

Managing National Assessment Report

Villa Maria College

July 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Villa Maria 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 2019* (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
- *Villa Maria College Assessment Handbook 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *Villa Maria College – Assessment Regulations (Students) 2019* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - Arts
 - English
 - Languages
 - Physical Education
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- 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

Villa Maria College

24 July 2019

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

Villa Maria College uses the flexibility of the NCEA model to enable students to negotiate a personalised learning and assessment programme that best meets their individual needs, interests and strengths. Choice of assessment standards, contexts and evidence presentation method are available in most subjects. Student agency is valued and encouraged enabling students to choose an assessment pathway that reflects their chosen career and aspirations.

The school's special Catholic character supports students to achieve in an inclusive and supportive culture that acknowledges the school's diverse student body. Student wellbeing is a current focus for the school.

Students and teachers share a vision of high academic expectations as illustrated by the current strategic goal to raise the number of Merit and Excellence endorsements. The success of this vision is reflected in the school's high NCEA student achievement which is significantly above national and decile statistics for all qualification levels and certificate endorsements, including that of Māori and Pacific students.

The school has embedded robust internal and external moderation processes. Heads of Faculty are responsible for managing quality assurance processes in their area. They regularly meet with the Principal's Nominee to discuss internal and external moderation processes and actions. She confirms that internal moderation documentation reflects actual practice and actions to address issues identified by external moderators are effective and completed. These meetings provide confidence to Senior Management that results reported to NZQA have been quality assured and external moderation has been adequately followed up. The digital recording of internal moderation processes and external moderation responses provides visibility and transparency to the quality assurance process to staff and Senior Management.

Student achievement is tracked and effectively used to make changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement. Those at risk of not meeting their qualification goal are identified early to enable specific individualised support. Ako Kaiako (mentors) meet with their students several times each week to provide ongoing support and advice.

Self-review is embedded and operates at all levels within the school to ensure assessment practice is credible, consistent and meets student needs. The school's self-review processes use student evaluations, teacher reflection and data analysis to inform assessment programme changes to meet the changing needs of the school's diverse student body.

Assessment practice is effectively led by the Principal's Nominee. She facilitates discussion, the sharing of best assessment practice and sets high expectations for staff. She supports Heads of Faculty to lead assessment in their subject area and assists the pastoral team, SENCO and Gateway co-ordinator to support student success.

Areas for improvement

There are no areas for improvement requiring actions items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Kay Wilson
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17 September 2019

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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 8 June 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

The two agreed actions from the 2016 review have been completed. Personalised learning programmes are now offered to students to support them to engage in an assessment programme that meets their individual need. Senior Management has updated school documentation to reflect actual practice.

Response to external moderation outcomes The consistently high agreement rate between assessors and moderators for external moderation indicates effective quality assurance processes for internal assessment. An effective process for following-up on external moderation is in place. Issues identified by moderators are investigated and, where required, the Heads of Faculty develop an action plan to address issues and support the ongoing development of teachers' understanding of the standard. Actions and their completion are recorded on the *Moderation Self-Review OneNote* for the Principal's Nominee to review and discuss with the Head of Faculty.

Longitudinal monitoring of agreement rates is used to identify any subject areas with low agreement rates between assessors and moderators over two or more years to inform where additional support is required. The school effectively uses the *External Moderation Application* to request standards to evaluate the effectiveness of actions in addressing issues.

Response to subjects where internally assessed results differ significantly from externally assessed standards NZQA provided the school with 2018 data identifying a subject where the pattern of internal and external results differs from the national pattern for schools of a similar decile band for a second year. The subject Head of Faculty has investigated the possible reasons and established that all internal standards were moderated following the school processes and external moderation for this subject confirmed the standards were assessed at the national standard. Existing good practice was confirmed for the preparation of students for externally assessed standards and their achievement.

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)

Teachers and senior management work collaboratively using student voice, teacher review and reflection, and data analysis to focus on the continuous improvement of assessment practice, the meeting of students' needs and the reporting of credible results.

On-going review and reflection is embedded practice and has enabled the school to initiate actions to address identified or potential risks found in its review and reflection

processes and meetings. Where inconsistencies in assessment practice are detected, clarifications are made to further develop assessment best practice and provide continued confidence and assurance to Senior Management that credible results are reported.

School wide ownership of the school strategic goals of improving Māori and Pacific student achievement, meeting student needs and increasing the school's Merit and Excellence endorsements was described by teachers, Heads of Faculty and Senior Management.

As a result of the school's internal review processes a number of changes have been made to the school's assessment practices since the last Managing National Assessment review including:

The development of a school-wide personalised learning and assessment philosophy to reflect the school's belief in each student's unique potential. Teachers enable students where appropriate and manageable to:

- select the standards for assessment from a menu
- choose the method and format of evidence presentation
- choose the context for assessment to support student engagement through relevant contexts
- negotiate individual deadlines for submission of work to allow a student to work at their own pace.

