

Managing National Assessment Report

Wairoa College

May 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Wairoa 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 2018* (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
- *Wairoa College Quality Management Systems April 2018*
- *Wairoa College Assessment & Qualifications Handbook 2018* (Staff Handbook)
- *Wairoa College Assessment and Qualifications Student Information 2018* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Faculty for Humanities, Mathematics, Physical Education/Health, Science, STAR/Vocational and Te Matauranga o Aotearoa.

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

Wairoa College

24 May 2018

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

Wairoa College has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school has responded effectively to issues raised by external review, fully addressing the action items from the 2015 Managing National Assessment review. It has processes in place to ensure staff respond appropriately to external moderation issues. Its internal review has identified a number of areas of assessment practice, such as department review and internal moderation monitoring, where improvements could be made, and has actioned changes accordingly.

The introduction of a "Day Zero" has allowed the school to better meet students' vocational assessment needs. Full-day programmes can be catered for without students missing work in other subjects. Assessment processes are well managed and ensure that student needs are met.

Internal moderation is an embedded process within faculties and is well monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Only results that have been quality assured are reported to NZQA. Staff have been encouraged to engage with NZQA's new External Moderation Application and much of the assessment material has been submitted digitally.

Student assessment data is checked for accuracy and reported to meet key dates. Data is effectively analysed to review school courses, set strategic direction, monitor student progress towards completing qualifications and identify students at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements.

Comprehensive, consistent and current assessment information is communicated to the school community using both physical and digital formats. These provide staff, students and their families the opportunity to gain a common understanding of school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

The school should make special assessment conditions applications for students before they are assessed against standards.

Agreed action

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

- ensure special assessment condition applications are made in a timely manner.

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Manager
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7 August 2018

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 2 September 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The five action items from the 2015 review have all been effectively addressed. The school:

- has review processes that allow it to identify where improvements could be made in assessment and moderation practices
- tests students and is using the evidence collected to support applications for special assessment conditions
- provides staff and students with appropriate information on their rights and responsibilities under the *Privacy Act 1993* and *Copyright Act 1994*
- has clarified internal moderation for staff so that student work is purposefully selected for verification
- uses the same processes to monitor the external moderation for all standard-setting bodies.

How well the items have been actioned reflects the effectiveness of the processes put in place by the Principal's Nominee during a period of significant staff change. She has the full support of staff and the new Principal.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a robust external moderation response process. The Principal's Nominee works with staff to follow-up on issues identified by NZQA or Industry Training Organisation moderators. Use of the school's *Response to External Moderation Report* form allows her to more effectively monitor that any required support and/or professional development are provided and that actions planned by staff are completed within the agreed time.

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)

Wairoa College is effectively using its internal review processes to identify where it can improve assessment and moderation processes and practice.

Faculties now review assessment processes Heads of Faculty are required to evaluate how well their faculty is meeting school and NZQA quality assurance requirements. This, and a cyclic audit of faculty processes, allows the Principal's Nominee to monitor where remedial action may be required. The school is considering the time intervals between audits to further strengthen this system.

Vocational pathways improved for students The school has changed Fridays to "Day Zero" on the timetable. This allows students to travel to either Gisborne or Napier to attend full-day Trade Academy courses at local tertiary providers. As much

as possible, STAR and Gateway courses are also timetabled for this day. This change allows students to engage with vocational training and assessment without missing work in other subjects.

Students who opt to stay at school on Fridays select from a range of alternative full day courses, designed on a contextual rather than subject basis. These courses offer assessment opportunities that fit the context. Achievement data, as well as staff and student voice have been used to refine this innovation over the last three years.

These changes recognise that for many students a vocational pathway is more important than an academic one. Achieving a qualification is not a goal for some students as the local employment opportunities available to them do not usually require an NCEA.

More effective processes for monitoring internal moderation The Principal's Nominee has reviewed the processes she, and Heads of Faculty, use to ensure all results are quality assured before they are reported to NZQA. Completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* are checked against course outlines, markbook entries in the student management system and the school's shared assessment calendar.

The school noted that these changes have:

- encouraged staff to be more timely with marking student work, verifying grades and submitting results for reporting
- allowed senior leadership to more effectively identify and assist staff with difficulties, such as finding suitable verifiers
- motivated students to check their results through the online student management system portal more often.

