

Managing National Assessment Report

Morrinsville College

September 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Morrinsville 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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 2017* (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:

- *Morrinsville College Assessment Guide NCEA 2017 (Staff Handbook)*
- *Morrinsville College Assessment for National Qualifications – Policy and Procedures*
- *Morrinsville College NCEA National Certificate of Educational Achievement Student Information 2017*
- *Morrinsville College Years 12 and 13 Senior Studies Guide 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, Leaders of Learning Area for English, Mathematics, Social Sciences, and Assistant Leader of Learning Area for English.

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

Morrinsville College

18 September 2017

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. A visit will be made within one year to check that the requirement for updates relating to staff and student documentation have been met.

What the school is doing well

Teachers described a range of NCEA assessment practices that they use to allow students to present their best evidence for assessment and to engage students in assessment activities. These practices include adapting contexts, the use of optional standards and naturally occurring evidence.

Internal moderation processes and expectations are understood and documented. Purposeful selection of a sufficient number of examples of student work is embedded practice throughout the school. Leaders of Learning Area and the Principal's Nominee monitor the process.

The outcomes of external moderation are shared and discussed. Where issues are identified action plans are developed and monitored. Teachers value external moderation feedback, which is used to improve assessment practice.

Achievement data is used to mentor and support students to achieve their academic goals and for teachers to evaluate their courses.

Areas for improvement

Suggested updates to staff and student handbooks signalled in the previous Managing National Assessment report were not actioned. The school must make these changes to ensure their documentation reflects current practice and NZQA requirements.

The Board of Trustees assessment policy document contains procedural information based on the staff handbook. It is recommended this is removed to ensure a consistent message is maintained.

The school has identified and applied for special assessment conditions for relevant students. The school is encouraged to investigate the use of school-based evidence to support future applications rather than relying on professional reports. This may remove any potential financial barriers.

Monitoring of internal moderation completion is the responsibility of the Leaders of Learning Area. The Principal's Nominee reconciles the documentation with actual practice through random audit checks. This process would be improved by

documenting these visits to ensure each Learning Area is covered so that identified areas can be followed up on.

The school assesses Year 10 students against some NZQA standards and reports these results in the following year. These results must be reported as unassigned standards to ensure the rules for course endorsement, which specify achievement must be within a single academic year, are followed.

Required action

In order to maintain its consent to assess, the school must:

- adequately address Action Items from the previous MNA review (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

Agreed action

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

- investigate the use of school-based evidence to identify and support applications for students eligible for special assessment conditions
- document internal moderation monitoring visits by the Principal's Nominee
- ensure that results carried over from a previous year are reported as unassigned to a course
- update staff and student documentation as detailed
- remove assessment procedure information from Board of Trustees policy document.

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1 November 2017

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence found that external review actions have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3v)

Action Items from 20 August 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The required action item to ensure the adequate monitoring of internal moderation has been actioned. All but one of the agreed action items have been addressed as discussed below.

The review and updates of school documentation itemised in the previous report have not been completed. As part of their *Consent to Assess Against Standards*, a school is required to follow-up external recommendations and findings including action items from previous Managing National Assessment review (CAAS Guidelines 3v). The suggestions from the 2015 report, along with additional recommendations, are discussed further in the Communication section of this report.

The school has worked to improve teacher understanding of, and systems associated with, internal moderation. This has included clarifying sufficient and purposeful selection of student work for verification and ensuring evidence of discussion is recorded.

At the time of the previous Managing National Assessment review, teachers were making entries for external standards following the school's practice examinations. This gave a very short timeframe for confirmation of entries and attachment of special assessment conditions. The school has encouraged teachers to enter students into external standards prior to practice examinations. This now enables students and teachers to make informed decisions over the accuracy and amend, if necessary, entries into external examinations before the 1 September data file submission is sent to NZQA.

