

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**St Peter's College  
(Palmerston North)**

**August 2024**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## St Peter's College (Palmerston North)

2 August 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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
<b>External and internal review</b>	
Strengthen the process to follow up issues raised in external moderation by including explicit review of internal moderation processes when reflecting on external moderation feedback.	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:

- sharing feedback from external moderation with all verifiers involved in the internal moderation process
- encouraging staff to utilise the query and appeal functions in the external moderation application
- establishing a more centralised process to store Memoranda of Understanding held with other providers.

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30 October 2024

**NZQA**

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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 6 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report** The school has effectively addressed the two action items identified in the previous Managing National Assessment report. The selection process for material submitted for external moderation meets current NZQA requirements. Consistent assessment information is provided to students for each of their courses by utilising the format available through the school's Student Management System.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** While feedback from external moderation has shown consistently accurate assessor judgements for the majority of standards, there remains a very small number of subject areas that have a recent pattern of ongoing inconsistencies. Strengthening the current system of responding to external moderation will help ensure responses are effective and meaningful. Discussion was held during the review visit on ways the current process could be improved.

As soon as the external moderation report is received by the school, the Principal's Nominee downloads and forwards each external moderation report to the relevant teacher(s). This ensures that reports are received by all relevant staff in a timely manner. Where the report indicates a Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent outcome, a copy is also sent to the Senior School Deputy Principal. He requires teachers to complete a *Response to External Moderation* form and meets with teachers to review their follow up actions to resolve issues identified in the external moderation report. While the Heads of Department responses tend to focus on standard specific information, the meeting with the Deputy Principal should delve into reviewing and ensuring effective practice particularly evaluating teachers' understanding of internal moderation expectations and processes. Aspects to consider should include

- robust critiquing prior to undertaking the assessment
- purposeful and sufficient selection of material for verification
- the appropriateness of the verifier
- documentation of verification discussion.

Sharing external moderation feedback with all verifiers involved in the internal moderation process, including teachers from other schools, will support collective understanding of the standard. Where the outcome is consistent this can reinforce the current practices.

Where school assessor grade judgements remain at variance to those of the NZQA moderators', assessors should consider using the query and appeal functions in the external moderation application to clarify and cement their understanding of the standard. The query function enables a two-way interaction with the moderator by allowing teachers to make up to three queries to help better understand feedback, judgement decisions, and the requirements of the standard. If a teacher understands the information contained in the moderation report but they can request an appeal. disagrees with the grade judgements and/or comments of the moderator. Utilising these supports will assist assessors to gain further clarification or feedback and help in maintaining consistency with the standard.

External moderation where a Work Development Council is the standard setting body

follows the same process as NZQA requested moderation and is also monitored by the Principal's Nominee.

### **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)*

St Peter's College promotes a focus on education and achievement centred on a school wide commitment to community "where students, teachers and families work in partnership to develop empowered, self-managing, lifelong learners who live the Gospel values in a changing world". Evidence of the effectiveness of the school's approach is the consistently high levels of achievement over the past few years across the three levels of NCEA and University Entrance. Heads of Department play an important role in internal review by analysing results within their subject areas and reporting their findings to the Board of Trustees. Data is used along with student voice to evaluate courses and is used to drive changes to course design such as the number and/or type of standards offered.

**Review of assessment processes** Since taking on the role at the beginning of 2023, the Principal's Nominee has undertaken a thorough review of assessment processes and procedures. Inconsistencies in communications and understanding of some credible assessment practices were identified. Assessment documentation has since been reviewed and rewritten. Comprehensive student and staff documents have been developed that ensure consistency and understanding. This has resulted in standardised assessment practices in aspects such as missed and late assessment and student appeals of assessment decisions. Course outlines developed through the Student Management System are available for students in all subject areas. This has helped support and strengthen understanding as there is now a uniform reference point for all subjects.

The Principal's Nominee works effectively alongside the Deputy Principal – Senior School to review, discuss and plan approaches to assessment procedures within the school. They welcomed this Managing National Assessment review as a way to further support the ongoing improvement in assessment quality.

