

Managing National Assessment Report

Scots College

June 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Scots College

12 June 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

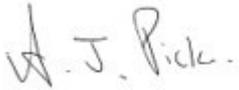
The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
to strengthen processes for responding to the outcomes of external moderation reports	following the publication of 2024 external moderation reports
to monitor that planned actions taken in response to the outcomes of external moderation are effectively completed	within one year of the publication of an external moderation report
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
to establish more consistent procedures across all departments to ensure that effective monitoring of internal moderation practices occurs	by 2025

For consideration

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

- reviewing the effectiveness of published course information.



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24 July 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 2 July 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The school has responded effectively to two of the three action items identified in this report. Internal moderation practices now follow a process that focusses on verifying work at grade boundaries which improves the robustness of verification. Internal entries now have a result reported or are withdrawn providing a more accurate indication of achievement for students and the school.

The school has developed a process to respond to the outcomes of external moderation reports as required in the report's third action item. However, there remains a concern about the effectiveness of these processes to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to remedy issues raised and that follow up by senior leaders occurs to ensure that the actions have been effectively completed. This is further expanded below.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school must strengthen their current procedures for responding to the outcomes of external moderation reports and introduce a process to monitor that planned actions taken in response to these outcomes are effectively completed. This will increase the confidence of senior leaders that results reported to NZQA are credible.

The school requires the relevant Head of Department or Learning Area Coordinator to reflect on the outcomes contained in external moderation reports and to document their findings and proposed actions to address these concerns in their annual departmental report. These reports are then discussed with a line manager which is an appropriate initial procedure to ensure accountability. Reporting to a line manager is also good practice as this embeds matters concerning moderation within a broader professional discussion and distributes responsibility across the wider senior leadership team rather than just the Principal's Nominee.

However, analysis of the results of external moderation since the last review indicates that the percentage of reports that reflect a lack of consistency with the standard (either not consistent or not yet consistent) varies between 25% and 40% of all reports in a given year. Although it can be expected each year that some external moderation outcomes will raise concerns that need to be addressed, a goal of 75% should be considered to maintain overall consistency rates.

It is also evident that a lack of consistency in external moderation is clustered in certain departments across multiple years. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of the steps that were taken to address the issues raised in the reports. The actions were either not sufficient to address the concerns or monitoring had not occurred to ensure that these actions had, in fact, been completed effectively and the improvements embedded.

Poor external moderation outcomes can reflect ineffective internal moderation practices. Seeking external verifiers for some standards could be a consideration. Teachers could also be directed to review clarification documents and engage in online courses through Pūtake, among other possible interventions.

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)

Robust self-review practices are apparent at all levels of the school with a clear focus on continual improvement and meeting students' needs. This process is well led by senior leaders. Middle leaders interviewed displayed an active engagement in self-reflection both in their personal teaching and assessment approaches and in the leadership of their departments.

Learning Area Coordinators and Heads of Department submit detailed annual reports that are based on the analysis of NCEA data. These are discussed with line managers. Departmental annual goals are established in part on the published annual goals set by senior leaders, and these also inform the personal goals of teachers. This is good practice.

The school is currently reviewing the process used for departmental self-review and this is being discussed with senior and middle leaders. One concern is whether a single comprehensive annual report is the best practice rather than having other more focused reporting periods during the year. These discussions are ongoing.

The introduction of the Year 11 Tohu programme to replace Level One NCEA (discussed further in this report) and the shift of responsibility for the follow up of at-risk students to the Deputy Principal: Pastoral are examples of the outcome of whole school review.

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)

Robust Academic Integrity Policy The school has produced a comprehensive policy on integrity in assessment that clarifies to students the expectations regarding authenticity, and to teachers how this should be implemented. This is good practice that provides certainty to all.

Of special note is the positive approach taken to the use of artificial intelligence applications by students. The policy states that "part of students' school experience is to learn about the ethical use of technology" and then explains how this can be realised. This is a refreshing and forward-thinking approach that prepares students for the reality of managing AI.

Meeting students' needs a priority A feature of the school is the commitment to understand students' individual needs and to ensure that appropriate support is provided to allow students to prosper in their chosen field.

