

Managing National Assessment Report

Hurunui College

August 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Hurunui 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 2021* (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
- *Hurunui College NZQA Student Handbook 2021*
- *Hurunui College NZQA Staff Handbook 2021*
- *Hurunui College Policies and Procedures*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty/Department for:
 - Arts / eLearning
 - Chemistry
 - History and Physical Education
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Outdoor Education and Numeracy
- 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

Hurunui College

17 August 2021

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 due to the restrictions of COVID-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2020.

What the school is doing well

Hurunui College focuses on supporting students to strive for their personal best in academic achievement. Flexible, authentic programmes, personalised to meeting learning and assessment needs and future aspirations of students, are integral to student engagement and achievement success. A positive school culture built on strong relationships is central to this approach. The school values and promotes student agency and responsibility. Positively trending student achievement at all qualification levels over the past years is evidence of the effectiveness of the school's approach.

The school responds effectively to the outcomes of internal review, to support students to attain their academic goals. Senior leaders and teachers use achievement data and student voice to inform programme delivery and course design. Strong leadership, and a shared commitment by a stable staff to ongoing improvement in assessment practice and student achievement, is evidence of staff capacity and ownership of credible assessment practice.

The school offers a range of academic and vocational pathways and uses external providers and distance learning opportunities to extend learning and assessment, beyond what the school can deliver.

The Principal's Nominee effectively leads assessment practice and is well supported by senior leaders and staff. He promotes school-wide responsibility for credible assessment by providing clear direction and setting high expectations. Staff and students appreciate the Principal's Nominee's knowledge and willingness to guide and support them.

Assessment practice is consistent across all departments that participated in the review and evident in student responses to interview questions. Teachers use varied strategies to gather evidence for assessment opportunities. These include offering optional standards and collecting a variety of types of evidence of achievement, to meet students' particular learning needs. To enhance engagement in learning and assessment, the students are extensively involved in digital learning and assessment, including digital examinations.

Effective internal moderation processes are evident in the consistent practice identified during the review. Senior leadership have confidence that only credible results are reported to NZQA. External moderation outcomes are reviewed, and appropriate actions are taken to remedy identified issues.

The management of assessment data is efficient, ensuring results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Individual student results are well tracked to monitor progress towards meeting personal goals, and qualification attainment. Appropriate support and interventions are offered to assist students to improve their assessment outcomes. Heads of Department analyse results data to reflect on the previous year's programme and make appropriate changes to course design. The Principal reports an annual analysis of achievement outcomes to the Board of Trustees, to inform strategic direction.

The Principals' Nominee effectively communicates assessment information. Regular use of face-to-face, digital and written communications supports staff, students and their families to gain a common understanding of NCEA, school expectations, and assessment procedures.

Students interviewed for the review were well-informed about the NCEA and reported that teachers actively supported them to achieve. There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

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28 September 2021

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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 5 December 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

The four items identified for action in the 2017 report have been addressed.

The Principal's Nominee:

- annually reconciles internal moderation evidence with actual practice and records the outcomes, as discussed in the next section of this report
- randomly selects student work to NZQA requirements, when the sample size is large enough to require this
- ensures entries submitted to NZQA have a reported result or are withdrawn as appropriate.

By following the guidelines in the staff handbook, teachers provide consistent information in course outlines.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation outcomes. Heads of Department develop action plans to address inconsistent external moderation outcomes. The Principal's Nominee checks the completion of these plans and identifies developing trends and potential issues in a subject area. Senior leaders evaluate the agreed actions for expected improvement and support teachers with professional development if required.

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)

Since the last review, senior leaders and the Principal's Nominee have collectively supported teachers to develop ownership of and capability to further engage students in learning and assessment, utilising the flexibility of the NCEA qualification model. Analysis of student achievement data and student voice has informed changes to programme pathways, teaching practice and assessment opportunities. Staff have fostered student agency through individualising learning and assessment design, and extensively utilising digital assessment, to support students to achieve.

