

Managing National Assessment Report

Coromandel Area School

September 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Coromandel Area School:

- 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
- *Coromandel Area School Parent and Student Options Handbook 2019*
- *Coromandel Area School NCEA Teachers' Handbook 2019* (staff handbook)
- *Coromandel Area School – Te Kura a Rohe o Waiau Parent and Student NCEA Handbook 2019* (student handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal and Senior Syndicate Leader
- Teacher(s) in Charge of:
 - Design and Visual Communication
 - English
 - Food and Fabric Technology and Hospitality
 - Humanities
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Outdoor Education
 - Science
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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

Coromandel Area School

5 September 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 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

Coromandel Area School – Te Kura a Rohe o Waiau is a composite Year 1-15 area school with a vision to “equip students for the future”.

Regular communication between teachers, senior leaders and students builds relationships that contribute to students' learning and NCEA assessment pathways. Students' interests and career aspirations are established through discussion with the school's teachers and effective mentoring discussions with the Senior Syndicate Leader and Careers Advisor.

Assessment processes are transparent and meet the academic and vocational needs of students.

Due to the school's small size, internal moderation includes most samples of student work. Teachers record verification discussions at grade boundaries on the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*. The documented process for each standard is provided to the Principal's Nominee who reconciles the information with actual practice.

The Principal's Nominee runs effective processes to follow-up external moderation feedback from NZQA. Documented and monitored action plans are used to address any issues identified.

Data is effectively managed to inform student achievement progress. The Principal's Nominee manages data file submission to NZQA in a timely manner. Teachers in charge of subjects analyse patterns of achievement across year levels and report to the Principal and the Board of Trustees on student progress against individual and schoolwide goals. Predictive data summaries are managed by the Senior Syndicate Leader and shared with teachers and senior managers to actively monitor individual student progress and provide appropriate interventions.

The school holds regular meetings with students and whānau and provides effective plain English handbooks to staff and students in a variety of formats.

Areas for improvement

The staff handbook requires two minor changes as outlined in this report to reflect the school's current internal moderation practice. The Principal's Nominee agreed to add reference to a sufficient and purposeful selection of student work at grade boundaries and to remove the requirement to mark in red and green pen.

The Principal's Nominee has agreed to update the student grade acceptance coversheet to provide a means for students to acknowledge that their work can be used as an exemplar.

Agreed action

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

- clarify school expectations on the use of student work as exemplars
- make minor changes to the staff handbook as outlined in this report.

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21 October 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 14 April 2016 Managing National Assessment Report The two agreed action items from the 2016 Managing National Assessment review have been addressed. The school uses a new summary format to analyse data which ensures improved shared tracking of student achievement progress and the annual reporting of student progress to the Principal and the Board of Trustees. Teachers have introduced standardised course outlines for all courses which support consistent understanding of assessment practice schoolwide.

Response to external moderation outcomes There are a consistently high agreement rates between assessor and NZQA moderator judgements. All assessment materials have been provided for standards as required by NZQA for external moderation.

The Principal's Nominee leads an effective system to follow up external moderation, holding discussions with teachers who document their response to their external moderation reports. She develops monitored action plans where necessary. Actions include changing external grade verifiers from other schools, rewriting assessment materials and engaging in professional development through participation in subject associations and Best Practice Workshops.

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)

Since the last Managing National Assessment Review Senior Management has focussed on reviewing assessment practice to broaden opportunities for students, internal moderation practice for staff, and ensuring that tracked student progress data is more easily shared. This effective self-review has included:

- introducing two Trades Academy days to provide students with tertiary pathways that will develop their interests and career pathways
- working with local businesses through trades, outdoor education and hospitality in the community to improve local employment opportunities for students
- reducing the number of credits students are aiming to achieve in courses to provide more time for teaching and learning
- identifying that a centralised storage system would enable more effective monitoring of departmental processes for internal moderation
- timely reporting of results to inform student achievement progress predictive data shared with senior managers, teacher and students as appropriate
- working closely with staff new to the school to ensure they have a sound understanding of assessment and moderation practice and processes.

These examples show that the school is continuing to develop its own capacity to identify and respond to issues and risks.

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)

Coromandel Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- assessing students, when ready, through flexible timeframes, including using varied modes of evidence collection
- providing differentiated assessment within courses through provision of optional standards and relevant contexts
- offering appropriate vocational and academic pathways through Trades Academy and Gateway
- using the Online Learning Community to provide subjects the school would not otherwise have the capacity to offer, for example languages and Physics
- applying for special assessment conditions for students who may be entitled to these to remove barriers to fair assessment, and using school-based evidence to do so
- providing Academic Counselling to all students through the Senior Syndicate Leader and the Careers Advisor.