### **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)*

**Professional learning opportunities utilised** The school has embraced the NZQA Learning Management System, Pūtake, to support teacher understanding and assessment judgement. This is testament to the time spent at the start of the year ensuring all teachers know and can use their ESL login alongside the commitment to ongoing learning by teachers. Subject specific courses and the Assessor Practice Tool show usage across a wide range of subjects and by a high number of teachers. This good practice should continue to be encouraged as the number of standards and levels for which resources are available continue to grow. It will be particularly relevant for teachers of the new Level 1 standards.

**Authenticity checks strengthened** The school has invested in and utilises a commercial plagiarism checker for student work. Both students and teachers spoken to during the review acknowledge that its use is not a one stop shop for ensuring

authentic student work and the school continues to review and discuss ways to support authentic assessment processes. Teachers understand the importance of knowing their students, recognising their strengths and weaknesses and of utilising checkpoints and assessment milestones throughout the assessment process to observe student progression towards the final assessment date. Regular conversations are ongoing throughout the school. This is helping empower staff to hold assessment conversations with students, including the identification of potential breaches.

**Tracking of students towards achievement for qualifications** A key feature of the school is supporting student success through a student's Connect to Succeed (C2S) group. The C2S coach works alongside students and their families to monitor academic progress towards qualification goals. Students are encouraged to check and monitor results through the Student Management System portal and are supported to register and use their MyNZQA Learner login. There is a high percentage of students who are using the NZQA portal due in part to the role the C2S coach plays in sharing and disseminating assessment information to students. Use of the Learner login is vital in accessing the digital platform for examinations, common assessment activities and submission of external standards. It also means students can check results, apply for reviews and reconsiderations and order certificates.

**Consider centralising the storage of Memoranda of Understanding** The school works with a number of external providers to support student's learning in standards not covered by the school's Consent to Assess. This enhances the school's ability to meet students' aspirations, qualification needs and interests. Memoranda of Understanding are held predominately within the Careers Department. The school could consider a central, possibly digitally, storage system for all Memoranda of Understanding in order to improve access and visibility by the Principal's Nominee and support monitoring of data accuracy.

## **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)*

**Effective internal moderation processes evident** Internal moderation processes are embedded within the school. Continued monitoring and reinforcement of best practice will ensure these processes remain effective. The Principal's Nominee has oversight of and monitors the completion of internal moderation. The school is moving to utilise the benefits of a centralised system through their Student Management System. While still early in its implementation, this will enable greater visibility for Heads of Department to monitor completion of internal moderation within their subject areas. The consistent format of the internal moderation cover sheet will assist in reinforcing expected processes and procedures. It is timely therefore to confirm with all staff what the evidence for effective processes looks like so there is a clear understanding and approach throughout the school.

Internal moderation processes ensure the credibility and validity of the assessment and grade judgements. The verification process must be undertaken by a subject specialist with standard-specific knowledge. At St Peter's College sole teachers utilise expertise from other schools. In one area the teacher has been instrumental in setting up a verification group with other sole teachers from throughout the area. This

is excellent practice. In larger subject areas teachers use verifiers from within the school. It should be noted that while it would be a reasonable expectation to change the verifier following a pattern of inconsistency, it is also good practice to consider a change of verifier after several years of the same people verifying each other's work to avoid insularity.

Verification processes are well understood with evidence of purposeful selection used to confirm benchmark samples and to unpack examples of student work at grade boundaries. Discussion is documented which provides a valuable reference for future years.

A sufficient number of samples should be selected depending on factors such as the experience of the teacher, previous external moderation history and the student cohort. There were examples sighted during the review of internal moderation practice well beyond what is actually required. While this practice is to be commended, teacher workload should also be a consideration.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- 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
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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**

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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 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.

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

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

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- 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 / Tumuaki and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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

- 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 families/whānau about assessment**

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) has effective processes and procedures for:**

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- 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.

**St Peter's College (Palmerston North) 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 St Peter's College (Palmerston North):

- 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 / 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
- *National Qualifications Framework School Guidelines and Procedures 2024* (Staff Handbook)
- *National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) St Peter's College Student Handbook 2024.*

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

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Senior School
- Heads of Department for:
  - Mathematics
  - PE Studies
  - Religious Education
  - Social Sciences
- Teacher in Charge of:
  - Music
- three students.

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