

Managing National Assessment Report

**St John's College
(Hastings)**

August 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

St John's College (Hastings)

30 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 2023.

Considerations

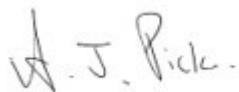
For consideration

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

- clarifying internal moderation monitoring requirements with Heads of Department.

No action required

The school has no action items relating to the quality of their assessment systems.



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17 October 2024

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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 27 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The one agreed item from the previous review has been addressed effectively by updating the staff and student handbooks and ensuring these are current, accessible and user-friendly.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Since 2021, the school's overall external moderation outcomes have consistently shown a high level of NZQA moderator agreement with teacher grade judgements. Although the school's overall consistency is high, patterns of inconsistency can emerge in individual subjects over time, which the department and senior leaders should endeavour to resolve. Where an external moderation report results in an outcome which is Not Consistent, or Not Yet Consistent with the standard, the Head of Department and the assessor are required to create an action plan that will resolve the issue effectively.

Where there are ongoing issues within a subject area, or with particular standards, professional support is usually sought from those outside the school with the required expertise. Teachers at the school attend Professional Development events, such as, NZQA Best Practice workshops and online meetings run by subject associations. Teachers are also encouraged to use NZQA's Query and Appeal process to challenge or unpack the NZQA Moderator's evaluation where necessary.

Where an assessor still has queries about the assessment criteria for a particular standard and/or its grade boundaries, they are advised to use the *Request Clarification of an Internally Assessed Standard* form next time they assess the standard. This process has not been used recently by teachers in the school, but together with checking the available assessor support on NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, this process can provide another layer of support to inform teachers' grade judgements.

The Principal's Nominee evaluates the effectiveness of external moderation follow up through bi-annual departmental Quality Assurance checks. They check progress against the action plan and evaluate how effectively the action plan resolved issues identified in the external moderation report.

Online storage of external moderation follow up is recommended as this improves accessibility and visibility for future assessors of the standard and Senior Leadership. The Principal's Nominee stores each external moderation report with its respective action plan by year. Heads of Department also need access to this material to inform future assessment of the standard.

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 John's College (Hastings) is using its own processes of self-review based on data analysis and staff, student and community voice to build teacher capability and implement changes that will continue to improve assessment outcomes for all students.

Since the last MNA review, a change in school leadership has been the catalyst for a whole school review and reimagining of the school's vision, values and strategic direction. At the time of this review, the new Strategic Plan was in draft and its intent is to reduce barriers to success for all students, with a particular focus on improving equity, excellence and engagement for Māori students.

Each year, Heads of Department prepare departmental reports for the Principal and Board for Trustees with a detailed analysis and presentation of their NCEA assessment data. The Head of Curriculum synthesizes these reports for the Board of Trustees into a more digestible summary of each department's key performance indicators, notable highlights, strengths and challenges. The school leadership has identified several key priorities for the immediate future:

- strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy skills in the junior school to support all students to gain the NCEA co-requisite
- improving whakawhanaungatanga and connectedness for Māori students and their whānau
- improving access to vocational pathways and training through a revised timetable
- raising the University Entrance pass rate and improving the number of certificate and course endorsements.

The school can be justifiably proud of its achievement outcomes over the past five years, considering it suffered an extended period of disruption to teaching, learning and assessment following Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023. Since 2019, the school has maintained NCEA pass rates well above those of comparable schools and schools nationally. Similarly, Māori NCEA achievement outcomes at St John's College have been consistently better than those of their counterparts in comparable schools and schools nationally. The school attributes its success in this area in part to the work of its Lost Learning teacher, who is responsible for catching students up when they return after a prolonged absence from school.

