

Managing National Assessment Report

Tangaroa College

May 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tangaora 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
- *Tangaora College Teaching Staff NCEA/NZQA 2018 (Staff Handbook)*
- *Tangaroa College Rules and Procedure for students entering NZQA standards 2018 Your Questions Answered*
- *The NZQF Student Guide*
- examples of a fortnightly student services assessment data update, the summary of external moderation follow-up for 2017, and Quality Assurance Departmental checklists
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Learning for Commerce, Digital Technologies, Mathematics, Performing Arts, Technology and Visual Arts.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee, Associate Principal and two Deputy Principals 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

Tangaroa College

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

What the school is doing well

Tangaroa College is committed to students achieving qualifications, so they have a purposeful transition beyond school. Their success is evident as their rate of NCEA qualifications achievement exceeds that of schools nationally. Key to this success is the positive relationships with students, careful tracking of progress, and assessment of courses occurring every term so that students experience regular success.

The school has undertaken review of several aspects of assessment practice, effectively incorporating the data to both identify and measure improvement. One review aspect is focused on credible assessment with senior leaders checking evidence that teacher practice is consistent and meets school expectations. Another focus is on student success, with a review of whole school curriculum underway. An outcome has been the reduction of the volume of assessment this year by decreasing the number of subjects that students take. Initial reaction to this change is very positive, although the effect is too early to be measured in terms of achievement outcomes.

Internal moderation is becoming embedded practice across the school. A model of distributed leadership is used to monitor that quality assurance is ensuring valid and verifiable assessment. Response to external moderation has been strengthened by making the process more transparent and having increased accountability. The school addresses areas of concern.

Communications aim to ensure student, teachers and families have shared understanding of assessment policy and process. The school supports this at information evenings by providing parents with the opportunity to work in groups in their Pasifika language, while students report having ready access to a range of staff who are both knowledgeable about assessment for qualifications and their individual needs.

Areas for improvement

Despite the Principal's Nominee having processes in place to provide accurate and timely data to NZQA, several issues arose in 2017. The school agrees that reference to NZQA data reports will help them to identify and resolve any issues.

While two items from the 2015 review have been actioned, the others are still in progress or need further consideration. This is in part the result of recent changes in key personnel including the Principal's Nominee, Principal and most Senior Leaders.

We recommend that the school reconsiders the 2015 agreed action to evaluate the effectiveness of their process for both identifying possible students requiring special assessment conditions, and to use school-based evidence to support applications for entitlements and in so doing, removing financial costs to families. The number of applications received by NZQA for special assessment conditions remains well below that of the decile band.

Agreed action

The school agreed this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems:

- ensure checks on data accuracy and completeness include NZQA records.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

19 September 2018

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 23 July 2015 Managing National Assessment Report This report identified six agreed actions. While two have been fully addressed, further action is needed on the following four:

- refinements to processes for identifying students requiring special assessment conditions
- recording reasons for verifier decisions on graded
- ensuring that for all entries a result is reported
- checking that students understand the school's assessment processes.

These are further detailed in the relevant section of this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes strengthened The school has strengthened monitoring departmental follow-up of external moderation findings, as agreed at the 2015 review. Last year, the new Principal's Nominee refined the system by using a shared document to provide teachers with the feedback for all standards moderated. Heads of Learning were required to report on the document any standards where external moderators did not support teacher grade judgements. Senior leaders were then expected to carry out evidence-based checks on remediation as part of their monitoring process. The Principal's Nominee commented that the increased transparency of moderation outcomes had resulted in greater teacher ownership of issues identified and better follow-up.

External moderation reports have identified ongoing issues with assessment quality in a few departments. The school has worked closely with these departments to address the issues and expects that this should result in improved external moderation outcomes this year.

Internal review

Evidence for 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)

Senior leadership changes provide opportunity for review Staffing changes in 2017 have resulted in an increase in the size of the Senior Leadership team. The team has taken the change as an opportunity to refine their approach and distribute expertise, increase transparency and share ownership. All leaders are assigned responsibility for managing and monitoring individual Heads of Learning, Year levels and Deans. This includes the quality assurance of assessment. Having senior leaders develop common understanding of expectations is key to the success of this distributed model. The team is building the culture and strategies to effect this change, along with developing record systems and checks to provide evidence and feedback for self-review.

