

Managing National Assessment Report

Pakuranga College

June 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Pakuranga 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 2019* (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
- *Pakuranga College Curriculum and Assessment Policies, 2019*
- *Pakuranga College Assessment Aro Matawai Teacher handbook, 2019*
- *Pakuranga College Assessment Aro Matawai Student, Parent and Caregivers handbook, 2019*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13
- samples of Pakuranga College NZQA External Moderation Review 2018 reports by Heads of Faculty.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty
 - Drama
 - English
 - Languages
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Science.
- three students.

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

Pakuranga College

5 June 2019

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.

What the school is doing well

Pakuranga College has high expectations for its students to achieve qualifications and a vision that supports meeting student needs. The school is developing a culture of school-wide self-review and ownership of NCEA assessment practice led by the Deputy Principal Curriculum and the Principal's Nominee. Shared responsibility for assessment practice between senior leaders and Heads of Faculty ensures credible results are reported to NZQA. The school's high NCEA student achievement rates compared to similar schools is a consequence of this vision.

Assessment practice was consistent across all faculties that participated in the review and was evident in student responses to review questions. Meeting student needs is a priority in course design, data analysis, monitoring and tracking student achievement progress, and promoting appropriate pathways for students to follow.

Internal moderation processes are robust with all Heads of Faculty committed to maintaining quality assurance processes. External moderation issues are addressed through the preparation of action plans, which are supported and monitored for completion by line managers and the Principal's Nominee.

Data analysis in "real time" is responsive to student needs, informing teachers how to personalise students' courses and identify students at risk of not completing qualifications. Reporting of results is accurate and timely due to effective sign-off procedures.

Communication is appropriate and accessible at all levels of the school's operation. Recent systematic review of communication processes has led to the development of a number of initiatives to better support and inform students, parents and teachers of assessment procedures and student achievement progress.

NCEA assessment practice is effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal - Curriculum. They are supported in their work by the senior leadership team who with staff work collaboratively to help ensure students achieve qualifications.

Areas for improvement

The process for ensuring derived grades are based on standard-specific evidence needs to be documented in the staff handbook and discussed with staff, to establish consistent understanding school-wide.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- clarify the requirements for providing standard-specific evidence for reporting derived grades
- ensure entries for external examinations are accurate and timely.

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12 August 2019

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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 16 September 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

The six action items from the last Managing National Assessment Report have been completed including:

- purposeful selection of student work for grade verification as confirmed by all Heads of Faculty interviewed for the review. Documented discussions of verification process were sighted
- monitoring by senior management of internal and external moderation through the “Quality Assurance Document” process
- rigorous checking processes so that no entries without results were reported in 2018
- the requirements to withdraw students from internal entries where they were not assessed or report a result having been documented
- memoranda of understanding now being held centrally. This year they will be reconciled with results reported
- documentation having been updated as required.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a sound external moderation history and high levels of agreement between teachers and NZQA moderator judgements.

Heads of Faculty are required to develop action plans to address issues identified in external moderation reports. Line Managers and the Principal’s Nominee monitor the completion of these plans and support teachers through professional development, appeals, clarifications and engagement with external subject experts if required.

Response to data issues Over the last two years NZQA has identified six subjects as being outliers when internal and external results were statistically compared. The school investigates these and provides satisfactory explanations of variance.

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)

The school is developing a culture of self-review of NCEA assessment practice. A number of new initiatives indicate the growing capacity of the school to identify issues and initiate interventions to improve NCEA procedures and further develop robust quality assurance.

Teachers have high expectations for their students to achieve and a clear vision to respond to student agency and support student needs. Teacher as Inquiry projects frequently use NCEA achievement data to reflect on course design and innovative assessment strategies. Current reviews of NCEA practice include responses to external moderation outcomes, managing late entries to external examinations, supporting students to manage workloads and reporting emergency derived grades following issues with digital examinations in 2018.

The following initiatives indicate the school's growing capacity to review and improve its NCEA assessment processes, including:

- reducing barriers to success by using “real-time” analysis of student progress data “allowing timely response to personalising student programmes”
- increasing use of school-based evidence to identify students requiring special assessment conditions
- developing processes to track and monitor student progress through the “Success Student Project”
- strengthening the monitoring of internal and external moderation processes by storing documentation and samples of student work in the online Faculty Team Drive to allow ready access by Line Managers and the Principal's Nominee
- introducing digital tools as one strategy to identify and manage authenticity issues
- investigating the use of a software programme to facilitate student option choices and support them to manage workload.

These initiatives reflect the school vision of meeting student needs within a context of robust quality assurance of NCEA assessment practice. This ensures credible results are reported.

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 2019 5.5)

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

- investigating strategies to address inequality of participation and outcomes for Maori and Pacific students in STEM subjects
- using a range of methods during assessments to gather evidence of achievement
- providing differentiated assessment programmes within courses and across classes in the same subject and, in some subjects, offering optional standards
- making portfolio and research-based assessment more manageable by using milestones, checks and templates
- using formative assessment, student feedback and feedforward to help determine their readiness for assessment
- offering an intensive scholarship programme to develop students' thinking and creative skills
- using careers education to inform and prepare students to follow realistic and meaningful pathways.

