

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Taita College

2 April 2019

## **What this report is about**

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Taita 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
- *Taita College Procedures for Assessment for National Qualifications: Student Guidelines*
- *Procedures for Assessment for National Qualifications: Teacher Guidelines, 2019*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee/Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Assessment
- Heads of Department for:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education
  - Samoan
  - Science
  - 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

## Taita College

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

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2018.

### What the school is doing well

Taita College has a strong culture of self-review that ensures credible assessment practice is maintained and that the assessment needs of students are met.

The school offers a range of academic and vocational assessment pathways. Individualised, differentiated, culturally responsive programmes with relevant contexts, allow students to present their best evidence for achievement.

The Principal's Nominee's leadership ensures there is consistent school-wide assessment practice. The school aims to be inclusive in catering to the needs, interests, abilities and future aspirations of all students.

Robust internal moderation processes assure senior management that only credible results are reported to NZQA. Responses to external moderation outcomes are documented and action plans are developed when issues are identified. The Principal's Nominee monitors that planned actions are completed and necessary changes in practice implemented. Recent external moderation agreement rates between teachers and NZQA moderators have been sound, reflecting credible internal moderation practice and effective response to external moderation.

Student voice and achievement data from a range of sources are used to reflect on, and develop, assessment programmes. Data is regularly submitted to NZQA and its accuracy is enhanced through regular checking of results by staff, students and senior managers. This close monitoring of achievement data enables the school to intervene where students are at risk of not achieving qualifications or endorsements.

A range of communication systems are in place to assist staff, students and parents with their understanding of the NCEA qualification and the school's assessment policies and procedures. Senior managers work closely to ensure consistency of practice across the senior school and are confident that results submitted to NZQA are robust, reliable and credible.

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2 August 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 11-12 August 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

All agreed action items from the 2015 report have been completed.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** Taita College has robust internal moderation processes which are reflected in its positive external moderation outcomes. An equally robust process of responding to external moderation feedback, which includes all teachers responsible for moderated work meeting with the Principal's Nominee, further ensures assessment credibility. Responses to identified issues include changing verifiers, seeking professional development and extending professional networks.

### 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)*

Taita College has strong internal review processes that inform improved assessment practice within the senior school. The Curriculum review in 2018 involved feedback from the community through focus groups. Resultant changes to assessment practice have been put in place with a focus on improving academic outcomes for all students, including its high Māori and Pacific student population. Key changes that have led to positive achievement outcomes since the last Managing National Assessment review which include:

- meaningful engagement with the wider school community, involving them in strategic planning and goal setting
- introducing a Life Skills programme to the curriculum and assessing as appropriate such as driver license standards
- introducing inquiry-based learning in the junior school with a view to developing it further in the senior school to encourage more integrated assessment
- digitising the staff and student assessment guides so they are now more accessible and current
- tracking and monitoring of student achievement throughout the year has been strengthened with senior leaders and middle managers meeting and discussing student progress fortnightly
- requiring all courses to have at least one standard assessed by the end of Term One so that most students have experienced success early in the year.

These examples demonstrate that Taita College makes effective use of self-review to identify on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures to improve student achievement outcomes. The review process is supported by reflective leadership from senior management and increasing shared ownership by all teachers.

**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 2019 5.5)*

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

- implementing strategies to address inequity of successful outcomes in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) subjects such as creating a Level 3 Science course that includes standards from different science strands
- focussing on quality outcomes through:
  - reducing the number of standards that are assessed
  - providing practice tasks to familiarise students with the expectations of upcoming assessment
  - designing multiple assessment tasks for standards so students can choose how they are assessed
  - assessing when ready, where appropriate
  - offering a selection of optional standards, to provide flexibility within courses and using a single context to assess standards
- managing portfolio and research-based assessments through the effective use of milestones, scaffolding and one-on-one conferencing
- working with external education providers such as WELTEC to broaden assessment opportunities and pathways
- working closely with the local community to enable authentic assessment tasks in technology over the last two years
- increasing the use of digital technologies for gathering evidence of achievement.

