

Managing National Assessment Report

Rangi Ruru Girls' School

June 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Rangī Ruru Girls' School.

- 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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 2017* (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
- *Rangi Ruru Girls' School – Staff Guide to Assessment Practice*
- *Rangi Ruru Girls' School – Quality Assurance, Internal and External Moderation Procedures A guide to best practice*
- *Rangi Ruru Girls' School – Student Guide to Assessment*
- *Student Achievement Assessment Policy*
- Assessment policies, procedures and templates for Authenticity, Misconduct, Appeals and Absence from assessments by links to the school web site *Rangi Life*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Subject for Accounting, Chemistry and French, the Learning Support Leader and Director of Music.

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

Rangi Ruru Girls' School

7 June 2017

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 four years.

What the school is doing well

An effective internal self-review culture has been used to inform innovative teaching and learning, and assessment strategies that meet student assessment needs. These strategies have contributed to significantly raised NCEA student achievement, including the number of Merit and Excellence NCEA certificate endorsements.

The school's vision of personal excellence is raised through personalisation of assessment programmes. These differentiated assessment programmes support the school's philosophy of supporting all students to succeed on their own terms. An effective learning support programme identifies and monitors students with learning challenges, empowering them to succeed.

Internal moderation evidence confirms a robust quality assurance process and assures senior management of credible assessment of internal standards. Annual monitoring by the Principal's Nominee reconciles documented internal moderation with actual practice. Evidence of a thorough and well documented annual monitoring process was provided at the review.

External moderation agreement rates are high and confirm the robustness of the internal moderation. There is a robust process for follow-up of external moderation that includes documenting required actions and monitoring completion.

The Principal's Nominee leads assessment practice with confidence, articulating high expectations and facilitating discussion on assessment practice at Heads of Learning Area and staff meetings. These discussions support the on-going development of ownership of assessment practice by teachers. A consistent approach to the management of assessment was evident. Practices used meet student needs and provide the opportunity to maximise student achievement.

Student progress is effectively monitored and interventions put in place to support students meet personal and qualification goals. A range of data management processes ensure complete and accurate entries and results are reported.

Analysis and interpretation of NCEA data informs self-review of assessment programmes and practices. Teachers annually reflect on the standards they offer to confirm that course design and standard selection meet the student cohort's needs.

NCEA information and student achievement information is effectively communicated to staff, students and parents using a range of communication modes. Communication methods and documentation are annually reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Areas for improvement

The school plans to remind staff of the guidelines for offering a resubmission opportunity to ensure it is consistently applied across the school.

To manage teacher internal assessment workload, the school plans to clarify with staff that the student work selected for verification should be purposefully selected.

To ensure concise, easily understood and consistent information is provided to all students, the school plans to develop an assessment statement template for use from 2018 onward.

Agreed action

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- clarify the guidelines for providing resubmission opportunities with staff
- clarify that the selection of work for internal moderation verification should be purposeful
- develop a template to standardise the assessment statement information provided to students in course outlines.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

31 August 2017

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence found that external review actions have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3v)

Action Items from 16 August 2013 Managing National Assessment Report The two agreed action items from the 2013 review have been completed.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Principal's Nominee identified that changes in both personnel and technology resulted in material not being available for submission for some standards in 2016. As a consequence, the school has reviewed processes for storing digital material and the teacher exit procedure to ensure material is available for submission if requested.

An effective process for following-up on external moderation feedback is in place. Evidence sighted confirmed that teachers' responses to external moderation feedback are monitored for completion. The school's moderator/assessor agreement rate has averaged 90 percent for the past three years and confirms the robustness of the school's internal moderation process for the standards moderated.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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 uses internal self-review to continually reflect on the effectiveness of assessment practice and meet student needs. The school's effective use of student achievement information and the flexibility of NCEA has contributed to the significant increase in Excellence endorsements and the minimal number of standards not attempted and absences from external examinations. This reflects the school's vision of personalisation of assessment programmes and the processes to support student achievement.

As a consequence of the school's internal review processes, senior management has introduced a number of assessment strategies to raise NCEA achievement and meet the school's vision of ensuring student wellbeing. Two recent examples include:

- Limiting the number of credits assessed in any Level 1 course to 19 credits. This has enabled students to focus on their learning and the quality of their achievement. The school attributes this change to the significant increase in Excellence endorsements at Level 1 in 2016. Students studying at Level 2 and 3 are able to negotiate their individual assessment programmes to reflect their career pathway and strengths, including selecting from a menu of standards offered and withdrawing from external standards as appropriate. These changes have assisted with managing student assessment workload.
- Implementing a literacy support programme to develop the skills of Years 9 and 10 students so they can access Level 6 of the curriculum in Year 11. This is in response to student entry data showing an increasing number of students entering the school with lower than expected literacy levels.

These examples illustrate the school's capacity to effectively anticipate and identify issues, and to resolve these to ensure student needs are met and ensure credible assessment practice.

