

Managing National Assessment Report

Ngata Memorial College

September 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Ngata Memorial 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 2021* (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
- *Ngata Memorial College 2021 Student Handbook*
- *Ngata Memorial College 2021 Staff Handbook*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

Two School Relationship Managers met with:

- the Principal
- the Principal's Nominee
- Teachers for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Technology/Mathematics
- two 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.

SUMMARY

Ngata Memorial College

24 September 2021

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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

What the school is doing well

Ngata Memorial College has started to provide students with access to an increasing number of academic and vocational learning and assessment opportunities, to help meet their academic needs and to prepare them to achieve their qualification goals.

Once the quality assurance processes are fully embedded, the school can be confident in its ability to provide credible assessment opportunities for all students. Teachers are managing assessment and moderation processes more effectively, understanding and following most school assessment requirements, supported by the new Principal and Principal's Nominee.

The management of assessment data has become more efficient, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Student academic progress is monitored by the new Principal's Nominee. Interventions are initiated where students are identified as being at risk of not meeting qualification requirements. Staff, students, and parents are kept well informed of individual progress towards qualifications by the Principal and Principal's Nominee.

The school reviews how it communicates assessment information to its community. While communication is increasingly digital, it was evident that both the Principal and Deputy Principal still value and encourage face-to-face meetings. Staff are kept regularly informed of changes to NZQA requirements by the Principal's Nominee. The two students interviewed for the review felt well informed about NCEA and extremely well supported by the Principal's Nominee.

Areas for improvement

The staff and student handbooks should be reviewed to ensure the information is current, aligns with best practice and is consistent with the NZQA assessment requirements, and are written in plain language that reflects the Ngata Memorial College context. This will help ensure the school's and NZQA assessment procedures are accessible, understandable, and consistently applied.

Some other steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Agreed action

NZQA and the Senior Leadership agree on the following actions to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. The Senior Leadership undertakes to:

- ensure staff follow resubmission requirements
- strengthen staff practices for managing authenticity of student work
- review both the Staff and Student handbooks to ensure information is current and fit for purpose.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

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NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 August 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

The agreed items from the 2017 Managing National Assessment review have been actioned. In 2018, the moderation and authenticity monitoring systems were strengthened by the Principal's Nominee. All assessment was checked by the Principal's Nominee for authenticity, which included online authenticity checks before results were submitted to NZQA. The school has identified the need for further strengthening of staff practices for managing authenticity of student work with changes of staff.

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)

Ngata Memorial College is developing a culture of self-review. Assessment systems are being reviewed regularly, and change processes are evaluated. This has led to a variety of improvements including:

- the Principal's Nominee tracking student progress and ensuring that subject teachers are closely monitoring this
- extending the opportunities for students to achieve University Entrance
- changing Mathematics and Science courses to make them more inclusive for Māori students.

External moderation outcomes and response processes The school has developed new processes for responding to external moderation. The Principal's Nominee reads each report and annotates changes required. Teachers then provide a response to the Principal's Nominee with an action plan developed and monitored by the Principal's Nominee, where necessary. These changes provide increased confidence that any issues raised in moderation reports are identified, actioned, and followed up.

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 2020 5.5)

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

- using co-construction to create assessment contexts relevant to the students being assessed, as particularly evident in the Science Department
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready
- ensuring grades awarded are valid, authentic, and verified
- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice of managing appeals and further assessment opportunities.

Ngata Memorial College has effective processes and procedures for:

- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* by ensuring student results remain private and permission is sought to use or share student work
- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals.

Culturally responsive approach enhances student achievement success Ngata Memorial College continues to provide student focused assessment opportunities. The teachers know their students well and work with the Principal's Nominee to develop courses relevant to the context of the students they teach.

Ensure staff follow resubmission requirements The school must ensure staff understand and follow resubmission processes to meet NZQA requirements. A resubmission may be offered at the teacher's discretion where they judge a student has made a minor error or omission that they can identify and correct on their own.

