

Managing National Assessment Report

Paeroa College

May 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Paeroa 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
- Managing National Assessment, Teacher Handbook, Paeroa College 2019 (Staff Handbook)
- Student Handbook, National Qualifications, Paeroa College 2019 (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Senior Leader of Senior School
- Subject Advisors for:
 - Careers
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and the Senior Leader of Senior School 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

Paeroa College

15 May 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 Paeroa College aims to provide meaningful assessment for its students to meet a range of interests, abilities and aspirations. This goal underpins its vision for students "to excel as courageous, innovative citizens in a can-do community". Students follow an NCEA pathway supported by academic mentoring that contributes to improvements in their achievement. The model fully utilises the flexibility of NCEA.

Students' qualification goals are supported through differentiated assessment, including multi-level classes and optional standards at all levels. The school offers semester-long project-based courses alongside a core curriculum in year 11. In years 12 and 13 students follow academic and vocational pathways. Learning and assessment contexts engage student interests. In addition, each student participates in a one day Academic or Trades Academy course each Friday.

Changes to assessment materials, identification of new grade verifiers and appropriate professional development are improving teacher understanding of internal moderation practice. Teachers complete internal moderation processes in accordance with NZQA requirements. External moderation outcomes are reviewed by the Principal's Nominee who discusses any issues with teachers and develops action plans with them as required.

Student achievement data is well managed by the Principal's Nominee who submits regular data files to NZQA. Results are reported in a timely manner and any errors or concerns are promptly resolved.

Information on assessment and moderation is effectively communicated to staff, students and whānau through a range of media. Effective student tracking enables the school to provide timely updates to students and parents through credit summaries and the parent portal.

Areas for improvement The school has lower numbers of students applying for special assessment conditions than could be expected. It should ensure that students who may be entitled to special assessment conditions are identified and that applications are made to NZQA for these conditions to meet student needs and ensure equity of access to assessment.

To ensure that senior management is confident in all results reported, monitoring of internal moderation must be strengthened by adding an annual Principal's Nominee audit visit to each subject advisor. The purpose of this visit is to ensure results

reported are credible. It should include a reconciliation with completed moderation documentation with evidence of actual practice in order to triangulate the paperwork with the physical evidence of moderation having taken place.

The school's practice of displaying student progress charts containing identifying photographs in public settings does not meet the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1993*. This must be addressed.

To improve shared use of data the Principal agreed there is a need to develop a template for annual comparative and longitudinal data analysis to be reported by subject advisors to senior management. A cycle of middle management meetings to discuss assessment data with senior management would support this development.

For clarity and currency of published information the school should ensure several updates are made to the staff handbook as outlined in the communications section of this report.

Agreed action

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

- ensure applications are made for special assessment conditions where students may be entitled to them
- use school-based evidence schoolwide to identify students requiring special assessment conditions
- strengthen the internal moderation monitoring process by reconciling paperwork with actual practice through an auditing process for each subject so that senior management can have confidence that all results are credible
- ensure that school is meeting the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1993* by seeking permission to share student information
- develop a template for subject advisors to report comparative and longitudinal data analysis to senior management annually.
- update the staff handbook as indicated in this report.

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25 June 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 26 August 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

Since the last Managing National Assessment review the school has partially completed all action items. Memoranda of Understanding are now stored centrally and are reconciled with results. The staff handbook has been updated and the next step is to review it annually for currency.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has developed effective processes to respond to external moderation outcomes. Where issues are identified, the Principal's Nominee has developed templated action plans with teachers to address them. She holds meetings with teachers and monitors their plans for completion. Teachers use external verifiers, change assessment contexts and use clarifications documents to develop new assessment schedules. They are engaging with professional development through Best Practice Workshops and seek support from subject advisors. The next step is to continue evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies to ensure effective outcomes are achieved. Teachers are also encouraged to use the queries/appeals function in the External Moderation tool to clarify decisions.

Results of external moderation show an improving agreement between assessor and NZQA moderators' judgements.

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)

Teachers self-review of their assessment practice and moderation outcomes is a developing practice at Paeroa College.

Review takes place in two broad categories:

- developing assessment practice to support student achievement and meet student needs
- fostering the use of digital tools for teaching and learning, internal and external moderation, data analysis and communication to engage students in modern learning contexts.