The Future Pathways approach enables students to build their own learning pathways through the year levels with clear guidance being provided on the directions that subject and other choices will lead to. A Future Pathways Coordinator is available to provide guidance to students and this support was highly rated by the students interviewed during this review.

The school unashamedly sets high academic standards, and most students follow pathways that lead to post-school tertiary study. Almost all school courses are established to support these pathways which are followed by the majority of students. However, this is not a “one size fits all” approach and meeting students’ individual needs is a priority for the school.

Examples of the school striving to meet the individual needs of students include:

- the provision of vocational study options for a small number of students, most recently in building trades and hospitality
- offering standards through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu to supplement what is being offered in school courses
- access to STAR courses where students show an interest
- identifying and supporting students with special learning or other needs (including the provision of special assessment conditions for assessment).

Year 11 Tohu replaces Level One NCEA Following a previous review, the school began a process to develop a bespoke Year 11 academic programme to better prepare students for either the NCEA or International Baccalaureate pathway from Year 12. This has been introduced in full, from 2024.

The syllabus and forms of assessment for each Year 11 subject course have been determined by staff with a strong emphasis on the Future Focussed Learning approach that underpins the teaching and learning philosophy of the school. These include a focus on collaboration, critical thinking and communication (among others). Students are required to take full year courses in English, Mathematics and Science, two additional full year courses and two semester courses. A collaborative project is completed in the first two terms.

This innovative programme is well planned and structured and is showing promise to deliver on its aims. However, only following a thorough future review will it be possible to determine its success.

Reviewing the effectiveness of published course information should be considered The school should consider reviewing the content of information provided to students in course booklets, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of this method for conveying essential information.

A number of current course booklets were sighted during this review. The style and content of these booklets are varied. This variation in style is not necessarily a concern but the variability in content may be. Some booklets contained more assessment information than others and, in at least one booklet, information was supplied that appeared to not be consistent with the schoolwide expectation published in the staff handbook. It seems that the only place students are able to access schoolwide assessment rules for NCEA is in course booklets and the possible lack of consistency of information in these booklets could be confusing.

Rather than using course booklets as the primary source for schoolwide assessment rules, the school may wish to consider a standalone publication of these rules to ensure clarity, consistency of application and ease of access by students.

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)

Effective monitoring of internal moderation practices required The school must establish more consistent procedures across all departments to ensure that effective monitoring of internal moderation practices can occur. This will enable senior leaders to have confidence that these procedures are occurring and are undertaken with suitable robustness to ensure the credibility of results reported to NZQA.

Not every middle leader interviewed during this review could express full confidence that verification of marked student work was always occurring as thoroughly as they would have wanted. In some cases, this seems to be a result of recently appointed Heads of Department still familiarising themselves with past departmental procedures. However, inconsistencies in the way departments record the completion of internal moderation procedures (e.g. digitally versus on paper) also contribute to this uncertainty.

The recently appointed Principal's Nominee has begun to meet with departments to assure herself that assessment and moderation practices are consistent with school and NZQA expectations. This is good practice. However, the Principal's Nominee should be able to easily and routinely monitor the completion of internal moderation across the school. Current practices do not allow her to do this. For example, it is uncertain whether she has shared access to the online folders of those departments that record internal moderation outcomes digitally. Monitoring by the Principal's Nominee that verification is being completed effectively is a requirement of NZQA.

All middle leaders understood the importance of verification to assure the credibility of results and to improve the judgement of assessors. The selection of student work for internal moderation (e.g. strategic section, use of grade boundary samples) is occurring according to the expectations of NZQA.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Scots College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its students by:

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- 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
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- 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 their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Scots 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

Scots 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.

Scots 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
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Scots 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.

Scots 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

Scots College has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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.

Scots 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 Scots 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
- *Senior School Curriculum*, Scots College, 2024
- *Academic Integrity Policy*, Scots College, 2023
- *Science Department Manual*, Scots College, 2024
- *Assessment Manual*, Scots College, 2024 (Staff Handbook)
- A selection of course outlines for students.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal: Curriculum
- Learning Area Coordinators for:
 - Arts (also the Head of Department for Visual Arts)
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Science (also the Head of Department for Chemistry)
- Heads of Department for:
 - Biology
 - Design and Visual Communication
- two students.

There was a report-back session with the Senior School 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.