

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**Huntly College**

**June 2024**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Huntly College

26 June, 2024

### Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

No significant issues with the school's management of national assessment were found. The school's own review mechanisms allow them to identify and respond to most issues.

As a school with effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

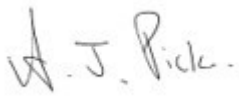
The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
<b>External and internal review</b>	
Evaluate the effectiveness of external moderation action plans for every standard affected	When the standard is next assessed following External Moderation feedback
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Strengthen tracking of individual student progress towards qualifications and awards	Immediate
Ensure all derived grades generated through benchmark exams are sent to NZQA	Prior to the exam round annually
Strengthen identification and support for students eligible for Special Assessment Conditions	Immediate and ongoing

**For consideration**

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

- checking Pūtake before assessing an internal Achievement Standard
- developing dedicated fit-for-purpose staff and student handbooks
- monitoring students' Learner logins prior to upcoming digital exams
- creating an assessment calendar for Level 1 school-based, external, submitted standards.



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8 Aug 2024

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## External and internal review

### External review

*Evidence of external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)*

#### **Action Items from 9 June 2022 Managing National Assessment Report**

The school has made very good progress towards resolving the significant issue concerning how well it responds to external review recommendations and findings.

Since June 2022, the Principal's Nominee has managed to resolve most issues identified in the last review by:

- developing written documentation of the school's assessment procedures for teachers in the form of a staff/student handbook resulting in more consistent and credible assessment practice across all curriculum areas
- ensuring external moderation reports that are Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent are followed up:
  - as soon as possible after receipt of the report
  - through a process delegated to, and shared with, respective Curriculum Leaders and monitored by the Principal's Nominee
  - by checking that the actions in the action plan have been completed
- focussing on the continuous improvement of staff capability through Professional Development linked to the school's strategic goals, including clearer communication of NZQA's assessment Rules and requirements.

Two issues from the last report are a continuing work in progress, namely:

- identifying and provisioning students eligible for Special Assessment Conditions. The school is exploring ways to improve students' access to SAC support and to identify students earlier from the Foundation (junior) level
- tracking of student progress is carried out using a traffic light system and should be strengthened as outlined in this report.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** Since 2021, there have been no further Materials Not Received reports and the overall rate of consistency is trending upward and currently sits above 80 percent consistent. One Curriculum Area had recent success using the Appeal process in the External Moderation Application. Two other curriculum areas' outcomes improved when their affected standards were re-moderated in a subsequent year.

More effective and actively tracked monitoring of internal moderation has resulted in improved External Moderation outcomes. Much of the improvement can be attributed to the involvement of Curriculum Leaders who share ownership of the monitoring process. Completion of the required steps is tracked through a centrally maintained spreadsheet, and all standards must receive final approval from the Principal's Nominee before results are reported to NZQA.

Teachers at Huntly College value the professional learning component in the feedback they receive in their External Moderation reports. Action plans sighted during this review show the teachers understand what, how and why changes need to be made to align their grade judgements with those of NZQA moderators.

To strengthen the follow-up, the school needs to ensure that all action plans are stored centrally, by year, for ready access. In future, where the school receives Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent reports, the Principal's Nominee should conduct a spot check of the Curriculum Area's critiquing process for that standard and reconcile it with the relevant Internal Moderation Cover Sheet.

A common theme in the few Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent reports the school received in 2022-2023 was the need for assessors to check all the available assessor support on NZQA's website prior to the commencement of assessment. Typically this includes collecting, checking and storing the latest:

- version of the standard
- the clarifications
- any NZQA or previously moderated school exemplars, and
- the most recent National Moderator's report.

**Check Pūtake prior to assessment** Increasingly, NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, should be checked in the initial critiquing phase of internal moderation. Teachers will find Bite-Sized tutorials on a range of internal standards, as well as authentic samples of moderated work in the Assessor Practice Tool. Here assessors can compare their grade judgements with those of NZQA moderator's. This step will improve awareness and understanding of the various grade boundaries in new and existing internal Achievement Standards.

The next step for the Principal's Nominee is to evaluate and record the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up once the standard has been assessed again. An effective practice that the school may wish to consider is reporting on external moderation outcomes as part of the Curriculum Learning Area review process and include this in annual reports to the Principal and/or Board of Trustees.