Self-review has resulted in a number of initiatives in NCEA assessment including:

- offering all students, a range of academic and vocational pathways through several Academies one day a week.
- introducing 200 minutes per week of academic and vocational mentoring by year group, with support from Learning Leaders, to maintain consistency of NCEA advice to students and ensure completion of Learner Journals
- introducing contextualised semester-based projects at Year 11 across multiple disciplines to engage student interest and assessing these with a range of standards from across the curriculum
- trialling Assay, a digital system for internal moderation and data analysis, to simplify and digitise internal moderation processes and improve accountability around internal moderation
- centralised establishment of mark books, entries and reporting results, and developed data accuracy checks carried out by the Principal's Nominee
- improved access to information about assessment processes through enhanced digital communication with staff, students and parents.

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)

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

- assessing students when ready, where appropriate
- providing ongoing feedback and feedforward to support students to present their best evidence for assessment
- differentiating academic and vocational pathways through project-based learning and a core curriculum in Year 11 to help reinforce choices of learning pathways in Years 12 and 13
- providing meaningful contexts for students to gain their literacy and numeracy credits
- using the Online Learning Community to provide a greater range of option choices.

Paeroa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment and any breaches of the rules
- monitoring authenticity of student work using a variety of digital and physical strategies
- providing consistent schoolwide practice for managing resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is based on authentic standard-specific assessment from practice examinations
- managing NZQA external examinations.

Implementing strategies to address equity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects Senior Leaders have considered the school's STEM statistics for 2018 with a focus on equity of access for Māori and Pacific students. The school is engaged in strategies to improve foundations for access to these subjects for all students by:

- building teacher capacity in Science and Mathematics to collaboratively integrate STEM subjects across the curriculum in years 9 and 10 to prepare students for NCEA
- providing more dedicated time for numeracy in the junior school so that students are better prepared for STEM subjects in Year 11
- requiring all students to study a core curriculum of Science and Mathematics standards alongside their project-based learning at Year 11
- designing a number of project-based courses in Year 11 and ensuring these include assessment against appropriate STEM standards in student-negotiated contexts
- introducing new courses in Digital Technology

- identifying Technology students who may benefit from further assistance with Mathematics to support an engineering pathway
- updating resources to support delivery of STEM subjects, including rebuilding the school's Science block.

The school will begin reviewing the effectiveness of these strategies against their STEM data for the current Year 11s in 2020.

Make applications for Special Assessment Conditions In 2019 there have been no new applications made for NCEA students to have special assessment conditions. The school needs to develop effective processes to identify and apply for special assessment conditions for students who may be entitled to them.

The new Special Needs Co-ordinator is gathering school-based evidence from year 9 and 10 students to support future applications. The use of school-based evidence to identify students requiring special assessment conditions should be used schoolwide. In schools of a similar nature NZQA would normally expect applications for at least 3 per cent of students. These applications will better meet student needs and ensure equity of access to assessment.

Agreed action

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

- ensure applications are made for special assessment conditions where students may be entitled to them
- use school-based evidence schoolwide to identify students requiring special assessment conditions.

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)

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

- ensuring teachers are provided with clear expectations on internal moderation requirements through the school's documented internal moderation process and advice on good assessment practice
- critiquing new and amended assessment activities before use
- supporting teachers to network with subject specialists from within or outside the school to verify grades for a purposefully selected sample of student work
- encouraging staff to strategically select assessment materials for grade verification to maximise the opportunity to clarify assessment decisions and potentially reduce workload
- documenting the completion of each step in the process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and submitting this to the Principal's Nominee for checking prior to reporting results.

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

- encouraging staff to select standards for which they would like external moderation feedback through NZQA's online external moderation application
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work selected for external moderation can be provided by adequately storing them
- using external moderation feedback to modify tasks and clarify understanding of standards.

