

Managing National Assessment Report

William Colenso College

August 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively William Colenso 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
- *Charter William Colenso College 2021*
- *NCEA and Assessment for Students (2021)* (Student Handbook)
- *Procedures: Assessment National Qualifications 2021* (Staff Handbook)
- *English Department Report and Collaborative Inquiry 2020*
- a sample of learning area overviews
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the two Acting Principals
- Heads of Learning Area for:
 - English
 - Mathematics and Science
 - Performing Arts
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Social Sciences
 - Visual Arts
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting Principals 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

William Colenso College

5 August 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 19 pandemic.

What the school is doing well

William Colenso College places the student at the heart of school practice. Culturally responsive and relational pedagogy is well embedded and rates of attainment for Māori students at Level 3 are above those of similar decile schools, and comparable to, or better than, those of other ethnic groups within the college. Since the last Managing Assessment Review, the college has won two Prime Minister's *Excellence in Education* awards in recognition of its inclusive practice for students with additional needs, and for raising professional capability and producing improved and sustainable outcomes for students.

The college's process of internal review for NCEA assessment will be finalised following the appointment of a new Principal. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum delivery with regard to introducing a broader Localised Curriculum, preparing for the introduction of the NCEA Change Package and reviewing the diverse curriculum offered through its Friday Timetable.

Providing a meaningful pathway for each student, including a significant number of transient students, is a key focus for the school. Programmes are flexible to cater for the varied pathways students wish to follow. Assessment prioritises localised, authentic contexts to engage students' interests and maximise prior learning. There is a high degree of differentiation and personalisation to meet students' needs and assessment dates are fluid with students assessed when ready.

The introduction of *Taku Huarahi Ako* in Years 10 -13 has strengthened tracking of student progress and provides regular mentoring for all students to ensure qualifications goals are met. Students are given the tools to investigate and map out their own personal pathway and are supported to monitor and track their own progress. Whānau Hui held throughout the year are a deliberate strategy to strengthen the connection between home and school. Caring and supportive teachers are highly valued by students and their whānau, and a strong sense of belonging is evident among the students interviewed. Face-to-face communications with students and their whānau support a sound understanding of the NCEA qualification and college assessment procedures.

The Principal's Nominee has digitised all internal and external moderation processes, to improve transparency and give senior leadership visibility of the whole moderation cycle. External moderation outcomes are effectively addressed by Heads of Learning who create action plans to resolve issues identified by NZQA moderators.

Data management and use effectively supports student achievement outcomes and ensures the timely reporting of results to NZQA. Achievement data is analysed to review department assessment practice and programmes offered, set strategic direction and evaluate the effectiveness of changes to assessment for qualifications.

There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the college to consider are detailed in the body of the report.



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10 September 2021

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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 17-18 May 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

There were three agreed action items in the 2016 Managing National Assessment report to improve the quality of the college's assessment processes. Two have been effectively resolved by:

- clarifying with staff that samples of student work for verification should be purposefully selected, at grade boundaries
- requiring staff to respond to any issue reported by external moderators with an appropriate action to address it.

The third action required the college to review the effectiveness of their process for ensuring all assessment material required for external moderation is submitted to NZQA. A check early in 2017 found that external monitoring processes were effective and confirmed that all assessment material required was submitted to NZQA as requested.

Response to external moderation outcomes The college has a robust process in place to follow up on issues arising from external moderation and the school's quality assurance processes have been found to be effective with a high rate of consistency with NZQA moderators' judgements.

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)

William Colenso College's process of internal review for NCEA assessment will be finalised following the appointment of a new Principal. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum delivery with regard to introducing a broader Localised Curriculum, preparing for the introduction of the NCEA Change Package and reviewing the diverse curriculum offered through its Friday Timetable. The Senior Leadership Team meets every four weeks with Curriculum leaders to evaluate how well the current curriculum meets students' needs and is planning how to weave a Localised Curriculum and the NCEA Change Package into future NCEA courses.

