

Managing National Assessment Report

**Onslow
College**

July 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Onslow 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
- *Staff National Assessment Handbook, Onslow College 2018*
- *Student National Assessment Handbook, Onslow College 2018*
- *Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020, Onslow College*
- *Board of Trustee Policy, Onslow College 2017*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Learning Area Leaders for Arts, English, Social Sciences and Technology, and Subject Leaders for Drama and Fashion and Design.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal Curriculum 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

Onslow College

27 July 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 four years.

What the school is doing well

Onslow College has an embedded culture of self-review for continuous improvement to meet student needs and the school's strategic goal of supporting students to access pathways that maximise their learning opportunities. The school has shared ownership of NCEA assessment practice, ensuring that results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible. The school delivers assessment programmes and courses that meet the learning needs of a diverse range of students.

Student centred courses are a feature of the school. All courses have a clear qualification pathway allowing students to choose those that best suits their needs and interests. Teachers match assessments to student abilities and gather evidence through a range of methods. Individual assessment programmes are created where appropriate. School assessment policy and procedures are well documented and consistently applied.

Internal moderation is an embedded practice. Robust systems ensure that results that are reported to NZQA are credible. The Principal's Nominee effectively monitors internal moderation to ensure that every standard is subject to the school's moderation process.

Effective data management processes and reviews ensure that accurate data is reported to NZQA. The number of late entries for external examinations has been reduced through improvements to teacher and student sign-off processes. Student progress is monitored and those students who may be at risk of not gaining a qualification are identified and well supported with individually tailored programmes.

Students and families are kept well informed of NCEA information and school policies and procedures through a range of effective communication methods, including the Onslow College app for mobile devices. The NCEA programme introduced during Ako time has improved student understanding of NCEA. Students who participated in the review demonstrated a good understanding of school policy and processes and how to gain a qualification.

The Deputy Principal Curriculum and the Principal's Nominee are a long standing experienced team who work very effectively to manage assessment practices within the school.

Areas for improvement

The school has so far put forward few standards for inclusion in their annual moderation plan. Staff selecting standards for the moderation plan allows them to seek feedback on new tasks and standards where there have been historical verification issues. The school identified this as an issue and is working towards Learning Areas submitting a moderation plan to support their professional development. The school is encouraged to further increase the number of standards put forward for selection to support their professional development.

Action plans in response to external moderation outcomes are developed between the Principal's Nominee and Learning Area Leaders. However, they are no longer formally documented. The school is encouraged to consider re-continuing the formal documentation of external moderation action plans, so that the process is transparent and to assist with the evaluation of their effectiveness.

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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 19 March 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no actions items identified from the 2014 review.

Response to external moderation outcomes Onslow College has historically very high agreement rates between assessor and moderator judgements. This reflects robust internal moderation processes that are well embedded in the school. The school responds effectively to external moderation outcomes. Action plans are developed through meetings and emails between the Principal's Nominee and Learning Area Leaders for those standards with consistency issues. However, a return to the practice of formally documenting planned actions would ensure that the process is transparent and assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken.

Queries and appeals are encouraged for further clarification and to improve assessor judgements, particularly for standards with consistency issues. Courses that are of concern are given further support and monitored. The Principal's Nominee reports annually to the Executive on the school's external moderation outcomes and responses.

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 review found a culture of self-review embedded within the school. Effective systems for self-review are evident at senior level and throughout the Learning Areas. The school can respond quickly to any issues that are identified and to make effective improvements from their evaluations.

Onslow College has a school goal to support students to access pathways that maximise their learning opportunities, as part of their current Strategic Plan. This goal has been developed through ongoing curriculum review, which identified that the introduction of new courses and assessment programmes need to lead to a meaningful qualification. All courses on offer now align with either a vocational or academic qualification pathway.

Onslow College has effective self-review processes and procedures to identify areas for on-going improvement by having:

- the Senior Leadership Team (senior managers and Learning Area Leaders) meet once a term to review school goals and progress towards meeting them
- biannual teacher-only days in June, to assess courses, propose changes or new courses, and in November, to review and evaluate course outcomes

- Learning Areas reviewing courses using NCEA data and student voice to identify gaps in their programmes in meeting the needs of students
- Learning Areas report an annual review to the Board of Trustees
- Line managers meet with Learning Area Leaders and Subject Leaders twice a term, to review assessment progress
- weekly meetings between the Deputy Principal for Curriculum, the Principal's Nominee and the Data Manager to resolve any issues identified and coordinate required responses
- Executive (senior managers) meetings to review all outcomes for the school and develop the school's Strategic Plan and Annual Goals
- the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal for Curriculum regularly reviewing school assessment policies, processes and procedures.

This school-wide approach to self-review has resulted in a number of changes to the school learning structure and Learning Areas assessment programmes. These changes were implemented to ensure a school-wide alignment to the school's annual goals and strategic plan. These changes include:

- Extended Learning Opportunities (double spells) introduced to the timetable structure to maximise learning time and raise achievement. Early feedback suggests that this is having a positive effect on assessment outcomes
- Learning Areas introducing courses that offer new assessment opportunities and pathways for students. These courses, such as Performing Arts Technology, provide pathways for students that previous courses did not
- Learning Areas aligning all courses to vocational pathways and including these in course outlines, so that students can plan future study and career pathways
- introducing the Ako programme to improve the monitoring of student progress towards gaining a qualification, provide mentoring, and communicate information about NCEA
- reducing the number of credits that courses offer to manage assessment workloads and student wellbeing
- revision of the student handbook so that it is user friendly.

