

Managing National Assessment Report

Northcote College

July 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Northcote College

27 July 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 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 2020.

Actions and considerations

No action required

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

For consideration

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

- updating staff and student handbooks and assessment policy to ensure currency and consistency as discussed
- using internal moderation clarifications forms to submit any request to NZQA relating to internal standards
- increasing the use of the NZQA Learner login so that students can use its functions



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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 18 August 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

Since the previous Managing National Assessment review, the school has added effective digital processes to their internal moderation systems. Senior leaders have provided professional development to all staff to ensure they share a collective understanding of effective internal moderation practices. For example, purposeful selection of samples of student work for grade verification has replaced random selection.

The Principal's Nominee leads a quality assurance visit to each department. These visits include documented discussion of grade verification and purposeful selection methods used by departments for each standard as a method to inquire into the accuracy of their own grade decisions. Evidence supporting this ownership of practice is clear in the quality of evaluative comments made on internal moderation cover sheets for each department interviewed.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The school has effectively developed its already robust external moderation systems and processes to meet NZQA's requirements since its last Managing National Assessment review. By using moderation monitoring visits and evaluating the outcomes of this visit against its external moderation results, the school effectively identifies and acts on changes needed. The Principal's Nominee's quality assurance meeting with each department includes checks on any feedback relating to external moderation. At this meeting, which is connected to the return of external moderation reports, any action plans are considered and evaluated so that adjustment can be made before the standard is offered again. For example, marking schedules in one subject area have been adjusted to better reflect the requirements of the standard and the Achieved/Not achieved grade boundary. This process assures senior management that all results for each standard have been subject to its quality assurance systems before they are reported to NZQA.

Teachers maintain a high level of consistency with the standards being assessed, as reported by NZQA moderators.

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 is an embedded practice at Northcote College and is integrated into the teaching, learning and assessment processes that support assessment for qualifications.

Digital external assessment In 2021 the school engaged students in digital external end-of-year examinations in Business Studies and Spanish to match assessment with the way students currently learn. Teachers in these areas

considered both their digital readiness and student voice before choosing to make this change.

In 2022 the school has progressed change by increasing its engagement in digital assessment including entering NCEA Change Programme pilot standards in History and Spanish and extending engagement in digital end-of-year examinations to Chinese.

The school is considering using further Common Assessment Activities throughout the year but has reflected that these will need to be balanced against the value of other events in the school's calendar.

There is ongoing review of the success of the change.

Use of the Student Login Students currently review their progress towards qualifications through the school management system, rather than the NZQA Learner Login. There are limitations to this approach, as it is only through the Learner Login that a student can track the entries and results data that NZQA will use to award a qualification. The school should consider further supporting ownership of entries and results by increasing student engagement with the NZQA Learner login. This will also provide students with access to their digital examinations, reviews, resubmissions and access to ordering NCEA certificates.

Focus on enhancing Māori and Pasifika achievement The school has considered its Māori and Pasifika achievement data and whānau aspirations with a view to ensuring equitable access to all courses for all students. In response to this review and with leadership from the principal, it is removing banding across any remaining subjects by 2023 to provide better student access to Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics courses. Senior leaders noted that while the school has sound values and policies to support mentoring and provides role-models of successful achievement, removing the barrier of banding will support more equitable access and aspiration for students.

Their review also identified that renaming some courses to remove any perceived stigma attached to those course names will support the school's intention to provide equitable access for Māori and Pasifika students.

In addition to the previous initiative recent meetings at Pasifika churches, lunchtime and homework centres, initiatives for all, have provided an opportunity to listen to feedback from the Pasifika community and to hear student voice. This has resulted in the school providing strengthened post-COVID support mechanisms for assessment, both face-to-face and online.

Teacher professional development with mentors Teacher professional development and Professional Learning Groups proactively support development of assessment pedagogy including more effective assessment processes that meet student needs. Each teacher identifies individual goals linked to student achievement as part of their professional growth cycle. They are observed by an experienced mentor throughout the year. The ongoing dialogue between teacher and mentor results in engagement with a Professional Learning Group of the teacher's choice so that they can reflect on their own assessment pedagogy and course design to meet student needs, as required. This is better individualising student learning and addressing readiness to be assessed. For example, an English Language inquiry into the use of oral and visual evidence has resulted in better systems for systems to communicate instructions to and with students in assessments.

