

Managing National Assessment Report

St Mary's College (Wellington)

May 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

St Mary's College (Wellington)

25 May 2023

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 years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

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 | |
| Strengthen the process to follow up issues raised in external moderation | To support the 2023 round of external moderation |
| Credible assessment practice to meet student needs | |
| Clarify what constitutes an adequate assessment opportunity and the school's policy for extensions | Immediate |

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 unassigned standards to determine if a Course Endorsement is feasible for eligible students.



Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

20 June 2023

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 24 April 2018 Managing National Assessment Report There were no Action Items for the school to address from its previous Managing National Assessment Report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school needs to develop a more robust process for documenting and monitoring its learning areas' responses to external moderation reports. There is an ongoing low rate of consistency in some learning areas that needs to be addressed. When they are unsure about any outcomes, staff may find the query and appeal functions available in the external moderation application helpful as staff who have used the appeal function have found the feedback worthwhile for improving their assessment practices.

The school could consider putting in place a common external moderation response and action plan form for staff to complete when they receive a "Not Consistent" or "Not Yet Consistent" outcome as a way of documenting responses. Responses and action plans could be discussed at the regular meetings that each Head of Learning Area has with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, ensuring that they are completed and evaluated for effectiveness. This should provide some assurance that staff are actively addressing external moderation issues in a timely manner.

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)

St Mary's College's Mercy values are reflected in the relationships among staff and students. The Senior Leadership Team is pleased with the findings from a recent NZCER Wellbeing@School student survey at the school. The positive relationship reported between staff and students has led to teachers developing broader strategies to meet student needs. For example, students have the opportunity to be assessed at their appropriate level of study. Senior students interviewed enjoyed the challenge of studying at a higher level as a pathway to entering Scholarship subjects this year or in the future.

Meeting student interests Staff place assessment tasks into familiar contexts in order to make them more engaging for students. Teachers are reflective practitioners using student feedback and conversations with their professional networks of teachers to implement changes that will continue to improve assessment outcomes for all students. For example, more teachers are using videos and podcasts as teaching and learning tools in response to student requests. Consequently, more students are enjoying greater academic success, due to the accessibility of the teaching and learning.

Teachers offer a variety of opportunities for students to provide evidence for assessment in a conscious effort to make their assessment more accessible. Increasingly, students are working on collecting and crafting their assessment submissions over time, and work from one standard's assessment task may

contribute to the assessment of other standards. This is reducing students' assessment workload and allowing them to submit their best work for assessment.

Staff also review the readiness of students to be assessed. The school has engaged with the NCEA Change Programme by trialling the pilot NCEA literacy and numeracy co-requisite common assessment activities. In 2022, some Year 9 students were entered for the literacy standards based upon PAT and class assessment results but, in response to the achievement rate, only Year 10 students have been entered in 2023, excluding the students who achieved it last year. Similarly with numeracy, Year 10 students were entered last year and in 2023 Year 11 students who did not achieve it last year are entered.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

Students' cultural competencies recognised St Mary's College encourages students to enter standards related to their culture so that their cultural competencies are recognised in their NCEA qualifications. A Māori dean and a Pasifika dean have recently been seconded to the school's senior leadership to assist with planning to meet student needs. Assessment opportunities are made available through local events like Tu Tagata, enrolling students in programmes of learning with Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu, and enrolling students in external language assessments.

Allowing students to gain Course Endorsements that recognise cultural competencies would further validate students' academic achievements. To achieve this, the school may consider reviewing any unassigned standards for these students where they may be eligible for Course Endorsement.

Extensions and Further Assessment Opportunities require clarification The school needs to clarify what constitutes an adequate assessment opportunity and its assessment policy for extensions. Interviews with staff members and students revealed that some subjects are offering lengthy assessment extensions to some students and providing additional learning opportunities during this time. As well as being potentially inequitable, this does not align with NZQA requirements. Making it clear when an assessment opportunity has finished would ensure the validity of the assessment activity.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

St Mary's College has reviewed its internal moderation practices and is developing more effective school-wide processes in order to better meet its moderation requirements. To facilitate this, they are using a new software package and the Principal's Nominee audits the completion of each learning areas' internal moderation at the end of the year. The Heads of Learning Areas could readily provide examples of internal moderation and comment on the value it added to their assessment practices.

Staff seek out learning opportunities to stay up to date and strengthen their ability to assess through a range of channels, including employment as an NZQA marker, enrolment in NZQA's Pūtake courses, engaging in online forums and membership of subject associations. Many of them work with teachers at other schools to critique and verify grades awarded to student work.

Where some subjects have recurring external moderation reports of "Not Yet Consistent" or "Not Consistent", staff may benefit from using the clarification query available for internally assessed standards to ask specific questions of moderators about interpreting a standard prior to beginning an assessment task.

Addressing storage of assessed work The introduction of a centralised digital storage site has strengthened the Principal's Nominee's ability to monitor the completion of internal moderation processes. The Senior Leadership Team realised that teachers who had left the school had not stored assessed work adequately when student work for external moderation in 2021 and 2022 could not be located and sent, leading to a significant number of Materials Not Received outcomes. It undermined their confidence in the results that some departments were submitting to NZQA. The creation of a centralised system has allowed the school to submit student work for all standards selected for external moderation in 2023, meeting NZQA requirements.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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 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 literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

St Mary's College (Wellington) has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing resubmission
- 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 and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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 subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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 Mary's College (Wellington) 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
- celebrating students' success.

St Mary's College (Wellington) 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 to gain a qualification.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively St Mary's College (Wellington):

- 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 Candidates 2023*.

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
- Staff Handbook
- NCEA slide presentations made to students

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Acting Assistant Principal
- Heads of Learning Areas for:
 - Drama
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Music
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting Principal, Acting Assistant 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.