Focus is on credible assessment practices A school focus on assessment practice is confirming that teachers are consistently following policies and processes to ensure valid and credible assessment. Therefore, monitoring currently checks that all teachers are following processes without variation. Senior leaders expect to take on a more flexible and strategic approach to monitoring once they are confident that teachers are following process consistently.

The school has capitalised on the ease by which they can now build their own assessment plan for external moderation by requiring every teacher to nominate a standard they assess to be moderated in 2018. They expect this will help them to build a comprehensive picture of assessment quality across the school.

Review of curriculum underway Last year the school initiated a review of its curriculum. One immediate outcome of this review was the reduction from 6 to 5 in the number of subjects students take. Initial observations of the effect of this change is improved student knowledge retention, lessened assessment stress, better meeting of deadlines and a calmer, more settled school atmosphere.

The review also highlighted the lower rate of student success in University Entrance compared with the attainment of NCEA Level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications which is at or above national levels. In response, the school is strongly encouraging those students on a university pathway to sit examinations. For 2018, all Year 10 students will also experience an assessment under examination conditions in preparation for NCEA Level 1 in Year 11.

Ongoing review of data promotes achievement The school credits their regular, comprehensive system of tracking student data, in conjunction with strong collaboration between Deans, Senior Leaders and Heads of Learning, to their qualifications achievement success. They identify their next step in supporting achievement as every student having a full, individual assessment pathway.

One challenge the school is experiencing is the increased transience of its community, with 31% of students in the senior school leaving during the 2017 year. Most leave suddenly without a reason. Similarly, students arrive at Tangaora College from other schools throughout the year, including term four, requiring the school to make external entries after the expected due date. Given this challenge, the level of qualifications success experienced by students is evidence of the effectiveness of the school's data driven and dynamic approach to review.

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)

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

- offering specialist programmes through the Teen Parent and Alternative Education units, and academies in the Services, Construction and Health Science
- providing a programme for students who arrive in the senior school without having met the Level 1 literacy and/or numeracy requirement
- using external providers to enrich vocational pathways
- offering supported learning standards to appropriate students
- providing a process for them to add extra or withdraw from standards to personalise their assessment programme after entering all students for internal standards assessed in a course
- making entries in external standards based on student need
- ensuring they can experience regular success in every course by having at least one assessment per term, unless a course has been exempted by the Principal's Nominee.

Tangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment including granting extensions to assessment deadlines to allow students to provide their best evidence
- investigating appeals
- providing a further assessment opportunity to any student on request
- reporting a 'Not Achieved' result when a student is entered for a standard but does not provide evidence.

Reassess school processes for identifying and responding to students needing Special Assessment Conditions The school should reconsider the agreed action from the 2015 review to evaluate the effectiveness of their process for both identifying possible students and using school-based evidence to support applications for entitlements, thereby removing financial costs to families.

The Principal described the school's process as robust, drawing on information from their major contributing school and Resource Teacher for Learning and Behaviour cluster to identify possible students. However, the number of applications for Special Assessment Conditions remains well below that of the decile band.

This year the school has made applications for two students; one with an identified physical need and one learning application for a student who has transferred with an existing entitlement from another school. The school made one application for a student with learning needs in 2017. Supported by a professional report, this application did include some school-based evidence. It should be noted that schools

in the same decile band as Tangaroa College provide special assessment conditions to between three and five percent of students entered for NCEA qualifications.

Clarify resubmission and further assessment terminology Discussion with teachers and students on further assessment and resubmission opportunities showed that they were not familiar with this terminology. Therefore, while practices were consistent with NZQA requirements, the users were not clear which of the two processes they were describing. The Principal's Nominee had identified this confusion and plans to further clarify these terms with teachers.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

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)

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

- requiring Heads of Learning to show that all assessment materials have been critiqued prior to use by providing the Principal's Nominee with a copy of the checked assessment materials and completed cover sheet
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work, including using verifiers outside the school for single teacher subjects
- encouraging teachers to attend meetings of subject cluster groups to assist with developing their understanding of standards and gain comment on assessments and student evidence
- expecting that results are submitted to NZQA only once internal moderation is completed.

