

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Waiopehu College

May 2019

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Waiopēhu 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 2019* (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
- *Waiopahu College Staff Procedures Handbook 2019*
- *Waiopahu College NCEA Guide for Students and Caregivers*
- *Waiopahu College Assessment Procedure*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Heads of Department for:
  - Digital Technology
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Performing Arts
  - Social Sciences
  - Technology
- three students.

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

## Waiopahu College

08 May 2019

### 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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

### What the school is doing well

Waiopahu College uses the acronym 'Pehu PRIDE' to communicate its values of Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Excellence. The school uses these values to underpin the work they do to improve student achievement through strong learning-focused relationships and effective review leading to change.

School leaders, along with teaching staff and students, conduct review into teaching and assessment practice at all levels. Staff create and modify teaching and assessment programmes to develop learning plans for classes with the flexibility to enable individualised plans.

Students are mentored through strong learning-focused relationships and a future-focused approach involving parents and classroom and tutor teachers. All Year 13 students receive academic mentoring. Students are actively engaged in course planning that leads to them meeting their pathway goals. Deans for Pacific and Māori students specifically focus on supporting learning of students.

There is evidence that learning-focused relationships at Waiopahu College ensure effective communication between teachers, students and families about NCEA, and about how a student's abilities and goals inform course and assessment planning.

The school manages internal moderation processes in a transparent manner, with a team approach. They use their student management system and checking procedures effectively to ensure that moderation processes are thorough and completed. The Principal's Nominee has worked with departmental leaders to embed best practice for selecting and verifying samples for internal moderation. Heads of Department respond to external moderation with concrete action plans.

The school manages assessment data so that it is valid, accurate and timely. The Principal's Nominee monitors the data from input to submission.

### Areas for improvement

Waiopahu College's external moderation process will be strengthened by checking that the changes identified in response to external moderation reports are put into place by the next assessment cycle.

### **Agreed actions**

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

- complete the external moderation process by ensuring that actions taken resolve identified issues by the next assessment cycle.

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24 June 2019

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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 15 March 2016 Managing National Assessment Report** All action items from the 2016 Managing National Assessment review have been completed. Student work is stored in a central location in departments, and confirmation of internal moderation is completed in the student management system. The Principal's Nominee monitors this regularly for accuracy and completion. Internal moderation is completed to NZQA's expectations, staff check data for accuracy on the NZQA website, and the staff handbook is regularly reviewed.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** There is a high level of agreement between assessors and NZQA Moderators' judgements. The college effectively reviews external moderation outcomes. Where there is disagreement, staff respond proactively by seeking appropriate professional development and adapting their teaching and assessment plans. The Principal's Nominee oversees this. The next step in this review cycle is for senior leaders to monitor the actions taken; ensuring that these actions effectively resolve the identified issues by the subsequent assessment cycle.

### 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)*

At Waiopahu College, on-going, summative and future-focused review play an important part in shaping assessment practice. Staff share a departmental document to provide immediate reflective review of units and assessments just completed. Teachers and leaders are required to add to this, resulting in 'live' review. Heads of Departments and teachers analyse outcomes of courses for cohorts and consider changes to teaching and assessment plans in response. Departments review the use of particular standards, the internal/external mix and the total number of credits offered in courses. They are encouraged to incorporate student voice into this review.

This year the whole staff are reviewing the way learning is structured at the college, with a view to transforming learning at Level 1. The school anticipates that a thematic or topical approach to learning would allow for cross-curricula collaboration and increased flexibility and creativity in assessment planning.

In 2016 the school recognised that some results have been lower than national and decile figures. In response, they appointed deans for Pacific students tasked explicitly with focusing on supporting learning. This system was also implemented by the dean of Māori students and has now become the model used for academic monitoring of all students. All Year 13 students receive academic mentoring by a teacher they have selected. The 2017 and 2018 results provide evidence that this approach is having a positive effect on student achievement.

**Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review. Senior management undertakes to:

- complete the external moderation process by ensuring that actions resolve identified issues by the next assessment cycle.

## 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 2019 5.5)*

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

- applying for, and managing, special assessment conditions for eligible students
- providing differentiated assessment programmes within courses
- using milestones and feedback to help students present their best work and manage their deadlines
- allowing students to negotiate individual assessment plans with their teachers as appropriate
- assessing students when ready.