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

- valuing the Māori and Pacific cultures within the school by:
  - contextualising assessment tasks to recognise prior knowledge
  - providing whole-staff professional development for delivering curriculum and assessment in a culturally responsive way
- maintaining consistent senior school-wide practice for:
  - ensuring student work is authentic by using a range of well-embedded strategies
  - managing missed and late assessments
  - gathering credible standard-specific evidence for derived and emergency grades if needed
- supporting students to use the special assessment conditions they are entitled to use



- offering a range of assessment formats such as:
  - written reports
  - visual diaries
  - oral presentations
  - portfolios of work
  - practical demonstrations
  - electronic submissions of pre-recorded speeches
- investigating appeals of assessment decisions, following the principles of natural justice
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Catering to student aspirations** Taita College works hard to cater to the future aspirations of its students. This is exemplified through implementing a 'Meaningful Pathways' class in 2017, which involves senior students on a dual pathways programme. In tandem with WELTEC, the 20 students attend a Trades Academy for two days a week and work experience for one day a week. They spend the remaining two days of the week in a home room situation where they receive curriculum and pastoral support from the home room teacher. The programme has been very successful, contributing to an overall improvement in student achievement at Levels 2 and 3. Many graduates have moved on to work or further study in their area of interest.

#### **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)*

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

- ensuring that assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- having a requirement that at least one standard per course per year is moderated outside of school to enhance credibility and share knowledge
- requiring Heads of Department to enter grades to ensure the internal moderation process has been completed before results are reported
- teachers recording the completion of all moderation processes using the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- monitoring the completion of the moderation of standards by the Principals Nominee so senior leadership have confidence that all results reported are credible
- using benchmark exemplars and external moderation feedback from previous years to inform assessment decisions.

### **Taita College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are adequately stored so they are available for external moderation in a physical or digital format
- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation according to NZQA requirements

**Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency** Learning Areas assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However, some of the interviewed staff verify more samples of student work than this. The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on verifying sufficient student-work through strategic selection.

Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

### **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)*

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

- Heads of Departments reporting achievement annually to the Board of Trustees including reviewing the success of assessment programmes to inform future practice and ensure courses meet student needs
- identifying students who are at risk of not achieving qualifications or endorsements and intervening as appropriate
- empowering students to track their own progress by updating results and progress information in the student management system.

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

- using a range of effective checking mechanisms that involve teachers and students
- the career advisor supporting students to use their Learner Login so they can check on accuracy and achievement progress
- reconciling memoranda of understanding with correct provider codes for results from outside providers
- ensuring that internal entries are withdrawn, where appropriate
- reporting a Not Achieved result where students have been given an adequate opportunity to present their best effort, but have not completed work to the required standard
- timely reporting of results to NZQA.

**Better systems for tracking improve achievement outcomes** The school has introduced new processes to support tracking and monitoring of student achievement, including literacy and numeracy requirements. These include the requirement of a three week turn-around for internal moderation, the introduction of an online NCEA assessment calendar, and timely reporting of results to NZQA so they are visible on the students record of learning. Senior managers believe these processes have contributed to recent improvements in student achievement, particularly at Level 3.

### **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))*

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

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating consistent, up-to-date and easily accessed assessment information to staff, students and their families through the school's management system
- supporting teachers new to the school by including regular input from the Principal's Nominee in their induction programmes
- capturing 'student voice' at the end of courses to inform change
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit-for-purpose.

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

- encouraging staff members to be NZQA markers and moderators
- ensuring students have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and rights regarding NCEA
- engaging family through a range of strategies including learning conferences, Fono and Whānau evenings, and home visits
- facilitating NCEA discussions with whole staff, departments, and one-on-one meetings with the Principal's Nominee, to enhance shared understanding of assessment practice
- ensuring students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification.

**Students share responsibility for their own learning and assessment** At the senior level, students lead learning conference conversations with their teacher and parents, outlining the subjects they are taking and what their achievement goals are for the current year. The students also discuss the number of credits available to them in each course and how they are progressing. Senior managers have found this is an effective vehicle to enhance the school community's understanding of NCEA.

**Introduction of an NCEA assessment calendar** The assessment calendar, which is published on the school website and issued to every student in hard copy, has been well-received by the school community as it allows students and teachers to plan, manage workload and meet deadlines. Whānau voice has been positive as the calendar allows families to be part of the support team for the child. It also helps students to manage their assessment.

### **No action required**

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.