Pakuranga College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- investigating breaches and appeals of assessment decisions following the principles of natural justice
- using a range of strategies to ensure student work is authentic
- effectively managing NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 in managing student results and publishing samples of student work.

Clarify requirements for collecting evidence to support derived grades The requirement for derived grades to be based on pre-existing standard specific evidence needs to be clarified for all teachers.

Teachers interviewed for the review were not always clear that when collecting evidence for derived grades that tasks must be modified if from a public source, kept secure if from a commercial source and that the grades awarded must be justified. Senior management have agreed to document these requirements.

Supporting students requiring special assessment conditions The number of students identified requiring special assessment conditions using school-based evidence, has doubled over the last two years.

Teachers reported that these students were well supported during NCEA internal and external assessments with each identified student listed on the student management system along with a description of their approved condition and strategies to support their learning and assessment needs.

At present the school is reviewing its processes for providing assessment conditions for the increasing number of students presenting with anxiety issues.

Leader in the delivery of NZQA digital examinations As a beacon school in the delivery of digital examinations, a number of organisations are seeking Pakuranga College's advice on managing digital examinations.

Students have been entered for digital examinations since 2017, with the range of subjects offered this year being extended. The school has developed effective processes to manage large cohorts of students in digital examinations, train supervisors, ensure network capability and manage risk. This year they are using a third party's software to develop their own digital practice examinations to prepare students and generate evidence for derived grades.

Agreed action

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

- clarify the requirements for providing standard-specific evidence for reporting derived grades.

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 2019 6.4b)

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

- ensuring all assessment material is critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- documenting the internal moderation process in the staff handbook and using an internal moderation cover sheet to record the verification discussion for each standard where results are reported
- requiring that Heads of Faculty ensure internal moderation is completed for all standards prior to reporting results
- keeping benchmarks exemplars and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions.

Pakuranga 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
- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- actively encouraging submission of student work digitally
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Monitoring of internal moderation strengthened Following a recent review senior management now require Heads of Faculty to store all moderation documentation and samples of student work digitally to allow more transparent monitoring of the completion of internal moderation processes before results are reported for all standards.

Until 2018, all Heads of Faculty completed a "Quality Assurance" document attesting that all assessment procedures were followed, and that moderation was completed for all standards where results were reported. Line managers and the Principal's Nominee would then complete a random audit at the end of the year selecting a sample of standards where results were reported, to check. The digital storage of documentation and samples of student work on the Faculty Team Drive will make this process more transparent and accessible.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency To reduce teacher workloads, the school should consider providing staff with further guidance on sufficiency in relation to grade verification by the strategic selection of student work.. Learning Areas currently assure the quality of grades awarded by purposefully selecting work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However most of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than strategic selection would require.

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.

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)

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

- informing course design so that the standards offered match student strengths and interests
- using NZQA statistical reports and analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform strategic goals and actions for the Principal and Board of Trustees
- celebrating student achievement through student awards and recognition.

Pakuranga College reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- ensuring that all students have attested that their results have been entered correctly to be reported to NZQA
- actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system and the NZQA Learner Login
- using key indicators and data file submissions reports to identify and resolve data issues
- ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or are withdrawn as appropriate
- holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers and reconciling them with results reported

Identifying students at risk of not achieving qualifications The school effectively monitors and tracks all student achievement through the “Success Student Project” which is being further enhanced by the use of predictive data.

Deans use progress data including indicative results from portfolio and project assessments to identify students at risk of not completing a qualification. Teacher mentors are allocated to support these students who meet weekly in Mentor Tutor Groups to discuss goals, organisational strategies, attendance issues and arrange extra tuition.

Review to resolve the number of late entries for external examinations Senior management is reviewing the reasons for the increase in late entries for external examinations in 2018. This review was prompted by the Pakuranga College Exam Centre Management report which identified risks for managing large numbers of students with non-personalised examination papers.

The school has identified the subjects with a large number of late entries in 2018 and is working to rectify this situation, which it has attributed mainly to staff changes during the year.

A reduction in late entries will ensure that students have an accurate assessment programme recorded to assist them with tracking their progress. It also helps to

confirm that no grades are unreported, which could have an impact on the qualifications gained.

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 entries for external examinations are accurate and timely

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))

Pakuranga College has effective processes and procedures for:

- Communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through:
 - publication of staff and student NCEA handbooks, student course outlines and subject selection information
 - the school website
 - student assemblies
 - parent, teacher and student report evenings
 - NCEA and career information
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current
- managing student workloads through the publication of weekly planners
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss change through a structured meeting schedule
- keeping all staff informed and up-to-date through regular emails from the Deputy Principal-Curriculum and the Principal's Nominee.

Pakuranga College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding at the beginning of the year a professional development meeting for staff to inform and remind them about school policies, procedures and updates
- providing a template at the beginning of the year for course outlines across all subject areas, ensuring consistent assessment information
- providing career education at all year levels to ensure students understand what they need to do to gain a qualification and to support decision making about following appropriate pathways
- supporting new teachers to the school to understand school assessment procedures through an induction programme.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.