Strategic direction promotes school-wide digital first approach The school strategically supports digital learning to provide students with greater flexibility in their learning and assessment opportunities. The aim is to engage students, so they present their best assessment evidence. Teachers extensively use the school's learning management system, and most achievement evidence is collected digitally. To ensure this, the school provides each student with a laptop. Engagement in digital practice, and end-of-year, examinations matches students' everyday approaches to learning and assessment, and prepares them for future assessment opportunities.

A digital first approach also facilitates the digital submission of student work for external moderation. At the time of the last review most submissions were physical. Publications for staff, students and their families are also digital. The recently reviewed staff and student handbooks have embedded links to make the documents more accessible and support consistency.

The school's planned introduction of a digital analysis tool is to strengthen the review of student achievement data and quality assurance processes. The platform provides real time and predictive data, so has enhanced current tracking of student progress towards attainment goals and qualifications. The Principal's Nominee can also check internal moderation processes using the platform. Once staff use of this tool is embedded, the school will have an improved ability to monitor student achievement outcomes and the processes that underpin credible assessment.

Consistency of assessment practice and quality assurance processes strengthened The Principal's Nominee has introduced a review of the internal moderation processes of each department in response to external feedback and internally identified improvements. He now checks that actual practice matches information documented for a sample of standards, records the outcomes and follows up on any issues found. Senior leaders can be assured through this check that expectations of quality assurance are being met and results reported are credible. Improvements in practice also result. For example, the Principal's Nominee has clarified gaps in teacher understanding of assessment practice and recommended grades awarded to student work to be verified by teachers at other schools.

The Principal's Nominee also surveys teachers on course design and delivery, and assessment and moderation practices. The review and survey both provide an opportunity for the Principal's Nominee and teacher to discuss best practice and for additional support to be arranged if needed.

The feedback gathered by the Principal's Nominee is complemented by a senior leadership triennial review of all departments, including assessment practice, and subsequent recommendations to support ongoing improvement.

The implementation and embedding of current initiatives will continue to support student engagement and achievement and enhance teacher ownership of NCEA processes to ensure credible results are reported. These developments highlight the school's strategic direction and increase in its capacity to deliver NCEA programmes that meet their student needs, as evidenced by achievement outcomes.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- broadening the methods by which evidence of student achievement is collected, to reflect student strengths and choice
- using formative assessment, feedback and feedforward to help students present their best evidence of achievement
- extending the practice of using evidence to assess more than one standard and subject
- managing student workloads through limiting the number of credits offered in each course and focussing on the quality of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes, as appropriate
- using school-based evidence to support applications for students who are eligible for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

Hurunui College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent, school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- using a range of strategies to assist students to present authentic work
- reporting Not Achieved where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- modifying publicly sourced assessment tasks, and keeping commercial tasks secure
- ensuring derived and unexpected event grades are based on standard-specific, authentic evidence from practice assessment that has been subject to a quality assurance process
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

Responsive and flexible course design supports student engagement and achievement The school is effectively meeting student need by providing flexible and relevant programme pathways within a coherent curriculum framework. The school extends the range of pathways available by offering students three semester courses over a year. The courses provided are based on student choice, to meet their abilities, interests and planned career pathways. Students have flexibility to change courses between semesters. Within this semester structure, the school has broadened academic and vocational assessment opportunities for students through engagement with external providers. Distance learning also caters for individual student pathway choice, with examples including Accounting, Digital Technologies,

Korean, Media Studies, Philosophy, Psychology and Photography. The school runs mixed level classes to ensure courses are available.

Teachers differentiate and individualise learning and assessment programmes to tailor courses to class or individual needs. Course design flexibility involves co-construction of tasks, contexts and presentation formats, to reflect students' learning styles and preferences. An example of this is an all-comers numeracy programme assessing against achievement standards, where students learn and are assessed at their own pace. This exemplifies effective assessment practice.