Coromandel Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic assessment evidence using a range of appropriate strategies
- managing missed and late assessments and student appeals
- providing consistent schoolwide management of resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- 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.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) equity comparison

The school has considered its STEM equity data in senior leaders meetings. Student attainment data shows that Māori students' STEM achievement is better than that of all other groups of students in the school. Senior leaders attribute this outcome to individualising each student's programme and engaging motivational Māori speakers to support student aspiration and understanding with a STEM focus.

Ensure that students understand course endorsement The students who took part in this review were not able to explain course endorsement and indicated that they would like to better understand how this would affect their assessment outcomes and career pathways. While they were able to discuss certificate endorsements, the school's achievement data reflects that there is a broader opportunity to develop student understanding of course endorsement as a motivator for attainment.

For consideration

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

- developing student understanding of course endorsement.

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)

Coromandel Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using clarifications documents, exemplars and the NZQA subject resources pages along with professional learning opportunities to support assessment judgements
- using subject specialists within and outside the school to verify grades on a selected sample of student work and summarising grade boundary conversations for future reference
- requiring completion of NZQA's *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets*.

Coromandel Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

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

Develop consistent application of school processes for internal moderation All school processes to record grades need to be followed consistently to ensure that a record of grade decisions for samples of work verified are confirmed and retained for benchmarking and quality assurance purposes. Although the school requires the completion of all sections of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, there are occasional examples of sections that are incomplete. Consistent practice will effectively develop teacher understanding of the standard.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency The Principal's Nominee has provided staff with guidance on the strategic selection of student work for grade verification. A number of teachers interviewed in this review have an understanding and are using strategic selection of a sufficient sample of work without compromising the quality of the assurance process. This has also reduced verifier workload. Further guidance will embed this practice for all teachers so that they understand 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.

Consider developing a process for digital submission of internal moderation materials Currently the school submits most of the materials for external moderation physically. The addition of a process for submitting evidence that has been developed digitally is the next step. If student work is submitted to teachers in a digital format the material should be uploaded into NZQA's external moderation app.

Staff are encouraged to select a greater number of standards on which they would value feedback in the school's assessment plan, for inclusion in NZQA's external moderation.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- encourage the digital submission of external moderation materials for student work presented in a digital format
- encourage teachers to select standards for which they would value external moderation feedback.

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)

Coromandel Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- encouraging students and their parents to check entries and results and track their progress in both the student management system and through their NZQA Learner login
- providing students with regular progress and predictive credit summaries from the school management system
- using data to inform any changes to individualised learning programmes and courses
- keeping a centralised and regularly updated and shared spreadsheet of student progress for teachers and senior managers to track student progress; especially students at-risk of not achieving their qualifications goals
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees on standard-by-standard progress, including successes and challenges towards NCEA achievement, against school goals.

Coromandel Area School reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- checking for and correcting any data submission errors shown on the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- withdrawing internal entries of students, where students have left or changed courses, to ensure that all internal entries have a result reported
- reporting results for standards for which the school has Consent to Assess or submitting results against the provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

Students encouraged to monitor and track their own progress through NZQA Learner Login In 2018 100 percent of students were mentored to use their Learner Login. Of these over 80 per cent checked their results in January. This reflects advice and guidance from homeroom teachers and the Senior Syndicate Leader developing student ownership of their own data to track their progress towards their NCEA goals, apply for certificates, reconsiderations and reviews.

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))

Coromandel Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive commonly templated course outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure in a plain English student handbook
- providing a detailed options handbook for student, form teachers and their whānau at option selections evening in term 3
- supporting teachers new to the school through effective buddying and senior management support
- reviewing communications using NZQA self-review templates to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Coromandel Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking whether teachers, students and parents are following processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification
- engaging staff, and in particular single-teacher departments, to join subject associations, online forums and Facebook pages to access professional discussion to improve their subject-specific assessment practice.
- attending NZQA professional development workshops.

Check completion of steps on the Internal Moderation Cover Sheet Although the school requires the completion of all sections of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, there is potential for confusion over final grades where documentation of the third column of the verification section is incomplete. Two examples of this practice were sighted during the visit. The Principal's Nominee has agreed to remind teachers to enter a final grade decision on the piece of work in this column. Consistent practice will effectively confirm final grade decisions and close the loop of the internal moderation process.

Minor changes required to staff handbook Two minor changes in the school's plain English staff handbook will better align internal moderation current practice and remove outdated compliance practice.

The Principal's Nominee has agreed to update the staff handbook to reflect:

- the school's use of "a sufficient and purposeful selection of student work at grade boundaries" for grade verification as part of their internal moderation process
- remove reference to required marking in red and green pen.

Provide information on the use of student work as exemplars Students have the right to determine if their work is to be used as an exemplar for other students. This is not clearly understood by students or staff and there is no information on this in either handbook. The school has acknowledged this lack of information and will include appropriate information on the student grade acceptance coversheet for students to acknowledge their work can be shared if it is to be used as an exemplar.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- clarify school expectations on the use of student work as exemplars
- make minor changes to the staff handbook as outlined in this report.