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)

Strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy skills In response to NZQA's move towards digital online assessment of foundational literacy and numeracy, the school will dedicate four periods per week for both Year 9 and 10 to boost their skills and prepare the students for digital online assessment. In a move mirroring that of other schools, these classes will be taught by highly effective teachers to improve outcomes for students. Pre-testing pass rates have given the school confidence that

the majority of students in Years 10 and 11 are well-prepared for the upcoming numeracy Common Assessment Activity.

Improving access to vocational pathways and training Currently, there are more school leavers likely to pursue a trade, employment or non-university pathway than there are on a university pathway and the school is responsive to this demand. The school is reviewing its timetable to avoid the scenario where student choice is limited by options restricted to certain lines. This will enable students interested in pursuing vocational pathways to engage in vocational courses, rather than having to take subjects in which they are not fully engaged.

Improving University Entrance pass rates through improved tracking The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently, the long term disruption caused by Cyclone Gabrielle have been identified as factors contributing to a decline in the school's pass rate for University Entrance (UE). The Principal's Nominee has taken responsibility for tracking all senior students' assessment for qualifications. They are hopeful that more targeted tracking of all Year 12 and 13 students can facilitate an improved UE pass rate.

The Principals' Nominee ensures that student's NCEA progress is reported on at regular intervals in the first half of the year and then more frequently in the second half. Each student's progress towards gaining the NCEA co-requisite, their credit totals, rate of Not Achieved and attendance is visible and shared with the Deans, HODs, SENCO and the Careers Adviser, who follow up and contact home as required. In keeping with the Marist servant leadership charism of the school, teachers and whānau walk alongside their young men providing wrap around support to achieve their goals.

The students interviewed demonstrated their agency in tracking their own progress through their NZQA Learner Login and the student portal to the Student Management System.

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)

Clarify internal moderation monitoring requirements with Heads of Department

Since the last MNA review, the school has encouraged Heads of Department to share ownership for the monitoring of internal moderation. The school has adopted the moderation tool in the Student Management System (SMS) to provide greater visibility of the process and its progress. The Principals' Nominee relies on the department heads to send results to NZQA only when internal moderation is complete.

To ensure that this distributed leadership model continues to deliver compliant, credible and consistent assessment practice, it is important that all Heads of Department monitor internal moderation through the same lens as the Principal's Nominee. As discussed in the review, their checks of the internal moderation critiquing and verification steps need to be strengthened and more consistent. The Principal Nominee has indicated that they will outline the requirements of the critiquing and verification steps in the staff handbook.

Ensure the critiquing step is effective One reason for the Principal's Nominee's bi-annual department visit is to reconcile a sample of internal moderation cover sheets with actual practice. Pre-moderation documentation should be shared with the person verifying the assessor's grades and be stored securely (preferably online) until the standard is assessed again. Individual assessors can collect and collate the pre-moderation documentation to share this workload.

Ensure the verification step is effective Before results are sent to NZQA, Heads of Department need to review the completed internal moderation cover sheet and check that:

- the verifier is a suitably qualified, subject expert with recent successful experience with the standard
- the number of pieces internally moderated is sufficient
- verification discussions are recorded.

Heads of Department monitor the internal moderation process for all the standards for which their department reports results, and the Principal's Nominee provides a second pair of eyes by quality assuring the whole assessment and moderation cycle on behalf of the Principal.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

St John's College (Hastings) 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 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 expanding 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 John's College (Hastings) 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 John's College (Hastings) 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 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 John's College (Hastings) 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
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

St John's College (Hastings) 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.

St John's College (Hastings) 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.

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

St John's College (Hastings) 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, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

St John's College (Hastings) 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 John's College (Hastings):

- 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 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:

- a sample of departmental and other reports to the Board of Trustees
- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *SJC Student National Assessment Policies for Students 2024* (Student Handbook)
- *Staff Managing National Assessment Information 2024* (Staff Handbook)
- *Strategic Plan and Annual Goals 2024*.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee / Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Music
 - Science
 - Te Reo Māori
 - Visual Arts
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Principal's Nominee / Deputy Principal – Curriculum 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.