As agreed, the school now makes use of the course outline template available through the student management system. This ensures students are presented with information in a consistent format.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Principal's Nominee follows up and informs teachers of the outcomes of external moderation. Where inconsistency or identified issues are noted, teachers discuss these with their Senior Leadership Team designate and action plans are developed as required. Staff are aware of the role external moderation plays in reviewing the effectiveness of their previous internal moderation. This is evident through teachers' responses such as changing the verifier used, or the additional purposeful selection of student work for verification.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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)

Processes for managing national assessment in the school are reviewed and discussed at regular Leader of Learning Area meetings. The Principal's Nominee provides updates and information to improve current practice. Areas of focus have included:

- providing teachers with NZQA Provider login access through the Education Sector Authentication and Authorisation (ESAA) and use of the external moderation tool
- effective responses to external moderation feedback
- storage of material including guidelines around digital storage
- analysis of achievement data such as internal /external comparison and progress towards school goals.

The full staff meet weekly for professional learning. The Principal's Nominee has used this time to reinforce school procedures and ensure consistency of practice school-wide. Recent assessment practices discussed include:

- clarifying the purpose of, and differences between, internal and external moderation
- reinforcing requirements around effective internal moderation practice
- prevention and detection strategies for ensuring students present authentic work including the use of milestones
- processes for managing student achievement and the mentoring of students focused on supporting Hub teachers in Learning Hub time.

Required action

The following action is required to ensure effective response to external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice. The school must:

- adequately address Action Items from the previous Managing National Assessment review. (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6 I & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

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

- supporting teachers to collect a range of evidence of achievement, particularly through naturally occurring evidence, group activities and the use of digital tools
- providing differentiated assessment within courses through the use of core and optional standards and multi-level opportunities
- engaging with outside providers to offer vocational and trade-based courses
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready
- applying for special assessment conditions for eligible students
- adapting courses and contexts to include themes that engage and meet the interests of students.

Morrinsville College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- managing NZQA external examinations
- 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
- encouraging and maintaining authentic assessment practice
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Investigate use of school-based evidence to support special assessment conditions applications The school continues to identify students eligible for special assessment conditions. Their applications have relied solely on reports from Level C Assessors to substantiate need for students with a specific learning disorder. The school acknowledges the cost and availability of suitable professional resources may be prohibitive to some potentially eligible students. The school is encouraged to attend the NZQA-run special assessment seminar to further upskill and clarify data requirements and the use of school-based evidence to support future applications.

Continue to review assessment opportunities for students The school is encouraged, as part of its ongoing review, to continue to discuss assessment opportunities offered to students. Aspects to consider could include:

- the number of credits offered to individual students
- what extension opportunities for students could be offered
- improving certificate endorsements.

Assessing students against a large number of credits has an impact on both student and teacher workloads. As well, for students, more assessment may be at the expense of the deeper learning needed for merit and excellence results. In 2016, approximately 30 percent of the Year 11 cohort achieved 120 credits or more. While the proportion of students achieving a merit endorsement was similar to equivalent schools, the proportion of excellence endorsements at Level 1 remains lower.

The school assesses Year 10 students in standards across several subject areas. Teachers explained this aims to help engage students towards the end of the year, give them some understanding of NCEA processes and initiate pathways towards achieving an NCEA qualification. However, the percentage of those achieving Excellence results were well below that achieved throughout the entire NCEA cohort. Furthermore, in one standard, 56 percent of students received a not achieved result. Extension of students may be better undertaken by broadening learning and working towards developing a deeper understanding rather than simply undertaking assessment at a higher level.

The school is encouraged to continue to investigate ways to provide students with meaningful courses that are relevant to their current learning and future pathways, while maintaining high academic achievement and manageable student and teacher workloads.

Agreed action

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

- investigate the use of school-based evidence to identify and support applications for students eligible for special assessment conditions.

