

Managing National Assessment Report

Horowhenua College

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Horowhenua 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
- *Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy and Procedures, Horowhenua College*
- *NCEA Student Handbook 2018, Horowhenua College*
- *Assessment Procedures for the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, 2018 Staff Handbook, Horowhenua College*
- *2018 Year 11 and Year 13 Assembly PowerPoint, Horowhenua College*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, the Deputy Principal - Curriculum, three students, and Heads of Faculty for Arts, Languages, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science and Technology.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and 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.

SUMMARY

Horowhenua College

28 June 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 four years.

What the school is doing well

'The Nua Way' identifies academic achievements as a key to unlock doors of opportunity. This vision endorses the school's commitment to provide a diversity of pathways and responsive approaches, to support positive outcomes of student achievement school-wide. Thorough knowledge of each student's educational needs, interests and future goals underpins the school's approach. The school takes pride in the integrity of its assessment practices, ensuring assessment outcomes are consistent and credible, and meet NZQA requirements.

Self-review is embedded practice and occurs at all levels of the school. Distributive leadership and a shared culture of meeting student needs has built staff capacity and a school-wide collaborative ownership of effective NCEA assessment practice. Data analysis and student voice informs self-review, allowing teachers to reflect on course and programme design. The outcomes of biannual analysis by Heads of Faculty for the Board of Trustees are evaluated by senior leadership, to inform school-wide strategic focus.

Effective communication has enabled senior leadership and teachers to take ownership of the assessment systems in the college. Assessment practice is competently led by the experienced Principal's Nominee who regularly fosters discussion on best practice and sets high expectations for staff. Staff acknowledge the professionalism of the Principal's Nominee and her approachability and solutions focus.

Teachers described a variety of responsive assessment programmes used to differentiate and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate best achievement. The students interviewed for the review were well-informed about the NCEA and considered teachers positively supported them to achieve.

The school has implemented a robust annual audit of internal moderation processes to ensure that only credible results are reported to NZQA. External moderation outcomes are addressed by faculty leaders preparing an action plan to resolve issues. Senior leadership evaluates the effectiveness of these interventions, and their findings indicate positive change following the actions taken.

The management of assessment data is efficient, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Effective monitoring of student progress towards personal goals occurs through mentoring.

School documentation of NCEA practices and national qualifications are reviewed and updated annually and provide clear direction of best practice. Sharing best assessment practice within and across faculties is used to further professional learning, promoting school-wide consistency.

Areas for improvement

Resubmission requires clarification to ensure consistent practice, to meets NZQA expectations.

Agreed action

The school agreed that this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is:

- clarifying resubmission assessment opportunities with teachers.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

13 August 2018

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 14 August 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The review identified four agreed actions, and these have been fully resolved.

Response to external moderation outcomes Consistently sound external moderation agreement rates reflect the school's effective response to external moderation feedback and robust internal moderation processes. External moderation outcomes and responses are discussed with the Principal's Nominee. All Heads of Faculty comprehensively document for senior leadership external moderation results and the actions they will take to rectify any issues. Appropriate support to improve practice is provided, where required. Senior leadership monitor the progression and impact of agreed actions as part of the regular meeting cycle, to inform ongoing improvements.

Internal review

Evidence that the school is 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)

A strong and effective culture of self-review is embedded practice at the school. The principles of accountability and advocacy for students are integral to the school's responsive and pro-active internal review of assessment practices, at each level of the school. This focus culminates in a shared commitment to continuous improvement to best meet the diverse needs of students and give students opportunities to demonstrate their best achievement. Student achievement outcomes and the evaluation of the effectiveness of assessment programmes are underpinned by data analysis and student voice.

Collective ownership and responsibility for assessment practice is promoted through effective sharing of good practice to support student achievement. All members of the senior leadership team oversee teaching, learning and assessment in the faculty areas and whānau groups they are responsible for. The biannual learning area self-review audit provides senior leadership and teachers with an effective framework for ongoing self-review and improvement. Working alongside senior leadership, the Principal's Nominee effectively resolves issues to ensure consistency for teachers and students and improvement in practice.

As a response to the school's self-review processes, a number of assessment strategies have been introduced or strengthened to raise student achievement and ensure credible assessment.

Developments resulting from self-review include:

- supporting Māori achieving as Māori, and Pasifika achievement through:
 - involvement with Raukawa Whānau Ora mentoring and Kia Eke Panuku

- a dedicated Māori and Pasifika Dean
- whānau hui and Pasifika fono
- pro-actively using a broad range of methods to collect evidence of achievement, including the strategic use of digital technologies, as appropriate
- developing policy and procedures to effectively manage the school-wide conventions to ensure consistent collection and storage of digital student evidence. The school is using the guidelines from the 2018 Principal's Nominee seminar to help ensure that digital evidence collected is authentic, credible and accessible
- strengthening and evaluating the effectiveness of quality assurance processes for moderation through an audit undertaken by the Principal's Nominee, and senior leadership review. Faculty leaders also complete a self-review tool to support the assurance process of all assessment procedures
- real time sharing of outcomes of assessment opportunities across teachers and with students using an innovative digital tool, allowing timely and responsive interactions that positively impact on student achievement
- participating in digital pilot and trial examinations, preparing students for future assessment practice
- investigating current school processes, including the increased use of school-based evidence, to ensure all students who need special assessment conditions are identified and provided with appropriate support.