Strengthened internal moderation required To provide senior management with confidence that all reported results are credible, the Principal's Nominee should introduce an audit process to reconcile paperwork with actual practice. Currently she checks *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* submitted by teachers but there is no regular visit to Subject Advisors to triangulate the paperwork with the physical evidence of moderation having taken place. Senior management have agreed to strengthen the internal moderation audit process by making an annual visit. This will provide them with confidence that internal moderation processes are occurring for all standards assessed ensuring senior management has confidence that all results reported to NZQA are credible.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- strengthen the internal moderation monitoring process by reconciling paperwork with actual practice through an auditing process for each subject so that senior management can have confidence that all results are credible.

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)

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

- identifying and tracking learners at-risk of not achieving an NCEA qualification and providing appropriate support
- gathering student voice to evaluate assessment programmes offered to inform changes to contexts and standards
- enabling mentors to meet with students and their whānau to monitor and track academic progress toward achieving NCEA and Vocational Pathways by setting and reviewing goals.

Paeroa College reports accurate achievement data by:

- centralising the set-up of mark books and entries through the Principal's Nominee
- timely reporting of results and submission of data files to NZQA
- reporting Not Achieved where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- checking Key Indicators to ensure the school holds Consent to Assess for standards for which results are reported using the school's provider code
- developing a system for the Principal's Nominee to reconcile results from external providers with current Memoranda of Understanding held with external providers.

Develop a template for reporting annual data analysis by subject advisors to senior management The Principal agreed that there is a need for subject advisors to report templated annual comparative and longitudinal data analysis to senior management. While subject advisors and senior management currently consider their own data and use it to make course changes there is no formal data reporting between the two groups, nor is there a regular cycle of meetings for subject advisors. The addition of such a middle management data reporting processes may improve schoolwide understanding of data.

Meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* The Principal agreed that the practice of displaying student credit totals publicly contravenes the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1993* and that this practice will now cease. The school will reconsider its use of a photo-ladder, currently displayed in the library and used to show student progress in gaining credits towards NCEA. Students should be informed of their right to privacy and their permission must be sought for any private information, such as results, to be displayed in a public location.

Consider student grade sign-off Currently the school has no system for students to sign acceptance of the grade awarded. It is encouraged to introduce a system for student grade sign-off to allow students to confirm the accuracy of the grades they are awarded.

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 that the school is meeting the provisions of the *Privacy Act* 1993
- develop a template for subject advisors to report comparative and longitudinal data analysis to senior management annually.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- introducing a student grade sign-off procedure so students can confirm the accuracy of grades awarded.

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))

Paeroa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and whānau using a range of media
- ensuring consistent information is provided to students using a common course outline template
- regularly and timely reporting to whānau on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system
- assisting students and parents to use the parent portal and NZQA Learner login to monitor progress
- celebrating student academic success and endorsements through awards assemblies.

Paeroa College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing regular parent information evenings to assist students and their whānau to better understand pathways and support career goals
- informing teachers about assessment best practice, schoolwide data and providing opportunities to discuss Mythbusters and assessment practice
- peer-mentoring new staff to ensure they understand assessment and moderation processes
- encouraging staff to take part in NZQA's Best Practice Workshops improve teacher ability to read and understand standards
- developing digital protocols for storage of student assessment materials.

Learning Advisory Leaders help students track progress through Learning Journals As part of the school's mentoring programme, Learning Advisory Leaders conference with groups of students led by three teachers. They work with whole-year cohorts of students who complete reflective Learning Journals. Students track progress towards assessment goals, discuss credits summaries, plan support strategies and next steps. They use their journals with their teachers and parents as a basis for effective home/school partnership interviews.

Effective development of student handbook The school has developed an effective Plain English student handbook. It is based around 24 frequently asked questions. Students explained that this is shared through their Learning Advisories and helps them to understand the requirements of NCEA.

Update staff handbook The staff handbook needs further review to ensure that several references are clear and current including:

- removing outdated references to the NQF and National Certificates, and replacing these with reference to the NZQF and New Zealand Certificates
- replacing reference to the former 'accreditation' process with the 'Consent to Assess' introduced in 2011, and linking this to the information on the NZQA website
- deleting the section referring to submitting optional teacher selected samples of student work for external moderation as this process is no longer available, and has been replaced by the Request for Clarification of an Internally Assessed Standard
- deleting references to outdated circulars and linking to current information on the NZQA website.

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:

- update the staff handbook as indicated in this report.