For consideration

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

- reviewing assessment opportunities offered to students.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

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

- critiquing new and amended assessment activities before use
- verifying grade judgements of purposefully selected samples of student work using subject specialists from within and outside the school
- documenting the internal moderation process, including noting verification discussion and decisions on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

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

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

Refine internal moderation monitoring system Since the last Managing National Assessment report, the school has reviewed and clarified its processes for monitoring internal moderation. Leaders of Learning Area are responsible for monitoring the completion of internal moderation within their own Learning Areas. The Principal's Nominee audits this by asking for evidence randomly from standards where results have been reported to NZQA. He sights examples of student evidence and the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and discusses the process undertaken. This could be strengthened by the Principal's Nominee recording the visits to ensure all Learning Areas have been covered and to note any areas requiring further follow up or support.

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:

- document internal moderation monitoring visits by the Principal's Nominee.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Morrinsville College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - using a 'traffic light' system to monitor progress towards achievement goals
 - reviewing achievement data to evaluate courses, and inform changes to contexts and assessment programmes
 - comparing the results of its own analysis of variance for internal assessment and external assessment to review course design
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
 - submitting fees paid and financial assistance applications on time
 - ensuring all internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate
 - using the correct provider code for assessment undertaken by external providers
 - supporting students to use the parent portal and their Learner login to track their NCEA progress, check results and report any errors or omissions.

Ensure accurate management of standards completed in Year 10 The school assesses Year 10 students against a number of standards, with the reporting of results to NZQA held over until the next year. This practice allows students to start the year with some credits towards their Level 1 NCEA without incurring a fee. When submitting these results to NZQA, the school is required to report them as unassigned standards as they are not eligible for inclusion in the calculation for a course endorsement in a current year. The Principal's Nominee will undertake to clarify this with relevant staff and ensure the reporting of any standards achieved by Year 10 students meet NZQA's requirements.

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 results carried over from a previous year are reported as unassigned to a course.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7iib)

Morrinsville College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake, available in both hardcopy and online
- communicating assessment policy and procedure.

Morrinsville College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification
- ensuring a memorandum of understanding is held for all outside providers against whose codes grades are reported
- encouraging students to use their Learner login and become familiar with the NZQA website
- ensuring relevant NZQA updates are circulated to NCEA teachers and discussed as necessary
- including NCEA relevant information, such as upcoming deadlines, in the weekly email to staff.

Update of documentation required Outdated and incorrect information remain in communications. Only one of the suggested amendments to update documentation listed in the 2015 Managing National Assessment report has been actioned. The outstanding items are repeated within the recommendations discussed below. NZQA will return to the school within a year to ensure the information communicated is accurate and consistent with the NZQA's Assessment Rules.

- *Morrinsville College Assessment Guide (Staff Handbook):*
 - remove all reference to compassionate consideration, random selection of student work for internal verification, and optional teacher selected material for external moderation
 - standardise the language between school documents and NZQA, such as further assessment opportunity rather than reassessment
 - include reference to purposeful and sufficient selection of student work in the verification section for internal moderation
 - update details for special assessment conditions including timeframes and the use of school-based evidence.
- *Morrinsville College NCEA National Certificate of Educational Achievement Student Information 2017*
 - include literacy and numeracy requirements for all levels of NCEA
 - update the statement to include University Entrance literacy credits can be gained through approved standards at Level 2 and 3, rather than solely through English or Te Reo Māori

- remove references suggesting that a student's grade will not be changed following internal moderation
- correct the statement about a derived grade, to include the reported grade is based on pre-existing, valid, standard-specific evidence including from school examinations, rather than estimated
- consider standardising the language between with NZQA, such as review and reconsideration rather than remark
- consider adjusting the language, scope and mode of delivery of the handbook to make the document more user-friendly and accessible for the intended audience.

Consolidate assessment procedural information The Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures document on *Assessment of National Qualifications* outlines assessment processes. This is in addition to that contained in the staff handbook. The school should consider restricting Board of Trustees policy to overarching principles. School-wide procedures should be removed and included solely in the staff and student handbook. This would support consistency and version control.

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 staff and student documentation as detailed
- remove assessment procedure information from Board of Trustees policy document.