Annual review of examination management The school operates practice examinations under the same conditions as NZQA examinations, using external supervisors, to review practice, identify improvements and provide Level 1 students with formal examination experience. Staff and students commented on the purposeful nature of these examinations. Systems are also reviewed following the completion of NZQA examinations, such as room allocation and rostering staff near examination venues, ensuring the most conducive atmosphere is provided for students.

Strengthened Derived Grade Quality Assurance Processes School practice examinations have been renamed Derived Grade examinations to emphasise to both staff and students the importance of these assessments to gather quality evidence for derived and emergency grades. The Principal's Nominee also corroborates the quality assurance processes and grade for each derived grade application, to provide certainty that evidence meets NZQA requirements.

Distributive leadership, cyclic review and collaborative practice have enhanced the shared vision of high expectations for student achievement. The school is explicitly addressing the challenges posed by more flexible assessment and wide-ranging evidence gathering. Credible quality assurance and use of data to respond to changing student need reflects an assessment culture that effectively utilises the flexibility of the NCEA model. Evidence of the impact of this approach is the improvement in student achievement since the last review.

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)

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

- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities within the same class and across classes in the same subjects, including offering optional standards
- designing courses with learning contexts that are relevant, engage student interests, and reflect cultural backgrounds
- managing student workloads through limiting the number of credits offered in each course and focussing on the quality of achievement
- providing challenge through supporting students to enter for New Zealand Scholarship with additional tutoring and starter NCEA programmes for Year 10 students
- increasing the number of options available to students by using external providers and links with local businesses including work experience
- providing opportunities for students to complete qualifications, particularly in weekly call back times and catch-up sessions at the end of the year
- celebrating student achievement through academic awards and acknowledgement of success.

Horowhenua College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals and further assessment opportunities
- monitoring the authenticity of student work through teachers and students using strategies during the assessment and marking process
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

Evidence gathering allows students to present best evidence Heads of Faculty interviewed identified broadening evidence gathering practices that promote student engagement and achievement. Students have the opportunity to present work in ways that recognise their varied learning preferences and abilities, while maintaining the quality of assessment practice and the requirements of the standard. Examples of practice of evidence gathering for assessment include:

- oral and performance, ensuring literacy skills are not a barrier to demonstrating achievement and to improve student confidence
- collecting naturally occurring, portfolios, group activities, practical, and digitally recorded evidence, as well as completion of checklists and templates

- using one context across more than one standard and investigating departmental collaboration to share evidence across subjects
- assessing students when they are ready, through flexible timeframes and using milestone checks, and feedback and feedforward to support students to present their best evidence of achievement
- double period extended learning time offers opportunities for practical and performance-based learning, as well as dedicated assessment time.

Clarification of resubmission required Two teachers described offering resubmission to all students. To meet NZQA requirements, a resubmission should be offered to individual students who are on a grade boundary and can independently identify and correct the error or omission. The school agreed to clarify processes with staff to ensure consistent and correct resubmission practice.

Focussing assessment opportunities on assessing when ready, where appropriate could reduce the need for resubmissions and further assessment opportunities.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- clarify resubmission assessment opportunities with teachers.

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)

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

- modifying publicly sourced, and keeping commercial tasks secure
- ensuring assessment tasks reflect the standard by having amended or new tasks critiqued prior to use
- verifying grade judgements of strategically selected samples of student work, including at grade boundaries, using subject specialists within and outside the school
- documenting internal moderation processes for each standard before results are reported
- using bench mark exemplars and documented discussions on grade judgements to inform future assessment decisions.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- valuing moderator's feedback for professional learning to inform robust internal moderation
- choosing a high proportion of standards to be included in the moderation plan and actively encouraging future digital submission of student work. The intended next step is to upskill Heads of Faculty to complete their own online submissions through the moderation tool.

Strengthened monitoring of internal moderation processes As part of their review focus, internal moderation practices are quality assured. The Principal's Nominee comprehensively audits the moderation processes of each faculty, including reconciling actual samples of student work with documentation and checking storage arrangements. Outcomes are recorded and where issues are identified, they are resolved.

The audit is complemented by a senior leadership review of faculty processes, including both internal and external moderation, every two-three years. Policies and processes have been established to ensure teachers are provided with clear expectations for moderation processes.