The *Friday Timetable* originally implemented in response to the high number of students attending vocational courses on Fridays, provides students with the opportunity to experience a subject they are unable to study full-time or through a full day programme. Students can embed themselves in a chosen pathway such as, Outdoor Education, Whakairo, Manaaki Marae, Catering, Gateway or Trades. Under guidance from the Deans, students may also attend tutor groups in subjects where they need additional support, for example, the Science Catchup tutorial. Staff and student voice are being gathered to contribute to this conversation.

Since the last Managing National Assessment review, the Principal's Nominee has reviewed the college's internal and external moderation processes resulting in a robust, consistent and transparent practice. Through digitising all internal and external moderation processes and procedures, there is greater transparency for the Principal's Nominee who can now check the verification of all standards in real time, see who verified the work and monitor the quality of verification discussions. The online process has given senior leadership confidence that the college's internal moderation processes are effective, credible and consistent school wide.

Likewise, external moderation is now managed digitally. Early requests for draft plans, change requests, and all assessment evidence that can be digitised together with associated reports, appeals and follow up to external moderation is stored centrally. Digitising the quality assurance system has proven to be invaluable in times of staff change, or unexpected absence, and allows school leadership ease of review as required.

The Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees are currently working on a new Charter to refresh the strategic plan over the coming year, taking into consideration any changes necessary to courses and programmes as new NCEA standards roll out from the beginning of 2023.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- providing every student with a Chromebook to improve the authenticity of student work and enable all students to participate in a digital online learning environment
- timetabling 30 minute, fortnightly academic mentoring, *Taku Huarahi Ako*, to support student progress and pathway planning by:
 - tracking, monitoring and recording student progress in the Student Profile of the Student Management System monitored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team
 - helping students navigate the *Taku Huarahi Ako* mentoring site with NCEA information, links to NZQA Exam Hub, Careers NZ and a range of pathway information.
- allowing students to have personalised timetables according to their chosen pathway and assessing when they are ready
- allowing a wider range of subjects to run through multi-levelling and timetabling cross-curricular courses
- using predictive grades in term three and again in term four, to identify students at risk of not gaining their qualification goals as well as those requiring support to meet their University Entrance and Course/Certificate Endorsements goals
- meeting the needs of the high proportion of transient students with flexible, authentic learning opportunities
- offering access to a wide range of vocational, trade and pre-employment courses
- extending the number of successful applications for Special Assessment Conditions by using school-based evidence.

William Colenso College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible and consistent school-wide assessment practice, regarding missed and late assessments, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- managing authenticity through a range of methods including, *Hāpara*, which gives teachers visibility into learners' Chrome browser activity and having students working on highly individualised programmes and tasks
- ensuring evidence for derived and unexpected event grades is based on valid standard specific evidence and that benchmark exams are subject to quality assurance processes.

Changes to improve participation and achievement outcomes in STEM and Science In pursuit of more equitable outcomes for all students, the college has removed prerequisites from courses at senior level to reduce barriers to achievement.

The new Head of Learning for Science and Mathematics has restructured courses so they can be tailored to meet the needs of students in each class and accommodate individual learning styles. To provide the full range of Level 2 and 3 Science subjects, the College has timetabled Biology with Earth and Space Science, and Chemistry with Physics. Students in these cross-curricular classes can self-select standards from each domain to better meet their needs, interests, and qualifications' goals.

Students requiring extra support in any Science subject can attend the Science Catchup offered through the Friday Timetable. The head of this learning area is working with his teachers to upskill their assessment practice and raise levels of participation and achievement for their students.

In addition, the Technology learning area is adding standards, so courses can meet the goals of students aiming for a University Entrance award.