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 2021 6.4b)

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

- ensuring assessment tasks reflect the standard by having amended or new tasks critiqued prior to use
- using clarification documents, benchmark exemplars and documented discussions on grade judgements to inform assessment decisions
- using appropriate subject specialists from inside or outside the school to verify assessor grade judgements for a sample of student work
- requiring teachers to document quality assurance processes physically or digitally on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* prior to reporting results to NZQA
- following the internal moderation processes of Industry Training Organisations.

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

- teachers suggesting appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan
- digitally submitting student work
- valuing moderator's feedback for professional learning to inform changes to assessments and assessor's judgements.

Reinforce grade verification requirements to reduce teacher workload NZQA expects that verification should involve checking sufficient samples of student work strategically selected at grade boundaries, as well as any grades that need review. Several teachers interviewed were verifying more samples of student work in their quality assurance of grades than required. In addition to student work selected at grade boundaries, samples were chosen randomly, or focused on a specific number.

Reinforcing grade verification requirements with teachers has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. It may also lessen the challenge of finding verifiers in other schools and support timely feedback. Verification does not require a fixed or predetermined number of pieces of student work. Factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed should determine the sample size.

For consideration

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

- reinforcing with teachers that verification should focus on a sufficient number of strategically selected material at grade boundaries.

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)

Hurunui College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and assessment programmes, including using student voice, to inform changes to course design, teaching strategies and contexts
- addressing the attainment and access to future opportunities for Māori students, through strategies such as tikanga being reflected in school life
- the Principal annually reporting an analysis of NCEA achievement to the Board of Trustees to inform strategic goals and actions, including each department review of student engagement and success
- reviewing the school's annual achievement goals and plan, and developing ongoing strategic direction, through collaboration with teachers
- supporting teachers in their professional growth enquiries, to improve student achievement.

Hurunui College reports accurate achievement data by:

- actively encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner login to check reported results for accuracy and prepare for digital external assessment
- timely and regular reporting of results that have been checked for accuracy, to NZQA
- resolving any issues highlighted in the *Key Indicators* or submission error messages
- only reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct code of outside providers with whom the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective monitoring to support achievement outcomes The school has effective processes for monitoring and tracking achievement of NCEA students. Teachers regularly review individual student progress towards qualification goals at secondary syndicate meetings, using current data provided by the Dean. Students at risk of not meeting literacy and numeracy requirements or needing support to achieve their chosen assessment pathway, such as a Merit or an Excellence certificate endorsement, are identified. Teachers co-construct appropriate plans, for example additional one to one support or changes to assessment programmes, when needed. Teachers also provide some opportunities for students to complete qualifications in catch-up sessions at the end of the year.

Thorough knowledge of each student's educational needs, interests, and future career goals underpins the school's approach. Subject and Ako teachers, and senior leaders work together to provide targeted assistance and counselling for course selection. Parents are kept fully informed of student intentions, engagement and achievement.

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))

Hurunui College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students are provided with assessment information for all the courses they undertake
- reviewing staff and student handbooks to ensure that they are fit for purpose and current, to support understanding and consistency of practice school-wide. The intended next step is to develop a succinct document for students summarising all key NCEA and school information, to further increase accessibility
- reporting on students' goals and progress towards qualifications, including through the student and parent portal, fortnightly reports and Parent-Teacher Student conferences twice a year.

Hurunui College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- using secondary syndicate meetings to clarify changes of assessment procedures or expectations, and facilitating discussion on assessment best practice
- presenting NCEA information to student groups and an NZQA parent evening
- supporting professional learning opportunities, collaborating with external subject specialists, and attending NZQA Best Practice Workshops when available
- encouraging teacher use of their Education Sector Logon to access secure information and website functions
- supporting new teachers through an induction programme on the school's assessment and moderation processes.

Students well informed about NCEA and school assessment practice When interviewed, students clearly articulated the school assessment practices, NZQA procedures, and what is needed to gain a qualification. They understood school processes such as resubmission, authenticity requirements, the right to appeal, moderation and derived grades. Students appreciated the Principal's Nominee's knowledge and willingness to answer questions and acknowledged the support of the staff enabling them to demonstrate their best work. This shows that communication to students about assessment and support processes are effective.

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.