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 found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6 I & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:

- offering students a range of methods for presenting internal assessment evidence, including portfolios, digital, presentations and verbal
- using One-Note to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information to support students to present their best evidence
- differentiating and individualising assessment programmes including:
 - offering extension and multi-level options
 - assessing students when ready through flexible timeframes, where appropriate and manageable
 - allowing students to select the standards for their assessment programme from a menu to meet student strengths, interests and future pathways
 - offering Individual Assessment Programmes for students identified as requiring additional support to gain a qualification.

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has effective processes and procedures for collecting credible evidence by:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process
- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions and appeals
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- ensuring derived grades are based on standard-specific, authentic evidence from practice examinations that have been subject to a quality assurance process
- operating an appeals process based on the principles of natural justice
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Review of special assessment conditions processes supports student entitlement A review of the school's special assessment process has led to the school modifying current processes and practice to ensure:

- protocols for reader/writers for external assessments meet NZQA requirements
- school-based data is collected in Years 9 and 10 to support future applications and remove the potential financial barrier of a Level C Assessor report
- annual roll-overs are based on robust needs analysis, with the aim of supporting students to develop into independent learners.

Clarification of resubmission opportunities required Some teachers described offering a resubmission to all students. Resubmissions should only be offered to individual students who are on a grade boundary and who can identify the error or omission themselves and readily fix it. The school agreed to clarify the correct application of resubmission opportunities with staff to ensure consistent practice across the school.

Broadening of evidence gathering methods is promoted by senior management The Principal's Nominee leads discussion and encourages teachers to explore ways of collecting evidence that includes collaboration using cross curricular assessment, evidence being used for two standards, and authentic assessment contexts. Two teachers interviewed provided examples of this assessment practice and described the positive engagement of students in these instances.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- clarify the guidelines for resubmission opportunities with staff.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation. Teachers:

- are provided with clear expectations on the school's internal moderation procedures
- document the internal moderation process, including noting discussion on grade judgements, before results are reported to NZQA
- use a panel marking process or subject specialists from outside the school to verify assessor grade judgements
- submit completed internal moderation cover sheets to the Principal's Nominee to confirm internal moderation has occurred.

The Principal's Nominee:

- requires Heads of Learning Areas to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their learning area prior to reporting results to NZQA
- annually audits all learning areas to ensure the documented moderation process reflects actual practice and to confirm school processes are followed
- encourages teachers to appeal moderation decisions when they do not agree
- uses a random selection method that meets NZQA requirements.

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- using external moderation feedback to measure the effectiveness of internal moderation
- valuing external moderation feedback and using it to modify tasks before further use, clarify understanding of the standard, and to inform future assessment decisions.

Purposeful selection of student work for verification required Internal moderation is an embedded process. However, not all teachers described selecting work at grade boundaries for verification of their assessment decisions. The school agreed to clarify with all teachers that work for verification should be a purposeful selection of student work at grade boundaries. The purposeful selection will assist with managing teacher assessment workload, support their understanding of grade boundaries and provide future benchmarks.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- clarify that the selection of work for internal moderation verification should be purposeful.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Rangi Ruru Girls' School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - on-going analysis of achievement data and monitoring student progress to identify students at risk of not gaining a qualification and to provide support as appropriate
 - awarding colours and pockets to celebrate student achievement
 - using learning progress interviews, home contact and customisation of assessment programmes to support students achieve their goals.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - ensuring minimal late entries for external examinations and that all internal entries have a result reported
 - supporting students to use their Learner login to track their NCEA progress and check the accuracy of their entries and results
 - requiring students and teachers to verify that entries and results have been entered correctly
 - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors.

Effective data analysis informs strategic and annual changes, and qualification achievement The school's data analysis is used to identify student needs and evaluate outcomes against goals. The Principal's Nominee and teachers described using assessment data to:

- track extension applications, authenticity issues and appeals, to identify trends and inform changes to procedures
- report to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement results comparatively and historically and against goals
- inform changes to standards assessed and programmes offered
- evaluate the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their achievement goals.

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 found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7iib)

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and whānau using a range of methods
- annually reviewing the staff and student handbooks to ensure they are fit for purpose
- assisting students and parents to use the parent portal to monitor NCEA progress.

Rangi Ruru Girls' School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- offering information evenings to assist parents to understand NCEA and ways to support their daughter's career aspirations
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme
- using Head of Learning Area and staff meetings to clarify changes of assessment procedures, expectations and facilitate discussion on good assessment practice
- providing parent-student-teacher conferences to promote three-way discussion of student achievement and qualification aspirations.

Effective use of school website to support communication The school website *Rangi Life* is used effectively to communicate assessment and achievement information to students and parents including:

- publishing assessment programmes so students and parents can see what assessments contribute to a course of study and the timing of assessments to assist with time management and identify assessment congestion points for students
- providing on-line access to a parent portal to support students and parents to monitor NCEA progress and access up-to-date assessment results
- easy access to assessment policy, procedure and templates for extensions and appeals.

Assessment statement information to be reviewed Assessment statement information provided to students in course outlines varies in format, and the information is inconsistent across subject areas. To remove the potential difficulty for students and parents to understand the relevant assessment procedures, the school agreed to introduce a common assessment statement format in 2018 to standardise the achievement standard information provided in course outlines.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- develop an assessment statement information template to standardise the information provided to students in course outlines.