### **Waiopahu College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating possible breaches of internal assessment rules
- managing the authenticity of student work
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Learning-focused relationships lead to flexible assessment practices** Heads of Departments speak about the flexibility of assessment plans in their department. They respond to students' interests and abilities by using a variety of methods of evidence collection for standards, including verbal reports, blogs, blended portfolios, and project work. Students have a strong voice in determining contexts, setting up projects and including performance events in their assessment programmes. They are encouraged to work with their teachers to manage their overall assessment plan and workload. Students speak positively about their ability to negotiate an individual assessment plan with their teachers, including contexts and deadlines.

**Equity in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at Level 3** The school's equity focus has been on reducing the achievement gap between Māori and Pacific students and their peers. Monitoring and mentoring systems now in place support all students in their learning. Senior Management have noted the lower participation and achievement in STEM subjects for Māori and Pacific students, so the next step is for the school to consider how their work on reducing the gap can lead to equity of outcomes. Careers New Zealand recommends that students should study English, Mathematics and at least one Science subject, particularly if they don't have a specific career in mind.

### **No action required**

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

## **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 2019 6.4b)*

### **Waiopahu College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- collecting and distributing benchmarked samples prior to marking meetings
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- working towards implementing strategic selection in all departments
- making arrangements with other schools to partner for grade verification in small departments
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring that all grades have been internally moderated before submission to NZQA.

### **Waiopahu 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 by being adequately stored
- submitting an increasing proportion of materials digitally.

**Review of moderation practices** The school has introduced a system of 'blind' moderation, whereby names and grades are not included with the samples when they are verified. They are finding that this improves the quality of the discussion around grade boundaries, as it removes the 'observer bias'. Leaders will continue to review this to see if it further improves their overall agreement rate with NZQA moderators.

### **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)*

### **Waiopahu College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- reporting results to students and families using the online portal to the student management system, so that they can have up-to-date information about attainment and progress
- tracking academic progress to assist with monitoring and mentoring students towards meeting their goals
- providing future-focused course planning and pathways advice supported by assessment evidence
- analysing results in order to conduct on-going and summative reviews of courses.

### **Waiopahu College reports accurate achievement data by:**

- submitting data files on a regular basis
- ensuring results are supplied for all entries or withdrawing student entries as appropriate
- having the Principal's Nominee monitor school assessment data, from input through to submission
- checking the Key Indicators to identify and correct data issues.

**Access to NZQA Learner Login** The school could consider encouraging more students to register and use their NZQA Learner Login. Students logging on to the NZQA website have access to their record of achievement, can check entries, results and qualifications, request certificates, amend their details and analyse their pathways information. The process also provides a useful checking mechanism which further supports the accuracy of data entered in the school's student management system.

### **For consideration**

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

- encouraging all students to use their NZQA Learner Login to check that entries and results are correct.

## **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))*

### **Waiopahu College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure
- supporting teachers new to the school
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

### **Waiopahu College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- providing teachers with clear information about processes
- requiring teachers to cover material about NCEA processes with students in all senior classes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and utilising online shared documents to conduct ongoing review in departments
- providing students and families online information about NCEA including processes.

### **Strong learning-focused relationships support effective communication**

Evidence from leaders, staff and students shows that positive learning-focused relationships are effective in ensuring NCEA is well understood.

Students can explain the basics of NCEA. They know about the certificate requirements, authenticity, deadlines, resubmission, and further assessment opportunities. Students report that they are well informed about deadlines and extensions and about where in the marking and moderation process their work is at.

Students can view NCEA information online via a booklet on the school website. The school could consider making this downloadable from the website or available on paper so that they have access to it offline. Some of the information in the booklet is expanded on through links which are not accessible in the online viewer.

Parents, tutor teachers and students meet in yearly 'futures interviews' to discuss achievement, pathways goals, and course recommendations supplied by classroom teachers. The focus of these meetings is on planning ahead for appropriate courses and qualifications.

Pacific students are supported by their own dean. Their families meet for NCEA information evenings as a separate group in order to improve their understanding of NCEA.

### **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:

- ensuring students have a physical copy or access to a downloadable digital copy of their handbook.