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

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- encouraging submission of evidence digitally, when this is the form that students have used to present their work for marking
- Heads of Learning being required to comment on their external moderation outcomes in their annual report to senior leaders and the Board of Trustees.

Reinforce expectations of internal moderation documentation The school meets NZQA's requirements that all standards must be internally moderated before results are reported. However, to ensure consistent practice, the school's expectation that an *internal moderation cover sheet* is used to record compliance with the process needs reinforcing.

Senior leaders are responsible for monitoring assessment quality assurance within the departments they manage. They check evidence of internal moderation when they attend a departmental meeting each term. This check provides the opportunity to reinforce school expectations in relation to documentation.

Internal moderation next steps The school's current internal moderation focus is administrative, ensuring teachers comply with requirements. Their next step is to develop internal moderation as an activity that encourages professional practice and engagement by all departments, as exemplified in Digital Technology.

Future processes could include more strategic selection of student work. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by

factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

Similarly, once the school is confident that processes are embedded, departments could be given the flexibility to record evidence of internal moderation to fit their individual marking process. This will help to promote internal moderation as a professional practice, rather than an administrative function.

Industry Training Organisation managed moderation The school assesses a range of standards owned by industry training organisations. These bodies undertake the external moderation of these standards. The Principal's Nominee plans to ensure that he receives reports from these standard setting bodies so that they can be included in the follow-up process used for NZQA managed standards.

No action required

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

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)

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

- requiring Heads of Learning to analyse and report on reasons for variance on completion of assessment for every internal standard, using a common format
- Heads of Learning reporting on achievement at the end of each term and annually to highlight successful practice and identify areas needing improvement
- Deans and senior leaders reviewing a fortnightly report of the distribution of credit totals attained within each year level, along with detailed commentary on individual priority students
- responding with support where achievement for any student is found to be not on track
- ensuring they regularly receive information on how many credits they have achieved to date
- monitoring that they are entered in sufficient credits to participate in qualifications.

Ensure data checks are comprehensive Several issues arose in 2017, despite the Principal's Nominee having processes in place to check data accuracy. A review of these issues identified that the checks all referred to the data stored in the student management system. To ensure effective data management, the school's annual data check should reference NZQA held records, as well as those in the student management system, as it is on the basis of NZQA held records that qualifications are awarded. This will help ensure that:

- all entries have a result reported against them
- the school remits to NZQA all student fees paid before qualifications are awarded in January.

The low number of results reported late for 2017 shows that the checks the school does have in place are effective.

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:

- ensure checks on data accuracy and completeness include NZQA records.

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))

Tangaroa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines using a common template for all courses they take
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to teachers and parents using an electronic portal
- reviewing and rewriting communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Tangaroa College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing parents with the opportunity to work in groups in their Pasifika language at information evenings,
- the Principal's Nominee running a meeting with Heads of Learning in term one, dedicated to NCEA
- using checklists for Heads of Learning and teachers to document that teachers are following quality assurance practices
- the senior leader of a year level being responsible for inducting teachers new to the school in school assessment expectations and practices.

Promote student access to information about qualifications and processes In 2015, the school agreed to check that students understand assessment processes. The students interviewed are still not knowledgeable about some processes. All had a qualifications goal for the year but were not confident of the details of what they needed to realise this. Having a confident understanding of both aspects will better equip students for success, complementing the school's comprehensive tracking of progress and positive relationships commented on by students.

The students again stated their preference to receive information from teachers or the Careers team verbally, rather than written in the handbook. The school is encouraged to consider how they might achieve this while ensuring consistent and comprehensive messaging from staff. Repeating messages in different formats will help students to understand their rights and responsibilities in assessment and have the confidence to exercise these. The reviewed handbooks provide a good basis for this messaging.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- promote student access to information about qualifications and assessment processes.