Senior leadership can be confident as a result of ongoing review that internal moderation procedures carried out in all faculties are complete and robust. The audit has added value in strengthening the consistency of moderation processes across all faculties, ensuring the reporting of credible results.

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)

Horowhenua College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - reporting achievement outcomes outlining next steps, and holding Parent Conferences to discuss student progress towards NCEA achievement
 - evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes, including using student voice, to inform changes to programmes, contexts and standards
 - supporting teachers to undertake reflective analysis of achievement data as part of teacher as inquiry projects
 - reporting to the Board of Trustees an evaluative analysis of NCEA achievement, including each faculty publishing annual evidence-based action plans and reviewing their progression and effectiveness.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - actively encouraging students and whānau to use the student management system portal and NZQA Learner login to monitor NCEA progress and check reported results for accuracy
 - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data issues
 - timely and accurate reporting of results to NZQA that have been checked for accuracy
 - ensuring entries submitted to NZQA have a reported result or are withdrawn as appropriate
 - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers which are reconciled with current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective use of data to inform change Data analysis and use is a strength of the school, informing good practice and self-review for teachers, Heads of Faculty, senior leadership and the Board of Trustees. Data is used to inform and reflect on student achievement, measurement of strategic goals and the effectiveness of changes made. High expectations of student success have been realised through comprehensive data evaluation.

Robust monitoring and academic mentoring to support achievement outcomes

The college has a very effective mentoring and monitoring system. Data from the student management system and an innovative digital analysis tool provides real time, relevant information. The tool provides current, comprehensive and accessible graphic result profiles for individuals and groups of students, allowing appropriate interventions when needed. Staff are trained as academic mentors to support students with goal setting, career pathways and progress towards completing qualifications, making effective use of the digital tool.

Whānau tutors coach and mentor each student at the school level for the NCEA qualification through regular tailored conversations, discussing their progress, preparedness for upcoming assessment opportunities and how to manage assessment workloads. Subject teachers actively monitor and support students to attain at least 14 credits within the subject. Within the classroom tuākana – tēina relationships are fostered with students mentoring their peers. An increased number of mixed ability groupings has extended the opportunity for peer support.

A traffic light system is used for tracking and monitoring student progress. Students who need additional numeracy and literacy support to achieve the qualification and University Entrance requirements are assisted through a range of targeted strategies. This approach allows early identification of at risk students and if necessary, assessment programmes are modified to reflect learning needs and aspirations.

The teacher-student mentoring sessions also allow any clarification required of assessment practice for students. This contributes to school-wide consistency. The college involves parents in this process, which further helps them to understand the NCEA assessment model.

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))

Horowhenua College has effective processes and procedures for:

- annually reviewing communications to ensure that they are fit for purpose and current
- ensuring students receive course information booklets for all subjects they undertake
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who may be eligible.

Horowhenua College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- presenting NCEA information in tailored student assemblies and parent evenings, Whānau hui and Pasifika fono
- Heads of Faculty supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme on the school's assessment and moderation processes
- annually using a self-review tool to discuss and evaluate assessment practice by Heads of Faculty and assigned senior leaders
- the Principal's Nominee operating an open-door policy and the senior leadership team regularly meeting with faculty leaders
- encouraging teachers to attend Best Practice Workshops, when available.

Clear communication of assessment practice Strong leadership and effective communication of NCEA assessment procedures and processes has facilitated shared ownership of assessment systems at all levels of the school's operation. Robust discussion and sharing of ideas and expectations across the staff supports the development of best assessment practice. Assessment processes, including unpacking the key ideas in the *NCEA Myth Busters*, are the subject of targeted professional learning at faculty meetings. Heads of Faculty then lead discussion of assessment practice within the context of their own faculty area.

Pro-active use of digital, face-to-face, and written communication opportunities ensure assessment information is accessible to all stakeholders and understood.

Communication is annually reviewed and is digitalised on the online learning management system to ensure documentation is current and fit for purpose. The staff and student handbooks are user-friendly, concise, plain English documents, covering essential information. Clear direction of best practice, such as authenticity strategies and moderation processes in the staff handbook, supports consistent application of assessment policies and NZQA requirements.

The students interviewed for the review clearly articulated the school assessment practices and what is needed to gain a qualification. They indicated ready access to NCEA information via the Principal's Nominee, teachers and documentation. They also acknowledged the support given by staff to assist students to demonstrate their best achievement, including through the varied pathways offered.

Updating course outlines to provide consistent assessment information All course outlines should include the requirements listed in the staff handbook on the assigned standardised format, to align documentation with practice. Some subject course outlines need updating to include accurate Level 1 literacy and numeracy, University Entrance literacy and further assessment opportunities information, as applicable. Identifying University Entrance approved subjects and endorseable courses is also recommended. Succinct and consistent information for all courses should be readily accessible to students and their caregivers.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing consistent assessment information in all course outlines.