teachers. This information is shared with teachers and helps to identify those students who may need targeted support at subject level.

After each internal assessment, Heads of Department are required to submit the grades achieved to Senior Management so that the overall school profile can be updated, and this refreshed data is shared with teachers. Departments are expected to provide additional subject-specific support for identified students.

The overall package of support is co-ordinated by Deans and Senior Management and this can include individual mentoring or home contact as required.

**Comprehensive support for students with learning needs** The school identifies and supports students with learning and other special needs well. The number of Special Assessment Conditions applications submitted in 2021 was significantly higher than the national average (almost 14 percent of the roll versus a national average of 8 percent).

A booking system is in place via the learning support department to ensure that students who need reader or writer support can access these for internal assessments wherever needed.

**Consider the effectiveness of student handbook** The school should consider reviewing the effectiveness of the processes used to ensure that students can readily access the content of the student handbook.

The student handbook is comprehensive, written in accessible language and a useful resource for students. However, students interviewed were uncertain whether they had received the handbook in 2022 and did not know where they could now access it. Consideration could be given to publish this digitally to improve accessibility and to more easily maintain currency.

## 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 procedures consistently followed** Although departments have slightly different ways of conducting internal moderation, these all follow the requirements set by NZQA. A level of consistency is maintained through the common use of the *Internal Moderation Coversheet*.

It was notable that all teachers interviewed valued the importance of robust internal moderation to ensure credible assessment and to improve their capability as assessors. Staff indicated a high degree of integrity and a desire to follow appropriate procedures.

**Consider developing a digital storage policy** The development of a digital storage policy for samples of student work selected for external moderation could improve schoolwide efficiency and security.

Departments are increasingly saving samples of student work selected for moderation in a digital format within folders set up by each department. It may be more suitable for the school to develop a digital storage policy and for these samples to be saved in a schoolwide shared drive managed by the Principal's Nominee.

This would ensure both that work is not inadvertently lost should a staff member leave the school and that the required permission settings for these folders are appropriate for moderators to access.

# Appendix 1: Effective Practice

## Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

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

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are 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
- providing expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Birkenhead 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**

**Birkenhead 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.

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

- 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**

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

- 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.

**Birkenhead 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
- 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**

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

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- 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.

### **Birkenhead 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 Birkenhead 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 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:

- 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 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 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
- *Staff Handbook, Birkenhead College, 2022*
- *Student Handbook, Birkenhead College, 2022*
- *Assessment Policy, Birkenhead College*
- *Curriculum Delivery Policy, Birkenhead College.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Head(s) Department for:
  - Art
  - English
  - Food & Textiles Technology
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Sciences

There was a report-back session with the 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.