Consecutive Prime Minister's *Excellence in Education* awards acknowledge success around equity and excellence In 2017, William Colenso College won the Excellence in Leading Award and was a finalist in Excellence in Teaching & Learning and Excellence in Governing. This award recognises the role of leadership in strengthening professional capability and creating change that produces improved and sustainable outcomes for students.

In 2018, the college was awarded the Education in Focus Award, celebrating outstanding inclusive practices that enable those with additional learning needs to succeed. William Colenso College is the only school to have won two *Excellence in Education* awards in consecutive years.

Remind staff to ensure student privacy is protected when confirming grades Students interviewed reported that in an isolated number of cases, grades have not been shared with students in a manner that guarantees a student's right to privacy. The senior leadership team confirmed they will review this matter and clarify for staff what methods they can use to ensure privacy is protected.

For consideration

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

- revisiting with all staff, the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020*.

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 2021 6.4b)

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

- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- having Heads of Learning document the quality assurance process on an online *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* shared with the Principal's Nominee
- having the Principal's Nominee track and manage the progress and completion of the internal moderation process online through shared learning area folders
- using suitable subject-specialists from within or outside the school to verify grades awarded on a purposefully selected sample of student work
- having the Principal's Nominee conduct annual audits of each learning area's internal moderation processes
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring that internal moderation is strategic and purposeful, and where over-verification occurs, there is a valid reason to support it.

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

- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being stored digitally by default
- requiring Heads of Learning to respond to any moderation that is "not consistent" within two weeks of receiving a report and to make a generalised response for "consistent" work
- monitoring external moderation over consecutive years to identify emerging trends and potential issues within subject areas
- having the Principal's Nominee discuss external moderation outcomes with Heads of Learning or assessors and helping to devise strategies or actions for improved outcomes moving forward.

No action required

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

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)

William Colenso College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- reporting to the Principal and the Board of Trustees annually, an analysis of NCEA achievement:
 - against set goals, identifying unexpected results and trends
 - reporting and reflecting explicitly on equity, and outcomes for Māori students
 - both comparatively and historically to inform changes to standards and justify future course content.
- supporting students to use the student portal to the student management system, the *MyMahi* platform and their NZQA Learner Login to track their NCEA progress themselves
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses, inform changes to programmes, assessment contexts and standards.

William Colenso College reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA on a regular and timely basis
- using the Key Indicator Checklist and Data File Submission reports to identify and resolve data issues
- using repeated and clear communication to staff about checking external entries to ensure minimal late entries
- monitoring the availability of Unexpected Event Grades prior to NCEA examinations
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with which the school holds a current Memorandum of Understanding.

No action required

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

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))

William Colenso College has effective processes and procedures for:

- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current
- ensuring students receive consistently formatted outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure through a variety of channels, including digital, physical and face-to-face.

William Colenso College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- ensuring consistent and effective messaging regarding course and pathway planning through:
 - *Taku Huarahi Ako*, fortnightly academic mentoring
 - appointing a full time Transitions Co-ordinator who matches Year 12 and 13 students with vocational and/or employment opportunities
 - holding a Careers Expo at the college, in addition to attending the *Hawke's Bay Career Expo*.
- having the Principal's Nominee send weekly emails to the relevant staff regarding NCEA updates, Key Dates and practical guidelines for NCEA processes and procedures.

Whānau Hui key to student engagement and successful transitions to further training or employment The college forges positive links between home and school with approximately 85 percent of students with regular attendance gaining a Level 2 NCEA. Teachers interviewed said they are always looking at new and meaningful ways to engage with whānau and the wider community.

The college hosts Whānau Hui throughout the year to demystify NCEA and inform students and their whānau's expectations around university and vocational pathways. The Hui include:

- termly three-way conferences to report on student progress and enable whānau to support their student's goals
- a Hui following the Waikato University Trip, catered for by the college Manaaki Marae students, where speakers share first-hand experiences, such as: how to navigate NCEA, how to adapt to university life and how to be a supportive parent/caregiver.

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.