

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Cambridge High School

July 2022

# **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

## **Cambridge High School**

**6 July 2022**

### **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 2021*.

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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2020.

## 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>	
Strengthen external moderation follow-up by ensuring responses to identified issues are effective.	Immediate and in response to the school's July external moderation feedback.
<b>Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results</b>	
Ensure kaiako make a purposeful and sufficient selection of student work for grade verification.	Immediate.

### For consideration

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

- annually reconcile that a Memorandum of Understanding is held for all external providers whose code is used to report results.



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22 August 2022

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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 11 May 2017 Managing National Assessment Report** The school's process for checking the timely completion of teachers' responses to external moderation has been addressed.

The agreed action to ensure the selection of aakonga work for internal moderation verification is purposeful and sufficient is yet to be fully completed as two Heads of Department interviewed continue to use a random sample for grade verification.

The Staff Handbook has been amended following the recommendations in the 2017 review. The Principal's Nominee, who is new to the school and role, will update the handbook to reflect recent changes made to school processes and NZQA Assessment Rules to ensure the document is up to date, relevant and fit for purpose.

**External moderation processes and response to outcomes** The school's response to external moderation requires strengthening to help ensure teachers' planned actions are effective by resolving issues in assessment decisions and / or assessment task design identified by moderators.

An effective response to external moderation will further develop teachers' understanding of the standard and grade boundaries. This will support assessment decisions consistent with the standard where the moderator has identified that a teacher's grade decision is inconsistent with the standard.

The Principal's Nominee's analysis of historical moderation outcomes has identified that there are four subjects where assessment judgments have not been consistent with the standard across several years. As part of her discussion with the Heads of Faculty she is planning, to review the grade verification process, the use of clarification documents and exemplars, and facilitate professional learning to further develop assessors understanding of the standard.

The effectiveness of the school's actions in response to external moderation feedback, can be evaluated by requesting the standard for external moderation in a subsequent year. This will complete the cycle of external moderation, with the feedback informing and improving the process of internal moderation.

### 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)*

Cambridge High School is well placed to effectively lead assessment for qualifications. There has been a change in Principal, Principal's Nominee and a new Senior Leadership Structure since the previous review in 2017. The new structure has six Senior Leaders with each pair focusing on strengthening culture, Strengthening Learning and Strengthening Us.

Strong assessment leadership at Senior Leadership and Head of Faculty level has resulted in the school's effective response to the disruptions of COVID, and kaiako adaptability in a hybrid learning environment. Collaborative and shared leadership supports kaiako to review and adapt their assessment practice and programmes, including exercising flexibility in the granting of extensions to aakonga who have been absent.

Heads of Faculty meetings have a focus on collegiality, the sharing of effective practice and consistency across faculty areas with the aim to have manageable, transparent, and robust systems and processes embedded to support the school's predicted roll growth. The distribution of assessment leadership to Heads of Faculty enables kaiako ownership and a shared understanding of school wide assessment and moderation practices. This supports the on-going development of effective and consistent assessment practice, the building of capability and the sustainability of systems and processes across the school.

To complement the school's effective tracking of student progress towards NCEA qualifications, University Entrance and Vocational Pathways, the school has introduced the *Aakonga Learning Journey Tracker in 2022*. This initiative is to encourage students to take more agency over their own learning by being aware of key assessment dates and their progress towards achieving their goals supported by Pou aarahi (form teachers). Year 13 aakonga interviewed described using the tracker and how it has enabled them to be "*in control*" of their progress.

Heads of Faculties' annual review to the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees has been strengthened. Detailed data analysis is provided at the start of the year for Heads of Faculty to identify trends, resolve areas of weakness and identify areas where strengths can be shared with faculty kaiako. Individual kaiako meet with the Head of Faculty to discuss an analysis of their aakonga results with the purpose of reflecting on their own practice. This new format enables changes to be made for the current year. Reports sighted at the review demonstrate the school-wide culture and commitment to continuous improvement informed by rigorous data analysis.

Analysis of Maaori and Pacific student achievement and participation across the curriculum is used to identify subject areas that these aakonga are, and are not represented in. This information is used to review and inform changes to subjects where they are under-represented with the aim to make these subjects more accessible by identifying and removing any inequities or barriers to success.

