

Managing National Assessment Report

Upper Hutt College

May 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Upper Hutt College

9 May 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 highly 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 2021.

Actions and considerations

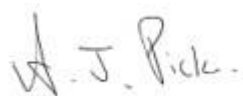
No action required

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

For consideration

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

- ensuring effective communication so that students understand the credit requirements for certificate achievement and endorsement
- clarifying the requirements of verification to ensure that for each standard a sufficient sample of every assessor's grade judgement is verified.



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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

14 June 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 08 June 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

Upper Hutt College has clarified its assessment practice in its documentation as requested in the previous review. As a result, the school can be confident that staff and student understanding of assessment practice in these areas is consistent school wide.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school's response processes to address external moderation outcomes are comprehensive and highly effective. The Principal's Nominee's follow up is improvement focussed. It includes documented review of reports and action plans with Heads of Department, using data to evaluate the effectiveness of changes made and summarised reporting of this to Senior Leadership and the Board of Trustees. This helps provide assurance that student results reported by the school are credible.

Examination Centre Quality Assurance Check Upper Hutt College has taken steps to ensure all issues identified in the 2023 Quality Assurance check of the school's examination centre are resolved. The process of preparing the examination and storage rooms has been updated. Students receive guidance on how to access their Learner Logins in all subjects with digital examinations and this is monitored using the key indicators report in the online portal. By addressing these points, the school is supporting the credibility of external assessment conducted at its exam centre.

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)

Self-review is an embedded practice at Upper Hutt College A highly effective cycle of self-review is in place. It is extensively used to evaluate practices and inform decision making in numerous areas across the school. It is an integral part of ensuring that the school's assessment and learning programmes continue to meet the needs of individual students including those considered at-risk of not achieving their qualification. Self-review occurs at all levels from the Board of Trustees through to the individual teacher. It involves analysing achievement data, considering external report recommendations, and incorporating student voice and anecdotal observations. Sharing the results from review cycles during staff meetings fosters participant ownership and leadership not only in the review process itself, but also in subsequent actions.

A recent review of literacy and numeracy achievement rates prompted by the changing NCEA requirements for certification exemplifies the school's excellent practice in this area. Concerns regarding literacy and numeracy achievement prompted the school to target support in these areas as a key priority. This was enacted through multiple initiatives such as the Achievement Opportunity Program which provides targeted support to Year 11 students and students new to New Zealand, the development of an extensive digital numeracy site and effective support of teaching staff using experts and coordinators. The success of this program can be seen in the increased rates of Level 1 literacy and numeracy achievement realised across the 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)

Programme pathways support student needs The school provides an extensive and appropriate range of differentiated academic and vocational pathways that are well placed to meet students' aspirations, qualification needs and interests. Analysis of repeated school-leaver surveys has informed a revision of the individualised programmes available to students. This has led to several new vocational pathways offered including Tourism Studies, Trades Academies, Gateway and Retail. The school has also broadened its assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers and by extending its own Consent to Assess. Students are well-informed of their opportunities and are appropriately mentored by their Senior Deans and Ako teachers. Upper Hutt College's focus in this area ensures that qualification pathways meet the needs of individual students.

Tracking student achievement informs interventions The school has effective systems in place to identify and provide targeted support for students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals. The engagement of literacy and numeracy coordinators and a specialist numeracy teacher, together with the support provided by a literacy expert consultant, has addressed the school wide focus on developing students' key foundational skills. The efficacy of these measures can clearly be observed in the school's outstanding levels of co-requisite attainment.

Student awareness of their own progress is a well-addressed priority at Upper Hutt College. Students interviewed during this review acknowledged the approachability and responsiveness of their teachers, Deans and senior leaders when assisting them to achieve their academic goals and providing well regarded guidance. Students regularly engage with this practice during Ako classes and through mentoring interviews with Senior Deans and Heads of Year. These sessions allow students to be well versed in their current achievement and indicates that this practice effectively engages them in the ownership of their progress.

Clear communication enhances school-wide understanding of assessment practice The school uses comprehensive communication protocols to ensure that teachers, students and whanau are informed of assessment practice, the structure of the qualification and changes to assessment and moderation practices resulting from the NCEA change program. 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, including a newly released direct notification which gives regular updates on attendance and achievement. As a result of these procedures, the school community is well placed to support students meet the requirements of NCEA qualifications.

The school could consider finding additional opportunities to embed an understanding of the requirements for NCEA certification and endorsement with students new to NCEA. Although all teachers and students interviewed for the review were consistent in their understanding of assessment rules and moderation practices, the two younger students of the three were unable to clearly articulate the requirements for NCEA certification and endorsement.

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 Upper Hutt College can be confident in the credibility of internally assessed results due to effective internal moderation practices across all departments. Department heads take ownership and leadership of the moderation cycle, documenting processes using standardized templates for each assessed standard. Strategic verification selection and high-quality verifier judgment statements contribute to effective quality assurance for internally assessed standards. An annual “mini-MNA” audit, conducted by the Principal’s Nominee, reviews all aspects of assessment quality assurance processes within each department. This includes a thorough examination of internal moderation practices. During the audit, internal moderation records are cross-referenced with stored student work, ensuring consistency. The school’s exemplary history of external moderation agreement further supports the efficacy of these practices.

The school is encouraged to confirm expectations for the selection requirements of student work for verification purposes. During discussions with department heads, it was observed that one department’s selection of samples for verification did not align with the requirement that a sample of student work for every teacher be moderated by another subject specialist. Further to the credible moderation processes in place across the school, the experience of the department head and the consistent external moderation feedback received by the department, clarifying verification sample requirements will ensure the reporting of credible assessment results.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Upper Hutt 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
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals

Upper Hutt College 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

Upper Hutt 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
- 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.

Upper Hutt 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

Upper Hutt 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
- 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.

Upper Hutt 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

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

Upper Hutt 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, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Upper Hutt 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

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Upper Hutt 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
- Assessment for National Qualifications Policy and Procedures: Guidelines for Staff. Upper Hutt College 2024.
- Student Assessment and Achievement Policy. Upper Hutt College 2024.
- Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy. Upper Hutt College 2024.
- Assessment Guidelines for Students. Upper Hutt College 2024.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Health
 - Learning Support
 - Mathematics
 - Media Studies
 - Physical Education
- three students.

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