

Managing National Assessment Report

Iona College

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 2021.

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Iona College

1 July 2022

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
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Clarify the resubmission rules with all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate
Ensure staff and student assessment handbooks are current, accurate and fit for purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Strengthen the monitoring of the internal moderation verification process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing
Evaluate the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up with Heads of Department, or teachers -in-Charge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At time of department audits

For consideration

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

- guiding teachers new to NCEA to use the internal moderation clarification tool to support their understanding of the standard.
- monitoring samples of student work for internal moderation to ensure they are strategically selected, including, purposefully around grade boundaries.



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5 August 2022

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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 26 October 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has resolved both agreed actions by developing a process to maintain student privacy when signing-off grades and providing students with accessible information on school assessment policy and procedures through the creation of a student handbook, available online for students and families through a web-based application.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes For the past five years, the school's external moderation outcomes have shown a high level of consistency. In one subject area in 2022, where assessor judgements were at variance with the judgments of NZQA moderators, the school activated the appeal process. The teacher new to the subject area gained insight and a clearer understanding of the standard through following up on the moderator's advice and accessing assessor support for the standard on the NZQA Learning Management System, Pūtake.

A next step for the Principal's Nominee would be to evaluate the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up during her annual audit of departmental assessment practice.

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)

Iona College combines time honoured traditions with modern tools and technologies to deliver credible assessment practice that meets NZQA's requirements for assessment outcomes that are valid, authentic, and verifiable.

In an effort to improve the school's level of excellence endorsements and to enhance student well-being, the senior leadership encouraged Heads of Department to cap their courses at 20 credits and adjust expectations regarding the number of standards students should attempt in the exams. The senior leadership team is aware that a significant proportion of students, drawn from the farming community, face conflicting demands on their time in the run up to the examination period and introduced these initiatives in response.

As part of its review of the student appeal process, the school identified the need for more robust checks on the authenticity of student work. Consequently, the school invested in plagiarism checking software, which led to an immediate and ongoing improvement in the authenticity of student work. In addition, this software can provide stronger proof of inauthentic work where originality is challenged in an appeal.

Following the last *Managing National Assessment* review, the storage and tracking of internal moderation has moved online and is managed and monitored through a web-based application. Several other online applications are used for course selection and the delivery and management of teaching and learning. The adoption of these tools and technologies has enabled teaching, learning and assessment to continue remotely through the disruption caused by COVID-19 and supports the credibility of the school's assessment practice.

In preparation for the *Digital First* approach that NCEA assessment will take from 2024, the school is piloting the new Literacy and Numeracy co-requisites to test how well its infrastructure can meet the demand for scaled-up digital assessment.

Iona College is using its own processes of self-review based on data analysis and staff/student voice to build teacher capability and implement changes that will continue to improve assessment outcomes for all students.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

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)

For the past five years, Iona College has maintained NCEA attainment rates above those of comparable schools. The school uses tools and technology, in conjunction with effective assessment practice to ensure it meets the needs of its students and delivers credible assessment that is fair, valid and authentic. Small class size allows teachers and Deans to readily identify students 'at risk' and modify their programmes accordingly.

Effective management of missed and late assessment ensures fairness and equity for students All requests for extensions to assessment deadlines are managed by the Principal's Nominee, ensuring that authenticity is maintained, and that assessment practice is consistent.

Effective communication of the new resubmission rules required The staff and student handbooks require minor edits to align with information on the NZQA website and further cement understandings regarding the resubmission of student work. Interviews with two staff members revealed that some of the finer points of the new resubmission rules need strengthening.

Although a resubmission can be offered for work that is Not Achieved, there are additional considerations to determine if the student should be offered a resubmission opportunity. A suitable reference for staff is the NZQA Resubmission *Mythbuster*, which states that "*effective use of checkpoints and feedback/feedforward will usually remove the need for resubmission where evidence is gathered by portfolio, or over an extended period.*" In the case of an assessment carried out over several weeks, where checkpoints and advice have been offered; if the student has chosen not to act on the advice; a resubmission should not be offered.

Further cementing understandings around the use of resubmissions will reduce inconsistencies in assessment practice

Quality assurance to ensure the reporting of credible results

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)

Overall, Iona College has an exemplary external moderation history and most of the teachers interviewed use subject specialists to verify grades awarded to student work for internal moderation. The school needs to ensure that all staff are aware that for internal moderation, the verifier should be a subject specialist with recent successful experience with the standard. While there is added pressure on sole subject specialists to find suitable grade verifiers; the cost of not using a subject specialist can result in a report that identifies the teacher judgement is not consistent with the standard. In addition, any teachers new to NCEA should be encouraged to use the internal moderation clarification tool to support their understanding of a standard.

Strengthen monitoring of Quality Assurance through shared ownership The school can strengthen its internal moderation processes by checking that the selection of samples of student work for verification is purposeful and is encouraged to devolve some ownership of the process to Heads of Department. In addition, verification discussions should be recorded giving reasons why verifiers agree or disagree with assessors' grade judgements, both to inform the grade judgements of future assessors of the standard and improve the robustness of the verification process.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Iona College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their 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 to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Iona College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late 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 and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

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

- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Iona College 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 and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Iona College 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
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding
- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

Effective communication to inform staff, students, and their families about assessment

Iona College has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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
- recognising and celebrating students' success in a range of settings.

Iona College 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 Iona 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.

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 2021* (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 to consider enhancing 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 information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report and the following documents:

- *Departmental Annual Reports 2021*
- *Iona College Policies and Procedures- Student Assessment and Achievement 2020*
- *NZQA Staff Handbook 2022*
- *NZQA Student Handbook 2022*
- *Strategic Plan 2020 – 2022*
- *Strategic Plan* (on a page modified for 2022).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal - Quality Learning and Teaching
- Heads of Department for:
 - Commerce
 - English
 - Performing Arts
 - Physical Education and Health
- Teachers of:
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- 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.