## **Internal review**

*Evidence of the school using its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures, which are then actioned. (CAAS Guidelines 3iv)*

Huntly College uses its own process of self-review, based on data analysis and staff/student voice to modify courses and implement changes to improve engagement and enable students to meet their qualifications and career goals.

At the end of 2023, the former trimesterised structure of the school timetable was reviewed following feedback from staff and evidence achievement outcomes had not significantly improved. The review highlighted the impracticality of meeting every student's needs when classes were multi-level and comprised of learners from Year 9 to 13. Furthermore, one context was typically used to deliver more than one standard, which two teachers were expected to Team Teach. While some curriculum areas meshed well, others did not. The logistics of this approach proved too difficult to manage class time equitably across more than one standard and meet the assessment needs of each teacher and the students satisfactorily.

As a result, the school has opted for a more coherent, semesterised structure of two 16 week blocks for 2024 and beyond. The school's programmes target three rather than the traditional five levels, namely:

- Foundation for Years 9 and 10
- Level 1 - a stand-alone, non-semesterised course to implement the new standards, and
- Advanced for students attempting Levels 2 and 3.

Currently, NCEA is delivered through themed “I Am” modules, which engage students by contextualising the delivery of standards around a career associated with a particular curriculum area. School leaders and the Board of Trustees will evaluate the effectiveness of this change at the end of the current academic year.

**Create clearer road maps of student progress towards qualifications and awards** The school is encouraged to make entries for the whole year much earlier so that teachers can better track student progress towards their qualifications and award goals. Data held by NZQA reveals that in 2023 a significant percentage of college students enrolled in Level 1 gained 20 or fewer credits. However the Level 1 qualification is a two-year journey for a high proportion of its students. Currently, how students will meet their qualifications and awards is not visible until entries are made for Semester Two, much later in the year. A clearer road map of how students can achieve their goals from the whole year’s course of study will create better visibility of students at risk and allow for more timely interventions.

**Focus on improved attendance** The school has set actionable targets to improve its rate of attendance, thereby enabling more students to successfully complete assessment for qualifications. With the guidance and support of the Education Review Office, the Principal and other school leaders are working together to evaluate the effectiveness of the school’s attendance and engagement strategies. This will allow the school to better understand what strategies work well and enable it to target resourcing and refine initiatives.

**Puna Matauranga addresses NCEA co-requisite requirement** Senior leaders are aware that a high number of their students fall below the published benchmarks of readiness to undertake the NCEA co-requisite Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) in foundational literacy and numeracy. Unless students gain the NCEA co-requisite, attainment of their NCEA is at risk. In response, the school has implemented its Puna Matauranga course, dedicated to the teaching of explicit literacy and numeracy skills for the school’s Foundation and Level 1 students. Period 1 from Monday to Thursday is timetabled for Puna Matauranga enabling students to practise and consolidate their skills, and staff to evaluate student readiness through e-asTTle and other diagnostic tools. Advanced students who have met the NCEA co-requisite requirement are offered an alternate programme comprising of Unit Standards in Legal Studies, Digital Literacy and Finance during this period.

## Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

*Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)*

**Strengthen practices for the provision of derived grades** This review found that Curriculum Areas have different understandings of NZQA's requirements regarding the provision of quality assured derived grades. Over the past three years, no more than three percent of all assessment outcomes have been derived from external assessment. Some of the teachers interviewed expressed their intention to engage more with external assessment going forward. For this reason it is important that all teachers understand NZQA's quality assurance requirements for benchmark exams generating derived grades.

Following the grading of benchmark exams, assessors are required to verify, or where appropriate, justify, a sample of student work for each standard following a process similar to that for internal moderation. This process must be documented with evidence and monitored to provide senior leadership with assurance that all grades submitted to NZQA are credible. Further guidance for quality assuring derived grade exams can be found on the NZQA website. A sample of templates for documenting the process was shared with the school following the review.

Where a derived grade has been generated through a benchmark exam, that result must be sent to NZQA prior to the commencement of the exam round, so that any eligible student can be given a derived grade upon application.

**Create dedicated staff and student handbooks** The school responded to its last review by developing one handbook outlining processes for staff and students to ensure that assessment practice for NCEA is credible. To better meet the needs of each target group, this review recommends creating separate staff and student handbooks.

