

Managing National Assessment Report

Huntly College

June 2019

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 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
- *Te Kura Tuarua oo Raahui Pookeka Huntly College Student Guide for National Certificate of Educational Achievement NCEA*
- *Curriculum Delivery Policy (101) 1.6 Assessment (102)*
- a variety of other assessment relevant information.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal / Literacy Lead
- Heads of Department for:
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and two Deputy Principals at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies, next steps and to agree on any action required.

SUMMARY

Huntly College

7 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 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

Huntly College is committed to improving engagement and achievement outcomes for its students. The approach to learning, and assessment is student centred and responsive, as evidenced by the significant changes to their 2019 programme and timetable structures.

Puna Ako teachers mentor students and support their progress towards achievement goals. There is also a specific focus on giving students opportunities to gain NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements. Students complete achievement standards through multilevel, career contextualised I AM modules. These modules are reviewed, modified and offered each term. Students complete programmes relating to their further plans including through links with outside organisations during their Pathways Day.

Self-review is a continuous process underpinned by data analysis and the involvement of student and teacher voice. Data is used to monitor the achievement progress of all students and identify those at risk of not achieving a qualification. Review of programmes occurs throughout the year enabling adjustments to be implemented to better support teachers and students. Reporting of results is regular and accurate.

Internal moderation processes are well understood and consistently applied by teachers. Evidence of student work and internal moderation is checked by the Principal's Nominee and stored centrally. External moderation outcomes are discussed, and action plans are developed when issues are identified.

Student information has been reviewed and a succinct user-friendly document is issued to students. NCEA practice is effectively led by the Principal's Nominee who communicates expectations to all staff. The school is continuing to develop systems to ensure consistent and robust assessment practice and credible results are reported.

Areas for improvement

There have been limited applications for students for special assessment conditions in recent years. The school has identified this and is working to improve understanding and develop systems to identify and support students who may be eligible.

The school is continuing to develop its guidelines for staff around managing national assessment. An accessible handbook will support understanding and consistent application of assessment processes and procedures.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is:

- ensure that students eligible to use special assessment conditions are identified and supported
- complete the development of processes and procedures information for staff.

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Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

6 August 2019

NZQA

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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 1 June 2016 Managing National Assessment Report There were two agreed action items from the 2016 Managing National Assessment report. These are being addressed.

The school's management of internal entries has improved. Staff have responsibility for managing their own mark books including withdrawing students from standards for which they will not have an adequate assessment opportunity. The Principal's Nominee oversees the mark books and completes a final check to ensure that all entries have a reported result or are withdrawn as appropriate by 1 December.

Changes were made to the staff handbook following the previous Managing National Assessment review to reflect the recommended updates. This handbook is no longer used. As discussed in the communication section of this report, new information on procedures and processes for managing national assessment is currently under development.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has developed an effective process for responding to external moderation outcomes. Teachers record their review of feedback on a response form that is collated and actions monitored by the Principal's Nominee. This includes reflecting on their interpretation of the standard and reviewing the internal moderation process undertaken. The Principal's Nominee has worked with teachers to ensure all verifiers are a subject specialist. Reinforcing strategic selection has assisted in improving understanding of the standard and the link between internal and external moderation.

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)

There has been significant personnel change since the time of the last Managing National Assessment review, including the Principal, members of senior and middle management and the Principal's Nominee. This new leadership team has driven internal review focused on addressing identified issues. These include the ongoing low levels of student achievement along with use of achievement information to monitor and track progress for learners.

This self-review has resulted in a significant number of recent initiatives aimed at improving achievement outcomes for students including:

- establishment of small group Puna Ako tutorials that support, mentor and track students towards NCEA achievement with a particular focus on the attainment of literacy and numeracy requirements

- a dedicated day for Pathways / Ara Tika that allows students to experience a work placement, give service to the community or explore a strength, interest or need based on their learning goals and future pathway
- term-by-term “I AM” modules based on a career pathway. Each module is available to students from across year levels with one achievement standard offered at each level.

Current self-review is continuous and dynamic. For example, analysis and review of the I AM modules is completed by all teachers within a month of their finishing. This enables timely response to adapt and improve future programmes. At the time of this review the school was finalising its term three programme and I AM modules. As a result of earlier review, more modules will be offered in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to encourage student engagement in these areas. The introduction of integrated learning by pairing teachers is intended to support practice and allow a module to be based around more than one curriculum area.

The Principal's Nominee has reviewed the school's processes around managing national assessment and has focused on areas she has identified as needing specific attention. In some areas she has taken direct oversight to ensure accuracy, such as the setup of mark books and the storage of moderation material. In publishing of results, the importance of building teachers' capacity and ownership has led to a review and subsequent change of procedure. The Principal's Nominee, supported by the Principal and other senior managers, is committed to developing school-wide consistency of assessment practices and quality assurance processes that meet NZQA requirements and guidelines to ensure credible results.

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)

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

- providing differentiated assessment within courses
- limiting assessment for students in I AM modules to one achievement standard to ensure sufficient opportunity for quality assessment
- developing programmes to focus on literacy, numeracy and student pathways.

Huntly College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing a consistent school-wide approach to resubmissions
- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment
- managing student assessment programmes through improved understanding of what constitutes an adequate assessment opportunity and requiring clear communication for any withdrawals or not submitted results. Teachers commented that this continues to be an area of discussion due to the high student absentee rate.