Shared ownership of self-review is well developed throughout the school and has informed the recent changes to ensure student assessment needs are well met and supported.

For consideration

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

- returning to documenting action plans prepared in response to external moderation outcomes to ensure that the process is transparent and assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken.

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)

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

- assessing when ready or withdrawing them from the standard, as appropriate
- using milestones checks and templates to make portfolio and research-based assessments more manageable
- providing differentiated assessment within courses to match student abilities
- ensuring staff are well informed of students with approved special assessment conditions, that appropriate assistance is available when required, and reviewing if the assistance is effective
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not achieving or meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA by providing targeted support
- offering extension opportunities for Year 10 students through undertaking NCEA assessments, and supporting New Zealand Scholarship candidates, as appropriate
- using external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against individual standards related to career pathways.

Onslow College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- investigating appeals and breaches of the rules for assessment
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity or where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have not submitted work
- assuring valid, authentic and standard-specific evidence for derived and emergency grades
- efficiently assisting in the management of NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 when handling students' assessment information, and the Copyright Act 1994 when using student work as exemplars.

Monitoring of student progress strengthened Using the information held in the school's student management system has strengthened the processes to identify students at risk of not meeting qualification requirements. Applications for extensions and appeals, withdrawal from an assessment, and non-submission of an internal assessment are recorded on the student's Behaviour Notes file. Teacher evaluations of student progress are also recorded, as part of the Student Not Achieving to Potential programme (SNAP). Deans use this information to identify students who are developing a pattern that potentially puts them at risk of not gaining a

qualification. Appropriate support, including tailored individual programmes, can then be provided.

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 2018 6.4b)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- staff reviewing standard clarifications, and using NZQA and school exemplars to improve assessor judgements
- documenting the internal moderation process by using a standardised *internal moderation cover sheet*
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a strategically selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- requiring Learning Area Leaders to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their faculty prior to reporting results to NZQA
- keeping benchmark exemplars and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions.

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

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- creating a visual instruction aid for the external moderation application, to assist teachers submit assessment material
- longitudinal tracking of external moderation outcomes to identify areas of concern
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Monitoring of Internal moderation Internal moderation is effectively monitored through an electronic tracking system. This was introduced as the previous system was found to be difficult to use and ineffective for monitoring.

The Principal's Nominee uses the electronic school assessment calendar that includes all assessments standards on offer and when they will be assessed to monitor moderation. Learning Area Leaders reconcile internal moderation coversheets against practice before sending a signed copy to the Principal's Nominee to assure moderation has been completed. The Principal's Nominee reconciles all completed cover sheets against the assessment calendar and follows up all overdue assessments with the appropriate teacher.

Encouraging staff to strategically request standards for moderation To date, the school has put forward few standards for inclusion in their annual moderation plans. The NZQA external moderation process allows the school to propose standards for which they would like feedback. The school should continue to

encourage staff to request standards, which will allow them to think strategically and ensure that:

- standards identified with issues are re-moderated within an appropriate timeframe
- only currently assessed standards are included in the moderation cycle
- teachers choose standards that have new or modified tasks or where standard requirements changed.

For consideration

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

- strategically request standards for inclusion in their annual moderation plan.

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)

Onslow College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - identifying students at risk of not achieving a NCEA qualification and providing appropriate support
 - using NZQA statistical reports and analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform decisions about future assessment programmes and design
 - annually report to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions
 - using of school evidence to support applications for special assessment conditions
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn, as appropriate
 - reconciling results from external providers with which they hold a current Memorandum of Understanding, to ensure results are reported with the correct provider codes
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
 - ensuring all students attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly
 - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the online student portal to the student management system, the NZQA learner login and/or the Onslow College mobile app.

Data management processes strengthened Processes for managing data have been strengthened following self-review. To ensure that correct standards and versions are reported, teachers advise the Data Manager of all standards that will be assessed for the year at the beginning of Term 1. Teachers and students now check entries and results throughout the year and an end of year sign-off provides further assurance of data accuracy. This has enabled the school to reduce the number of late entries for external examinations and ensure all results are correctly reported.

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))

Onslow College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through:
 - staff and student handbooks
 - the school website
 - the Year 10 NCEA evening
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system
- supporting teachers new to the school to understand school assessment policy and procedures through an induction programme
- publishing to staff and students a timeline of key NZQA and school assessment related dates in an online calendar.

Onslow College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding teacher/parent conferences whereby parents can clarify their understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- Learning Area Leaders and Subject Leaders meeting at appropriate times in the year to discuss assessment related issues.

Strengthened communication of NCEA matters to students and families Staff and students who participated in the review demonstrated a very good understanding of the school's assessment policy and procedures and felt that the school kept them well informed about NCEA matters.

Ako time proven effective in informing students about NCEA matters The Ako programme is ensuring that students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification. School review identified that assemblies had shortcomings in communicating NCEA information to the students. A programme was created to deliver NCEA information during Ako time. This allows students to ask questions and clarify their understanding about NCEA. Small group size assists with these processes. They can also check their entries and results and receive mentoring during this time. Students and teachers noted its effectiveness during this review

Onslow College App and parent portal effective communication tools The introduction of an Onslow College app for mobile devices has increased accessibility

to NCEA information for students and parents. The app accesses NCEA information, such as entries, results and assessment dates that is held on the school's student management system. The mobile app complements the parent portal, which the school has established as having a good uptake from parents.

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.