The existing handbook is targeted primarily at students but is written in sufficient detail for it to provide the depth of guidance staff also require. With minor editing, this handbook could be improved in terms of its user-friendliness and accessibility for students and whānau.

As a staff handbook, it lacks a section providing adequate guidance on internal quality assurance. The staff handbook should include the steps to follow for Internal Moderation and an explanation of the steps to follow for External Moderation and its follow up.

**Engagement with digital online assessment** The school's engagement with digital online assessment has been relatively recent. Those administering digital assessments are advised to use the Key Indicators in the school's Provider Login to check whether students' have had successful Learner logins prior to upcoming digital exams. This will ensure a more seamless start to future online assessment events.

Curriculum Leaders and the Principal's Nominee should now develop a school-wide approach to the management and assessment of submitted external standards for NCEA Level 1, including an assessment calendar to manage student workload across subjects. This should include how to support students to upload their work and coach teachers on the processes required to verify the authenticity of student work.

**Identify and support students eligible for Special Assessment Conditions** This required action from the last MNA report has made little or no progress. The school needs to increase student access to fair assessment by using school-based evidence to support eligibility for Special Assessment Conditions. For the past three years, comparable schools have used a high percentage of school-based evidence to support their applications, whereas Huntly College has not used school-based evidence to support any applications over the same period. The school is aware of this issue and is working on suitable ways to resolve it. The Special Assessment Conditions team at NZQA can be contacted for advice on how to proceed.

**Engaging Māori students in STEM through Pūhoro** A small group of Advanced level Māori students have been offered places with Pūhoro Academy. Its *STEMM* programme supports students/rangatahi in years 11-13 to become “*self-determined, empowered leaders who can bridge two worlds simultaneously.*” As well as providing support for STEM-related careers, the experience has been mana enhancing and led to an improved sense of purpose and belonging for the students involved.

## **Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results**

*Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)*

**Shared ownership of internal moderation monitoring** Since the last MNA review, moderation practice across all Curriculum Areas has become more credible and consistent. This reflects the school’s shared ownership of the internal moderation process by Curriculum Leaders, who together with the Principal’s Nominee, monitor the quality and completion of internal moderation for each standard before results are reported. The quality assurance checks are tracked through a centrally held spreadsheet creating effective visibility of the process and its progress. The school requires digital storage of moderation materials by each Curriculum Area to provide guidance for future assessment of the standard and for external quality assurance purposes.

**Considerations to strengthen internal moderation** Communications on the steps to follow for internal and external moderation need to be clearly documented in a dedicated staff handbook and updated regularly.

Although in most cases Internal Moderation Cover Sheets are completed satisfactorily, Curriculum Leaders new to the monitoring process need to check that the cover sheets:

- record verification comments to clarify why the verifier agrees or disagrees with the assessor’s grade decision
- show the final grade awarded on the cover sheet
- ensure both the assessor and verifier are identifiable.

The school may wish to consider trialling the internal moderation tool in its Student Management System. This creates visibility of the process and may reduce assessor workload.



## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**Huntly College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its students by:**

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Huntly College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

## **Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality**

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

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

## **Effective management and use of assessment-related data**

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

- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Huntly College reports accurate achievement data by:**

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data
- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year

- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

## **Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their whānau about assessment**

### **Huntly College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

### **Huntly College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

## Appendix 2: Overview

### What this report is about

**This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Huntly 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 whānau.

### Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

**The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:**

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022* (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 *NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024*.

### What are possible outcomes

**Outcomes may include NZQA:**

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- requiring action from the school where an issue is identified that significantly impacts on the school meeting the requirements of their *Consent to Assess*
- agreeing action with the school where an issue has been identified that could become significant if not addressed
- making suggestions for the school's consideration to enhance good assessment practice.

### What this review includes

**The review has three components:**

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every five years.

## How we conducted this review

The review includes examination of documentation from a range of sources and interviewing key stakeholders.

### **Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:**

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- 2024 Annual Implementation Plan: Huntly College
- Assessment Policy 2024
- Curriculum Booklets for all three levels
- *Huntly College NCEA Handbook 2024* (Staff and Student Handbook)

### **The School Relationship Manager met with:**

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Principal
- Curriculum Leaders for:
  - English
  - Health and Physical Education
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Sciences
  - Visual Art
- 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.