The school views itself as a community college with a role to meet the diverse needs of all aakonga, enabling them to "*leave school with choices, confidence and a sense of purpose.*" Effective and comprehensive vocational programmes provide students with a broad range of opportunities leading to employment and apprenticeships. Seventy-nine Vocational Pathways were awarded in 2021 reflecting the school's extensive programme and effective tracking of aakonga progress. The school offers an accelerated programme for Year 10 with the opportunity to study university papers or carry out community support in Year 13.

Strong leadership by the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty facilitates a shared school wide understanding and ownership of assessment for qualifications. The school's well-developed processes of evaluation of school effectiveness enables continuous improvement of assessment practices and contributes to the school's consistently high levels of student NCEA achievement and effectively meeting student qualification and learning needs.

## Credible assessment practice to meet aakonga needs

*Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 5.1 – 5.7)*

### **Assessment processes support future assessment changes and opportunities**

The school's involvement in NCEA digital examinations over the past two years, the NCEA Change literacy and numeracy co-requisite and Commerce pilots reflects the school's strategic focus to ensure the school is ready for future learning and assessment changes as a result of the NCEA Change Package.

External assessment will take a digital first approach with the implementation of the Review of Achievement Standards. The school's current engagement in digital examinations and NCEA Change Pilots is being used to test the school's digital infrastructure and develop an understanding and confidence in the use of Assessment Master, the digital examination platform.

A current school focus is developing student literacy through teacher professional learning using cross curricular strategies. The deliberate focus on literacy development is in response to the introduction of the literacy co-requisite requirement in 2024. This is another example of the school's strategic focus on future assessment readiness.

The school is well placed for the changes ahead through strong assessment leadership at a school and Faculty level through its engagement in digital examinations and the NCEA Change Pilots.

**Process to confirm a memorandum of understanding is held for all outside providers used to report grades required** The review identified that the school did not have a process to confirm that a current memorandum of understanding is held for all external providers whose codes are used to report results. It is recommended the school develop a system to centrally store memoranda of understanding and implement an annual reconciliation process to confirm one is held and the organisation holds consent to assess the standards for which grades are being reported. This will help to ensure that students receive the grades reported on behalf of the outside provider by the school.

## Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

*Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)*

**Planned strengthening of internal moderation process** To strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation the Principal's Nominee plans to move the November annual review to occur throughout the year. This shift is to enable any issues to be identified and resolved within the current year and to confirm assessment practice and internal moderation processes meet the school's and NZQA's requirements.

The Principal's Nominee, who is new to the role in 2022, required all Heads of Faculty to complete the Managing National Assessment teacher pre-review template regardless of whether they were to be involved in the actual review visit. Their completion provided an insight into how the different faculties are currently operating and what policies they are applying. The Principal's Nominee found evidence in all faculties that Cambridge High School's internal moderation process for verification of assessor judgments is being followed, through either panel marking, checks against agreed benchmark papers or the use of external verifiers in other schools. These findings give senior leaders confidence that internal moderation expectations are being met, and that the process supports the reporting of credible results.

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# Appendix 1: Effective Practice

## Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of aakonga

**Cambridge High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their aakonga by:**

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on aakonga 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 aakonga can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing aakonga when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet aakonga needs
- ensuring kaiako are aware of individual aakonga with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted support for aakonga at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide open opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Cambridge High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

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

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

**Cambridge High School 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 clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- 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.

**Cambridge High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of aakonga work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of aakonga work to NZQA requirements
- 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**

**Cambridge High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for aakonga by:**

- monitoring and tracking aakonga progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow aakonga to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering aakonga 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.

**Cambridge High School 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 aakonga and Kaiako checks of entries and results at key times during the year

- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results

## **Effective communication to inform staff, and aakonga and their whanau about assessment**

### **Cambridge High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring aakonga receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting aakonga to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on aakonga progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement.

### **Cambridge High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for aakonga
- informing aakonga about suitable learning pathways
- supporting aakonga 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 Cambridge High School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, aakonga and whaanau.

### 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 2021* (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 2022* (Assessment Rules).

### 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
- *Cambridge High School – Staff Guidelines for Managing National Assessment 2021*
- *Cambridge High School – Aakonga Guidelines for National Assessment 2022.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Arts
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Pathways
  - Physical Education and Health
  - Science
  - Social Sciences
- three aakonga.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal – Strengthening Learning 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.