Not all teachers interviewed showed a clear understanding of when a resubmission should be provided, and the two students interviewed described situations where all students in a class were offered a resubmission. This is inconsistent with the Rules.

Further strengthen authenticity practices The school has identified that it should continue to strengthen its policy and procedures on authenticity to ensure that results submitted to NZQA are credible. Strengthening a range of protocols will help to assure the Principal's Nominee and Principal that students are presenting authentic work. These include:

- using milestones and check points in project work or research assessments
- knowing students and their abilities, based on previous interaction and results analysis
- students signing an authenticity form for every completed assessment task.

It is important that teacher and student understanding of the school's policy is embedded in the assessment culture of the senior school. Updates to the authenticity policy in the NCEA staff handbooks, including new protocols, could be made after review, at the end of this year. These measures will give the school greater confidence that all stakeholders understand what is meant by 'authentic' in relation to

national assessment and enhance the credibility of managing assessment for national qualifications at Ngata Memorial College.

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 staff follow resubmission requirements
- strengthen staff practices for managing authenticity of student work.

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 2020 6.4b)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using external subject specialists (where possible) to verify grades awarded on a purposefully selected sample of student work
- teachers using published clarifications and exemplars to inform their grade judgements during marking
- requiring teachers to document the steps of their moderation processes, including noting verification discussion and decisions, on the standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

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

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

Focus on reducing workload by considering sufficiency for grade verification

The school could provide staff with further guidance on how they can strategically select student work to ensure their grade verification sample is sufficient to confirm that grades awarded are at the standard. Strategic selection can reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. Considering factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed, will help to determine sample size.

Strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation Internal moderation should be further strengthened by the Principal's Nominee reconciling completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* with actual practice to provide confidence that all results reported to NZQA have been quality assured.

For consideration

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

- implementing a stronger monitoring process so that the Principal's Nominee and Principal can be confident that all standards assessed have been subject to internal moderation.

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)

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

- tracking student progress using a colour coded system for actual and predicted assessment outcomes, then providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals.

Ngata Memorial College reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- checking for, and correcting where necessary, data submission errors shown on the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- students checking results and personal details held in the school's student management system and reporting any inaccuracies to the Principal's Nominee
- removing, where appropriate, internal entries of students who have left or changed assessment programmes, to ensure all entries have a reported result
- only reporting results for standards for which the school has consent to assess, or against the provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Close monitoring helps achieve assessment goals Monitoring students' progress throughout the year helps Ngata Memorial College identify and support students to achieve their academic goals. Teachers, the Principal's Nominee and Principal closely monitor student academic progress and provide targeted interventions to help ensure that all students can achieve at a level appropriate to their ability.

Encourage students to register and use their NZQA Learner Login The school could continue to assist their students to register for their Learner Login and provide them with advice on its use. While students can see their results through the online portal to the school's student management system, it is only through their Learner Login that they can:

- check the accuracy of their results reported to NZQA
- order copies of their qualification certificates
- request reviews or reconsiderations of external examination papers
- print an official copy of parts, or all, of their Record of Achievement.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:
continue to assist students to register and use their Learner login

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))

Ngata Memorial College has developed effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive appropriate information to help them understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification
- supporting teachers new to the school to understand assessment procedures at the school and to use the student management system.

Ngata Memorial College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking whether teachers and students are following NZQA processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification.

Student handbook requires review The student handbook contains relevant information. However, after discussion with the Principal's Nominee and Principal it was agreed that it should be reviewed to ensure that the level of detail and language of the document is more reflective of Ngata Memorial College's students and community.

Staff handbook requires review The Principal's Nominee Principal agreed that the staff documentation required a review to ensure that the language and detail reflects Ngata Memorial College's context.

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:

- review both the Staff and Student handbooks to ensure information is current and fit for purpose.