

Managing National Assessment Report

Makoura College

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Makoura 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
- *Makoura College Assessment Policy May 2018*
- *Makoura College NZQA Teachers Handbook, Procedures for 2018*
- *Makoura College NZQA Student Handbook 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, the manager of the Teen Parent Unit, Teacher in Charge of Careers, and Heads of Faculty for Hauora, Humanities, Mathematics and Science, Technology, and The Arts.

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

Makoura College

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

What the school is doing well

Makoura College has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

Recent review of the effectiveness of assessment processes has led to the needs of students being met. Staff and student feedback is often an integral part of these reviews, helping to ensure shared ownership of the process and outcomes. This has been achieved by providing a range of assessment opportunities both in and outside of the school, reducing the number of assessments to promote quality results and offering optional standards to allow more personalised programmes. Identified students are provided with approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported.

Internal moderation is an embedded process within faculties and is well monitored by the Principal's Nominee to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA. Heads of Faculty engage with NZQA's new External Moderation Application and assist with the submission process. Much of the assessment material has been submitted digitally.

Student assessment data is checked for accuracy and reported to meet key dates. Comparative annual data informs course and assessment programme design, producing more engaging and meaningful assessments for students. Data is also effectively analysed to set strategic direction, monitor student progress towards completing qualifications and identify students at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements.

Information on assessment processes is communicated to the school community in a range of formats and languages to facilitate the development of a common understanding.

Areas for improvement

Monitoring of actions planned by staff in response to external moderation outcomes is not always adequately recorded. Without these records, senior management cannot be confident identified issues have been effectively addressed. The school's external moderation processes need to ensure staff response is timely, and planned actions are appropriately evaluated and recorded.

The students interviewed during this review reported inconsistent staff use of the resubmission process. Senior management have agreed to clarify the resubmission process with staff.

The staff and student handbook contain information that is out of date and links that no longer work. Updating the handbooks will ensure they provide users with not just appropriate, but current information.

Agreed action

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are:

- ensure staff response to external moderation is timely, and planned actions are appropriately evaluated and recorded
- clarify the resubmission process with staff
- update the assessment handbooks.

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20 August 2018

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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 21-22 October 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no items that required action from the 2014 Managing National Assessment review.

Response to external moderation outcomes Staff respond to external moderation outcomes, developing a templated action plan to address concerns raised by moderators. The Principal's Nominee indicated that she discusses these action plans with the staff concerned to ensure support is provided, where required. However, she could not confirm that every plan was later checked to ensure it was completed in a timely manner, or that the effectiveness of the actions were evaluated. These checks should be recorded so that senior management can be confident that the school's response to external moderation is effectively addressing issues.

All external moderation, regardless of the standard-setting body, is managed by the Principal's Nominee and any issues identified are dealt with using the same response process.

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)

The school has internal review processes that effectively deal with issues identified by management, staff or students. These processes engage all involved stakeholders. Where appropriate, student feedback is sought to help judge the effectiveness of school processes. This willingness to involve students in review is not limited to just what happens within the school. Students are being encouraged to take part in Kōrero Mātauranga so they can have their say on what the future of NCEA looks like.

Withdrawal process tightened The Principal's Nominee is now the only one who can withdraw student entries through the student management system. Noting that the school's Not Achieved was lower than the national rate, the Principal's Nominee concluded from discussions with staff that in some instances student entries were incorrectly being withdrawn, rather than a Not Achieved grade being awarded. If staff consider a student has not achieved the standards because they have not had an adequate assessment opportunity, they must now negotiate the entry withdrawal with her.

Credit capping Credit caps of between 16 and 20 credits per course have been instituted to support the strategic goal of improving endorsement rates. Students can therefore focus on the quality of grades rather than the quantity of credits achieved. The school noted that endorsement rates increased markedly in 2017.

Review of Waka Huia groups Student feedback has been used to review the effectiveness of the mentoring occurring in the school's Waka Huia groups. Waka Huia teachers continue to track student progress, but now also take a more active role in assisting students understand how subject choice can influence career pathways. The school is focussing on pathways, reinforcing skills and knowledge acquisition by students and ensuring those looking at vocational pathways have a range of opportunities available.

However, the school does not have, and should consider setting in place, a system of regular review of school-wide assessment processes to ensure they meet the requirements of the Assessment Rules, and that teacher practice is consistent across faculties.

Agreed action

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

- ensure staff response to external moderation is timely, and planned actions are appropriately evaluated and recorded.

For consideration

To extend good practice in self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- developing a review process to regularly evaluate school-wide assessment practice.

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)

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

- improving the range of assessment opportunities available through extending the school's consent to assess, Star and Gateway programmes, and Trade Academies organised by local tertiary providers
- introducing optional standards in some courses to provide students with the opportunity to modify their own assessment programmes
- adapting courses and contexts to meet student interests
- reducing student assessment workload by using a single context to gather evidence for more than one standard
- assessing students when ready, as appropriate
- using a range of methods during assessment to collect physical and/or digital evidence of achievement
- identifying and applying for special assessment conditions for those potentially eligible
- ensuring that staff are well informed of those with special assessment conditions entitlements and providing appropriate support, as required.

Makoura College has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessments and further assessment opportunities
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules
- complying with the requirements of the Privacy Act, 1993 when handling students' assessment information, and the Copyright Act 1994 when using student work as exemplars
- assisting with the management of the Examination Centre.

