

Managing National Assessment Report

St Catherine's College

August 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

St Catherine's College

28 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

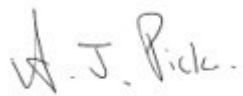
The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
To ensure that the process for teachers to respond to concerns raised in external moderation reports occurs and is monitored	In response to reports received for 2024 external moderation
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
To strengthen internal moderation practices and to introduce a system to monitor that effective and robust internal moderation is occurring	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 the staff and student handbooks
- developing a response to the availability of Artificial Intelligence applications
- developing a digital storage policy.



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5 November 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 22 May 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The school has responded effectively to the agreed action item in this report. Memoranda of Understanding are now signed by both parties, centrally stored and reconciled with reported results. This provides confidence to senior management that results from outside providers reported to NZQA by the school are credible.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school must ensure that the process documented in the staff handbook for teachers to respond to concerns raised in external moderation reports is followed. This should include action plans, when required, to address these concerns and a monitoring process to ensure that these plans have been effectively implemented. Strengthening these processes will improve the confidence that senior management can have in the credibility of results submitted to NZQA.

External moderation is a crucial process to ensure the credibility of results. It provides an external lens both on the quality of internal moderation processes and on the assessment judgement of teachers. The lack of an effective response to issues raised in external moderation reports and then to monitor that required changes have been made by teachers, poses a risk to the long term credibility of some results submitted to NZQA. This should be a concern for senior management. Teachers interviewed during this review could not confirm whether such a process existed and were unclear about schoolwide expectations even though this is referenced in the staff handbook.

The school has a good record of external moderators confirming that the assessment judgement of teachers is consistent with the standard. However, even if a moderation report indicates consistency, it is good practice for teachers to read the reports as advice to improve assessment judgements may be provided. It is very important that reports indicating a lack of consistency be read and responded to. This could initially be in the form of a query or appeal if there is uncertainty about the outcomes reported.

A process to respond to outcomes in reports designated as not yet or not consistent with the standard should include the development of an action plan, and a discussion with a senior leader (possibly but not necessarily the Principal's Nominee) to ensure that the planned actions are appropriate with a follow up meeting to monitor that the expected actions have been implemented.

As part of the overall monitoring of external moderation outcomes, the Principal's Nominee should also consider outcomes in subject areas across multiple years and standards. This may indicate patterns of issues that have not been effectively addressed.

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)

The school has a well-established self-review process. Departments are required to prepare annual reports that reflect on students' NCEA achievement in their subjects. These reports are submitted to senior management and to the Board of Trustees. On a three-year cycle, Heads of Department meet with the Board of Trustees to provide a fuller account of the outcomes achieved.

As result of a review of NCEA achievement, the school has set ambitious targets for student attainment, including 95% of Māori and Pacific students achieving at or above the national average in these demographics and 75% of eligible students being awarded University Entrance. The school has introduced a range of actions to support the achievement of these goals such as the setting of departmental targets to be reviewed regularly, tracking of student attainment and attendance throughout the year, and holding student learning conversations (discussed later in this report).

Review of courses offered is somewhat limited. The school has a settled course structure, partly determined by the need to coordinate timetable structures with St Patrick's College as some students move between the schools for some subjects.

The school has recently appointed their third Principal in six years. This change at senior level has had an impact on the consistency of the schools' review focus over this time even though overall processes have remained largely constant.

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)

Schoolwide practices support credible assessment There is a shared understanding and application of appropriate assessment practices schoolwide such as the handling of appeals of assessment decisions, offering resubmission opportunities, and managing late submission of work for assessment. This consistency provides confidence that these processes are supporting credible assessment.

The school also supports student achievement in a number of ways and the good rates of achievement across most demographics and year levels attests to the success of this support. The drop in attainment in 2023 (other than for Level 2) has been attributed largely to high levels of illness and poor attendance. Early in the year, student learning conversations are held to establish academic goals and to formulate plans in order to achieve these. These conversations form the basis of meetings with parents and are reviewed and updated as the year progresses. Deputy Principals and Deans track student progress at least once a term and this forms part of a whole staff conversation at a meeting. Students who may be at risk of not achieving their attainment goals are identified and a follow up initiated by the Dean including home contact if required. After-school homework support is also offered.

Consider reviewing the effectiveness of staff and student handbooks The school should consider reviewing whether the staff and student handbooks are effective in communicating schoolwide expectations of NCEA practices.

The current staff handbook requires updating and students interviewed were unsure how to access the student handbook. It may be possible to condense the contents of the booklets and to consider a more accessible format, possibly a digital publication. Ready and current information on schoolwide NCEA practices provides certainty and reinforces good assessment practice.

Consider the implications of Artificial Intelligence on authenticity The school should consider an approach to authenticity practices that both acknowledges the availability of Artificial Intelligence applications and also provides guidance to students and teachers about the use of these applications.

The staff and student handbooks have extensive sections on authenticity and plagiarism which are appropriate. However, the availability of Artificial Intelligence applications creates additional challenges which many schools are beginning to grapple with. These issues will not be resolved in a single step, but the school is encouraged to consider and publish an initial approach which could include advice to students and staff about whether there are appropriate uses of these applications in assessments. This will improve confidence in the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment.

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)

Strengthen internal moderation practices The school must strengthen internal moderation practices to ensure a more consistent approach to the selection of student work for verification and to the processes used for verification. A system to monitor that effective and robust internal moderation is occurring must also be introduced.

Verification is occurring in departments and the Heads of Department interviewed understand and value this practice both to confirm the assessment judgement of teachers and to improve assessor capability. Verifiers from outside the school are also being used in some cases which is appropriate. It is to be expected that internal moderation practices may vary slightly between departments. However, if there is no shared understanding of schoolwide expectations regarding practice, then this can lead to the use of processes that are contrary to NZQA's requirements. This was raised in the 2019 report as a matter for the school to consider. The underlying concerns remain and need to be addressed.

Although teachers do complete documentation to confirm that internal moderation has been completed for standards prior to submitting results to NZQA, the Principal's Nominee must develop a process of more detailed monitoring to assure herself and senior management that these practices are happening robustly and according to the school's and NZQA's expectations. This could occur by the Principal's Nominee and possibly other senior managers establishing a schedule to routinely visit departments to check the quality of the processes used in more depth. This will enhance confidence that results reported to NZQA are credible.

Consider developing a digital storage policy The school should consider developing a digital storage policy for teachers to use when storing students' work for external moderation and for other purposes.

Currently, student work needing to be stored is either kept physically in departments or in a variety of digital folders. These folders may be personal to the teachers concerned and there is a risk that work may be lost if a staff member leaves, and digital folders are deleted. A digital storage policy that establishes a shared folder structure and the procedures for teachers to use when storing work digitally will reduce the risk of loss. The Principal's Nominee needs to have access to all folders in which work for external moderation requirements is stored so she can access this even if the teacher leaves the school.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

St Catherine's 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
- 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.

St Catherine's 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

St Catherine's 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 grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

St Catherine's College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- 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.

St Catherine's 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

St Catherine's 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.

St Catherine's 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 St Catherine's 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 and Reporting Policy, St Catherine's College, 2021*
- *Curriculum Policy, St Catherine's College. 2020*
- *Staff Assessment Handbook, St Catherine's College, 2024* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student Assessment Handbook, St Catherine's College, 2024* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - French
 - Religious Education
 - Technology
 - Te Reo Māori
 - Visual Arts
- 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.