Responsive and dynamic assessment programmes introduced The school has made significant changes to the structure of its assessment programme and timetable. Programmes have been developed to try and address the ongoing low levels of student achievement, the need to engage students and support their future pathways. Students select I AM modules each term which offer only achievement standards. These are based on a career pathway covering a wide range of curriculum areas. There is an increased opportunity for students to gain Literacy and Numeracy through Puna Ako in addition to literacy standards that may be available in modules.

Identify and support students eligible to use special assessment conditions

The school has identified the need to review processes relating to special assessment conditions. A newly appointed SENCO, other relevant staff and the Principal's Nominee, are meeting with NZQA to better understand the process. This will provide an opportunity to discuss the development of their own procedures to ensure that eligible students are identified and appropriately supported. Special assessment conditions help to remove barriers for students that may prevent them having access to fair assessment. Based on patterns in similar schools, the school is likely to have around three to four percent of students who would be eligible for special assessment conditions.

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 that students eligible to use special assessment conditions are identified and supported.

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)

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

- ensuring teachers are clear in their understanding of the school's internal moderation expectations with detailed, step-by-step instructions developed, shared and reinforced
- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- engaging with suitably qualified and experienced subject specialists from within and outside the school to verify samples of student work for every standard
- purposefully selecting samples of student work including those at grade boundaries for verification of assessor judgements
- documenting the internal moderation process, including noting verification discussion on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- confirming the completion of the process by all teachers submitting a completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* to the Principal's Nominee before results are reported to NZQA
- providing clear expectations of deadlines for completion to speed up the feedback for students and ensure the timely report of results to NZQA.

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

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation using a valid random selection process
- ensuring student work is readily available by being centrally stored and by requiring the file path location for digital evidence to be clearly recorded on the Internal Moderation Cover Sheet
- using a response form to document and monitor the completion of actions undertaken to address issues identified in external moderation reports
- the Principal's Nominee coordinating the same process for both Industry Training Organisation and NZQA moderation.

Strengthening the monitoring of internal moderation The monitoring of internal moderation can be strengthened by a documented process reconciling moderation documentation to actual practice. Currently a compliance process checks the completion of an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and that all student work and related assessment material is centrally stored.

As discussed at the review, reconciling the completed cover sheets with student work for a selection of standards for each subject annually will provide a transparent account of moderation effectiveness and issues, where identified. Focusing on aspects such as the strategic selection of student work, appropriateness of verifier used, and evidence of discussions around borderline samples will support consistent

school-wide practice and confirm to senior leadership that internal results reported are quality assured.

For consideration

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

- strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation by reconciling internal moderation documentation with actual practice.

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)

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

- centralised and systematic tracking of literacy for all students
- monitoring student progress toward NCEA qualifications and identifying students early who may be at risk of not achieving their chosen assessment pathway
- recognising student achievement through activities such as an *Excellence Breakfast*.

Huntly College reports accurate achievement data by:

- the Principal's Nominee setting up mark books and staff verifying these as correct
- having a grade acceptance sheet for students to confirm their results
- having a delegated staff member who submits results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
- using the correct provider code for assessment undertaken by external providers.

Tracking of data integral to supporting and improving outcomes of students

Senior management has strengthened processes for tracking student achievement. The school's aim is to ensure that all students have an adequate opportunity for assessment, and the timely identification of students at risk of not achieving. This includes student progress towards NCEA Level 1 Literacy and Numeracy requirements.

Puna Ako teachers are key in monitoring. They track and mentor their students and support them to take ownership of their own progress. Students regularly complete an *Academic Tracker* and are encouraged to access the student management system portal. Puna Ako teachers coordinate termly *Learning Dialogues* run by each student who attends with an adult whānau member or a significant other, such as a sibling or teacher. These supports aim to improve NCEA success for all students.

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))

Huntly College has effective processes and procedures for:

- reconciling memoranda of understanding with results reported using outside provider codes
- ensuring that students are provided with assessment information about their courses.

Huntly College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding regular meetings with staff to review processes and outline expectations
- reinforcing key processes and dates in the school calendar, staff diaries, staff briefings and through professional development opportunities
- providing support and communication for teachers new to the school
- communicating and involving students and the community in assessment programmes and direction.

Staff assessment information still being developed The school is currently developing its processes and procedures guide for staff for managing national assessment. This year the Principal's Nominee has prioritised ensuring clear guidelines and expectations on moderation are available. This has been communicated to staff verbally, through written means and is accessible online. There is also information such as deadlines for results contained in the staff diary. Regular staff meetings ensure assessment information is communicated as required.

Further school-wide assessment information, including student breaches, appeals, derived grades, and missed and late assessments, has yet to be developed. The school aims to ensure that information is accurate and available for the 2020 school year. Assessment information should reflect school practice and NZQA requirements, be readily assessable and communicated to all teachers. This will help develop a consistent school-wide understanding and application. It is recommended that there is a single reference developed as this enables version control by the Principal's Nominee.

Student focused handout A student handout that is easily accessible and user friendly has been developed and published. The document is organised around a series of frequently asked questions. The answers are concise and are written in a style and language that can be easily understood by the students and their families. All students have been issued with a hard copy and additional copies are readily available. Students interviewed were well informed on assessment expectations and their progress towards achieving a qualification.

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:

- complete the development of processes and procedures information for staff.