Inconsistent use of the resubmission process The students interviewed reported inconsistent teacher practice and understanding of the resubmission process. Resubmission may be offered if a teacher, at their discretion, judges a student can identify and correct a minor error or omission in their work that would improve their grade. The teacher must not provide information that would assist the student to identify the error. Resubmission should not be student driven, offered to all, or a planned part of the assessment process. The school has agreed to clarify the resubmission process with staff. Use of NZQA's resubmission *Mythbuster* may assist with this.

Clarify appeal processes with staff and students Students have the right to appeal any decisions on reported conduct that might constitute a breach of the school's internal assessment rules. There is no information in the staff and student handbooks on this, and the students interviewed were not aware of it. They are aware of their right to appeal assessment grade decisions. Expanding the information on appeals in the handbooks and modifying the present appeal form to allow for other types of appeals to include breaches will help clarify processes for students and staff.

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 the resubmission process with staff.

For consideration

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

- clarifying appeal processes with staff and students.

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)

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

- having all assessment materials critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and provide students with the opportunity to present evidence at all grade levels
- teachers using exemplars and standard clarifications to inform their grade judgements during marking
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- using subject specialists to verify samples of student grades
- strengthening verification by expecting teachers to have samples from at least 20 per cent of all standards they assess considered by outside verifiers
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring teachers' internal moderation processes, including collecting and collating copies of all cover sheets, before submitting results to NZQA
- ensuring teachers in the attached Teen Parent Unit follow the same processes as those at the main campus.

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

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- providing Heads of Faculty with access to the NZQA External Moderation Application to assist with the submission process
- submitting much of the material selected for external moderation digitally
- storing physical assessment material securely so it is available for external moderation.

Encouraging staff to strategically request standards for moderation To date the school has put forward very few standards for inclusion in their annual moderation plans. The NZQA external moderation process allows the school to propose standards they would like feedback on. Encouraging staff to request standards will allow them to think strategically and ensure that:

- standards identified with issues are re-moderated within an appropriate timeframe
- currently assessed standards are chosen instead of those no longer being assessed against
- all assessed standards can be included over time.

Developing protocols for the storage of digital assessment material The school is aware that while the amount of assessment material being produced digitally is increasing, there are no clearly set out processes to ensure it is securely stored. Developing processes and protocols for the storage of digital material will enable the school to ensure it can be easily accessed, shared with outside verifiers, and be available, if required, for external moderation.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- encouraging staff to strategically select standards for external moderation
- exploring possible digital storage options.

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)

Makoura College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school-wide strategic and faculty goals based upon comparative analysis of achievement data
 - teachers analysing the previous year's achievement data to inform current year course or programme design
 - the Principal's Nominee identifying students at risk of not meeting qualification requirements and providing feedback to staff so that appropriate support can be provided
 - Senior Leaders mentoring small groups of at-risk students to keep them on-track towards achieving qualifications.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking for, and correcting errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - having students take ownership of their results by signing-off on the accuracy of their grades
 - teachers and Heads of Faculty checking the accuracy of results entered in the student management system, before they are reported to NZQA
 - reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

Assist students to register to use their NZQA Learner login The number of the students registering, and using, their NZQA Learner login has declined recently. Only one of the students interviewed had registered. Students are increasingly using the online portal to the school's student management system to check their results. However, it is only through their Learner login that they can check their results have

been accurately reported to NZQA, request reviews or reconsiderations for external examination papers or order copies of their Record of Achievement and/or qualification certificates.

The school is currently reviewing its processes to better assist students to register.

Encouraging staff use of the school's Provider login The Principal's Nominee noted that while staff have been provided with access to the school's Provider login, not all appear to be making use of it. Heads of Faculty have taken responsibility for preparing material external moderation submission but are also having to assist staff to view and print moderation reports. Encouraging staff to use their login to access the Moderation Application and the other resources available will spread the workload associated with using these, and ownership of the outcomes.

For consideration

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

- encouraging staff use of the school's Provider login.

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))

Makoura College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive course outlines for every course they take
- communicating information on qualifications, and assessment policies and procedures to all sectors of the school community

Makoura College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- making assessment handbooks available digitally to facilitate sharing
- taking students through their handbook at the beginning of the year to ensure key points are understood
- providing parents with NZQA's NCEA information in a range of Pacific Islands languages, as well as English
- supporting teachers new to the school with an NCEA induction process
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements.

Reviewing staff and student handbooks annually To reflect current practice and NZQA information, the staff and student handbooks should be reviewed and updated annually. Information that requires updating includes:

- reference to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) rather than the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)
- the consequence for breaching assessment rules
- appealing assessment decisions other than grades
- links to expired NZQA circulars and processes.

Outdated information should be removed and replaced with current material. Doing this through links to relevant pages on the NZQA website will ensure the handbooks stay up-to-date and provide staff and students with current information.

Increasing the consistency of course assessment information The assessment information in course outlines is inconsistent and presented in a variety of formats. Using a common template for course assessment statements, such as that available through the school's student management system, would provide students and their parents with more consistent and comprehensive information on standard-specific assessment practice. It would also better meet the preference of the students interviewed, for a standard to be referred to by its registered number, rather than its subject matrix identifier.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- update the assessment handbooks.

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 students with consistent information in course outlines.