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 2018 5.5)

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

- improving the range of assessment opportunities available, both academic and vocational, through extending the school's consent to assess, Star and Gateway programmes, and Trade Academies organised by local tertiary providers
- introducing optional standards in some courses to provide students with the opportunity to modify their own assessment programmes
- encouraging staff to use a range of methods during assessment to collect physical or digital evidence of achievement

Wairoa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessments, further assessment opportunities and resubmissions, and student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules
- 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
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act, 1993 and Copyright Act 1994*.

Ensure special assessment conditions applications are timely This review identified that while the school has completed the rollover of entitlements for previous year's applications, it has not yet completed applications for new students it has identified would benefit from an entitlement to special assessment conditions. These students could therefore be using conditions in internal assessments that they may not be entitled to.

The school must ensure that special assessment conditions applications are made to NZQA before students start using the conditions during assessments. This includes external practice assessments, as the results from these could potentially be used for derived grade applications. Once an application is made students may use any conditions applied for until a final decision is reached.

Applications open on 1 October for students being assessed for qualifications in the following academic year.

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 special assessment conditions applications are made in a timely manner.

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 2018 6.4b)

Wairoa College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation. These include:

- having all assessment materials critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and provide students with the opportunity to present evidence at all grade levels
- teachers using exemplars and standard clarifications to inform their grade judgements during marking
- using subject specialists either from within, or outside of the school to verify samples of student grades
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring teachers' internal moderation processes, including collecting and collating copies of all cover sheets, before submitting results to NZQA.

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

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- providing Heads of Faculty with access to the NZQA External Moderation Application to assist with the submission process
- encouraging staff to submit assessment material digitally
- storing physical assessment materials securely so they are available for external moderation.

Review digital storage processes The school should provide guidance on storing digital material so that it can ensure work is not lost. Developing a policy on how and where digital assessment material should be stored would be a good start. The amount of assessment material being produced by students in digital form is increasing. Staff storage processes include using their school laptops, USB memory sticks, external hard drives and online storage. Not all of these provide the school with the necessary assurance that work is securely stored and will be available, if required, for external moderation.

No action required

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

For consideration

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

- developing a digital storage policy.

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)

Wairoa College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school wide and faculty strategic goals based upon comparative analysis of achievement data
 - instituting a system to ensure the achievement of students at each year level is tracked and at-risk students identified by Deans
 - assigning a staff member to work with students identified as being at risk of not meeting NCEA literacy and/or numeracy requirements, or NCEA Level 2
 - teachers analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme design.

- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking for, and correcting, errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - ensuring all entries either have a result reported for them by the final submission date or are withdrawn, if appropriate
 - having students sign off on the accuracy of their external entries, and internal results
 - reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

Assist students to use their NZQA Learner login Less than half of the students being assessed for National Qualifications registered and used their NZQA Learner login in 2017. Without registering students cannot check the accuracy of the results being reported for them, request reviews or reconsiderations for external examination papers or order copies of their Record of Achievement and/or qualification certificates.

The school should consider how it can assist students to realise the usefulness of registering for and using their Learner login.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- assisting students to use their NZQA 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))

Wairoa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive course outlines with consistent assessment information
- communicating assessment policies and procedures, and information on qualifications to the various sectors of the school community
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and current.

Wairoa College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing comprehensive and consistent assessment information to staff, students and parents
- sharing all NZQA communications with staff, while directing specific information to those most concerned
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements.

School using a range of physical and digital formats to communicate

information Because there is still a large group within the school's community who have no internet access at home, the school has all communications available in a physical form upon request. However, to meet the requirements of those who are digitally connected, it has updated most of its communication methods. A Facebook page, School App, text alerts and an online portal to its student management system are all available. Its weekly newsletters are also published electronically and can be viewed either through the school's website or the App.

The school reports that while it distributes NCEA information to parents at a subject selection evening, and recently held an NCEA and the Whanau meeting organised in conjunction with NZQA staff, parental interest is disappointing. The local employment situation for students may be a factor in this. The school is continuing to explore ways in which it can provide opportunities for parents to improve their understanding of NCEA and knowledge of how the school's assessment processes work.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.