Communications review In response to the school's internal review of communications all handbooks and assessment communications are now digital and made available on the school's website. The staff handbook needs to be aligned with good practice through more consistent use of terminology. During the review NZQA identified, and the school agreed to, changes to the layout and wording of one section of the handbook to ensure consistent use of terminology around further assessment opportunities. This will develop consistent messaging for new staff and students.

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)

Student voice valued in supporting student needs to be met Student voice is gathered through case study projects that are valued by both teachers and students. Each teacher works with an individual student to hear their perspectives on learning and assessment. They also consider student and whānau voice as part of another review, the school's Kāhui Ako project. Students are encouraged to discuss their experience of courses and to take ownership of their progress towards academic and vocational goals with mentors and deans, including specific Māori and Pasifika support. Students also use "me and My School" surveys.

Students interviewed confirmed that this case study project has resulted in the school forging better links with whānau and community and that they feel supported by this. It helps them to develop their aspirations in parallel with effective advice and career guidance.

Data is used to identify student success, inform assessment interventions such as valid catch-up opportunities and identify any changes to assessment programmes, such as optional standards, that will best meet student needs.

Special Assessment Conditions The school has an effective Learning Support system including identification of students with learning needs and communication between teachers and the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator. This meets the needs of students who may be entitled to Special Assessment Conditions. Teachers communicate learning intentions to Learning Support Co-ordinators prior to lessons to enable them to effectively support students in their assessment. The school's own analysis of the use of conditions provided confirms the schoolwide understanding that this provision of support is best meeting the needs of students who may be entitled to special assessment conditions.

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)

Effective recording of internal moderation by teachers The school has a robust internal moderation system. This year it has digitised all systems so that each department documents its internal moderation process on a shared drive.

Standardised folders of student work and assessment materials are maintained in departments and access rights are shared with the Head of Department and Principal's Nominee. The Principal's Nominee commented that this system is saving time and making it much easier to conduct a monitoring check that each step of the internal moderation process is complete. The new system is not linked to individuals so that it ensures effective succession planning of each standard when personnel changes occur.

Effective internal moderation monitoring The Principal's Nominee's Moderation Review visit to departments considers internal storage of moderation materials and samples of student work, critiquing, exemplar maintenance and grade verification comments. These are considered alongside external moderation feedback to provide a lens on quality assurance. The Head of Department and the Principal's Nominee develop and document any action items and consider professional development needs. Progress on actions is checked in a return visit where required. Heads of Department report on these visits, and their progress towards solving any moderation issues, in their annual department report. These include grade boundary decisions, and any curriculum level concerns. The principal summarises moderation findings to the Board of Trustees.

The school's internal moderation system is providing senior leadership with effective oversight that results are quality assured before they are reported to NZQA. It ensures that most changes to grades and assessment tools are made as a result of the school's internal moderation mechanism before they are identified by the external moderation process. The system is supportive and effective.

Purposeful selection of grade boundary samples used effectively for internal moderation All teachers interviewed reported greater shared understanding of the purpose of internal moderation is the result of schoolwide professional development and use of MythBusters. Teachers use purposeful and strategic selection effectively to receive targeted feedback on specific aspects of student's work in relation to the standard being assessed. They select samples of student work at grade boundaries considering teacher experience and external moderation history. This is effective practice and results in consistent grade boundary decisions and understanding of the standards.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Northcote 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/ākonga can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students/ākonga when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students/ākonga with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing support for students/ākonga at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Northcote 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/ākonga 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/ākonga results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Northcote 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.

Northcote 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

Northcote College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students/ākonga by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students/ākonga 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.

Northcote 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
- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students/ākonga and their families about assessment**Northcote College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students/ākonga receive outlines for courses they undertake discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students/ākonga' 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/ākonga' success, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Northcote College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students/ākonga
- informing students/ākonga about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students/ākonga 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 Northcote 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/ākonga 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 2021* (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 2022* (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'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
- *Northcote College Assessment Policy*
- *Northcote College Assessment Policy in Practice – A guide for Staff 2022* (Staff Handbook)
- *Northcote College Assessment Policy in Practice – A guide for Students/ākonga 2022* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Senior Leader (Acting)
- Head of Faculty/Department
 - Social Sciences/Geography
- Head of Department
 - English
 - English Language Learning
 - Media Studies
 - Technology
- Acting Head of Department
 - Mathematics
- three students/ākonga.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Principal's Nominee/Senior Leader (Acting) 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.