

Managing National Assessment Report

Rathkeale College

August 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Rathkeale College

22 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

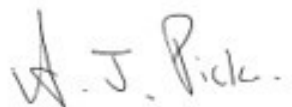
The school agreed that following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student	
Clarify the resubmission rules with all staff	Immediate and ongoing

For consideration

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

- using student voice to inform change to courses and assessment practice.



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27 September 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 September 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

The two agreed items from the previous review have been addressed by:

- ensuring all staff understand and practise strategic selection of samples of students work for internal moderation
- updating guidance on moderation practice and procedures in the staff handbook.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Rathkeale College has an effective process in place to respond to external moderation. The school's moderation history shows a high level of NZQA moderator agreement with teacher grade judgements and actions are taken in response to any issues identified in external moderation reports. The Principal's Nominee informs the Head of Faculty when an external moderation report has been received and all feedback is documented. The Head of Faculty determines actions that need to be addressed in discussion with their Line Manager and relevant teachers. The response form is then added to the document to ensure that the Principal's Nominee and Senior Leadership can monitor progress towards completion. Changes may be made to assessment tasks and teacher practice in accordance with moderator recommendations, including where assessor grade judgements have been found to be consistent with the standard.

The school actively supports its staff to address feedback from external moderation by encouraging the use of online assessor support and practice tools as well as attendance at Best Practice workshops and consultation with external subject specialists. Collectively, these actions give Senior Leadership confidence in the credibility of reported results, as well as in the robustness of the school's internal quality assurance practices.

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)

Heads of Faculty are required to prepare an annual report which includes an analysis of NCEA student results including implications for future course design and strategic direction. This report is shared and discussed with Senior Leaders and presented in person to the Board of Trustees.

Ongoing self-review has resulted in several initiatives being adopted at Rathkeale College. One example of this is the current focus on improving the literacy proficiency of its students. This initiative was launched as a result of an observed decline in the functional literacy of students beginning at the school and the concurrent increased importance of this area due to the introduction of the NCEA co-requisite.

Students at risk of not attaining the NCEA co-requisite are identified, and appropriate support is provided. The newly appointed literacy lead teacher regularly provides targeted professional development to all teachers, including focus on one particular

pedagogical tool each week. Teachers in this field share their practice contributing to shared ownership of this strategic priority. Although the success of this initiative can be seen in the school's positive achievement rates across the three dedicated co-requisite standards, which are routinely above those of similar schools, the school is committed to reviewing the programme so that it continues to meet the needs of all students.

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)

Meeting the assessment needs of students Rathkeale College prides itself on providing opportunities for every student to achieve their best. This feature of the school is evident in the many pathways to achievement available to students.

Examples of the school's focus on meeting the needs of students include:

- a very competent SENCO and valued learning support staff ensuring that barriers to achievement are effectively addressed
- Te Reo Māori and Mātauranga Māori both inside and outside the classroom.
- an appropriate range of differentiated academic and vocational pathways are well placed to meet students' aspirations, qualification needs and interests.
- offering digital exam options in which students participate at a higher rate than the national average.

Ensuring the authenticity of student submissions The process of managing suspected breaches and appealing decisions is well understood by both students and staff, ensuring equitable outcomes. Rathkeale College has substantial and consistent practices in place across all faculties to ensure evidence of achievement produced by a learner is their own. Students are well supported to avoid authenticity breaches by being informed of what constitutes a breach in specific tasks. Staff are also well versed in ways to detect breaches of authenticity ranging from the use of a variety of third-party detection tools through to extensive knowledge of the capability of students gained through checkpointing and evidence gathering. Keeping abreast of emerging challenges and opportunities in this area is also a key priority for the school, being the subject of ongoing discussion, review and research. This robust approach gives Senior Leadership confidence that internally assessed results at Rathkeale College are authentic.

Clear communication enhances school-wide understanding of assessment practice The school uses comprehensive communication protocols to ensure that teachers, students and the community are informed of assessment practice, the structure of the qualification and any changes resulting from the NCEA change programme. Information is delivered in a variety of formats that support a common understanding amongst all students, staff, and caregivers. These include electronic and in-person messaging. As a result of these procedures, the school community is well placed to ensure students understand the requirements of NCEA qualifications and practices.

Using student voice to inform change to courses and assessment practice

Teachers are experienced and capable assessors who demonstrate a shared understanding of the worth of amending programs to meet evolving student experience and interest. Senior Leadership supports this by providing strategic

direction and opportunities to share practice. As a next step, faculties could consider gathering student voice to provide feedback on courses and assessment. This would provide useful triangulation, supporting assessor reflection on internal assessment, and checking against data analysis of student achievement. When interviewed, teachers saw the value of student voice but were not consistently collecting nor utilising it.

Ensure a common understanding of resubmission rules Although the staff assessment handbook clearly communicates the rules, it was apparent during the review that some teachers are providing an inappropriate level of guidance to students on correcting errors to improve their grade from Not Achieved to Achieved. The school must ensure that all teachers understand that a resubmission opportunity needs to be managed appropriately and follow NZQA's published guidelines.

A valid resubmission opportunity can only occur where individually identified students should be able to discover and correct minor errors by themselves and must take place before the teacher gives any feedback to the whole class (or any student) on the work done. If feedback has been given after the assessment opportunity, resubmission is not possible and providing a further assessment opportunity would be more appropriate.

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)

Robust internal moderation monitoring and audit process Rathkeale College can be confident in the credibility of internally assessed results due to effective internal moderation practices across all faculties. Faculty heads interviewed during this review displayed a consistent understanding of the importance of internal moderation. They take ownership and leadership of the moderation cycle of all subjects within their faculty and document processes for each assessed standard using standardised physical templates or increasingly, those available on the school's Student Management System.

Although there were slight variations in internal moderation practices between subjects that reflect their unique character, these are all consistent with NZQA's requirements. Strategic verification selection and high-quality verifier judgment statements contribute to effective quality assurance for internally assessed standards. Where required, external subject specialists from outside of the school are utilised for verification. These practices together with consistent external moderation outcomes provide confidence in the school's verification procedures.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Rathkeale College 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- 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
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing 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
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Rathkeale 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 grades.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Rathkeale College 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 clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- 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.

Rathkeale College 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

Rathkeale 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
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Rathkeale 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, and students and their families about assessment

Rathkeale College 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.

Rathkeale 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 Rathkeale 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 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:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *Academic Procedures and Processes, Rathkeale College and Rathkeale/St. Matthew's Senior College, Rathkeale College 2024* (Staff Handbook)
- *Rathkeale/St. Matthew's Senior College Information, Rathkeale College 2024* (Student Handbook)

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee/Deputy Principal - Head of Senior School
- Deputy Principal - Director of Teaching and Learning
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - Arts
 - Languages
 - Physical Education
 - Science
 - Social Science
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team 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.

Background

Rathkeale College is a Year 9 – 13 boys' school. Boys up to Year 11 are taught exclusively on the Rathkeale campus.

There is a combined senior school known as Rathkeale/St Matthew's Senior College. This includes Year 12 and 13 girls from St Matthew's Collegiate. All students in the Senior College are enrolled with NZQA through Rathkeale College which reports the results. The two schools share an examination centre for Year 12 and 13 candidates.