Developing a *Moderation Self Review OneNote* digital monitoring tool to document and track internal and external moderation processes. The digital tool provides a means for Heads of Faculty, who are responsible for managing quality assurance processes in their faculty, to document internal and external moderation processes. The system provides visibility to Senior Management to confirm internal moderation process are robust and actions in response to external moderation are effective and completed.

Determining that the number of credits a student is to be assessed against in one course should be no more than eighteen. This is to assist with managing teacher and student assessment workload, further support student wellbeing and the school's goal of increasing the number of Merit and Excellence endorsements.

Establishing an '*At Risk Committee*' who:

- meet monthly to identify individual students where there are concerns regarding achievement
- receive referrals from Heads of Houses and Ako Kaiako whose role it is to monitor and track student achievement
- coordinate support across subject areas for those students referred to the committee who require this type of assistance.

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 2019 5.5)

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

- collecting school-based data to support applications for special assessment conditions, ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with entitlement and providing these resources where appropriate
- increasing the engagement with outside providers to extend the school's capacity to provide a wider range of vocational assessment opportunities
- differentiating assessment programmes to meet student needs including:
 - assessing students when ready through flexible timeframes
 - offering, multi-level and accelerated learning opportunities to meet academic targets
 - providing assessment programmes over two years and Individual Assessment Programmes for students identified as requiring additional support
- responding to student voice by adjusting assessment tasks, contexts and methods of evidence gathering
- celebrating and encouraging student achievement through certificates, letters and awards.

Villa Maria College has effective processes and procedures for:

- Heads of Faculty being responsible for ensuring assessment practice aligns with the school's policies and is consistent across the faculty
- managing further assessment opportunities and resubmission to NZQA requirements
documenting non-written evidence gathered during resubmission for verification and external moderation purposes
- ensuring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment
- collecting valid, authentic standard-specific evidence to support derived grade applications
- reporting Not Achieved, where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
- The PN managing extensions to ensure the consistency.

Digital tools support student engagement and outcomes The school's digital strategic vision has supported the introduction of *Bring Your Own Device* at all levels and teachers use of digital tools in their teaching and assessment practice. Previous involvement in digital external assessment trials has provided confidence to engage in digital examinations in 2019 to reflect classroom teaching and learning practice.

Māori and Pasifika engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects Senior Management has noted the lower participation and achievement in STEM subjects for Māori and Pasifika students than for students of other ethnicities.

The school introduced a Science Pathway course in 2017 at Levels 1, 2 and 3 with a focus on agriculture, horticulture and practical science. These classes are designed to allow students to access science-based vocational pathways including first aid and laboratory work. Connections with Tuahiwi Marae Education Officer and monitoring of student progress, has assisted Māori student engagement and success in this course.

While Māori and Pacific students have engaged and been successful in the Pathways course it uses a mix of achievement and unit standards and Science subjects not included in the NZQA Level 3 STEM data. The school is encouraged to consider reviewing the standards in the Science Pathway course to see if changes are possible to provide the opportunity for a student to achieve fourteen credits in a STEM subject.

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 2019 6.4b)

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

- ensuring Heads of Faculty are provided with clear expectations on their role in managing and monitoring internal moderation requirements
- teachers purposefully selecting samples of student work for verification of grade judgements and using subject specialists within and outside the school
- requiring teachers to record their moderation actions on the *Moderation Self-Review OneNote* and then to upload the moderation cover sheet to the review notes as evidence of the completed process
- the Principal's Nominee meeting regularly with Heads of Faculty to review the *Moderation Self-Review OneNote* record of moderation actions to:
 - confirm teachers' verification practice includes a purposeful selection and use of subject specialists as verifiers
 - monitor that the record of internal moderation reflects actual and good practice by viewing a sample of *OneNote* records and moderation cover sheets
 - confirm and discuss their monitoring of internal moderation processes and completion within their faculty
 - confirm grade boundary benchmarks are identified and stored for future reflection and professional learning
 - determine where and how student work for external moderation is stored
- teachers valuing the internal moderation process as an opportunity for professional discussion, ensuring the consistency of assessor judgements and improving practice
- using external moderation to confirm the robustness of internal moderation and inform understanding of standards.

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

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- developing digital storage protocols to ensure material is accessible with appropriate access rights and file names
- encouraging teachers to appeal moderation decisions when they do not agree
- using the query function of the External Moderation Application to further develop teachers understanding of the standard and moderators' comments
- using the same process for following-up on moderation feedback for Industry Training Organisation and NZQA standards.

No action required

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

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)

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

- monitoring student progress to identify students at risk of not achieving a qualification and providing appropriate support including modifying their assessment programme
- faculties tracking student achievement towards course endorsement to enable additional assistance to meet the school strategic focus of raising Merit and Excellence endorsements
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and inform changes to programmes, contexts and standards
- Heads of Faculty reporting annually to the Principal and Board of Trustees an *Achievement Report* and a *Priority Learners Report* of NCEA student achievement against set goals
- providing teachers with pre-analysed NCEA data to assist them to investigate individual standard outcomes to confirm good practice and identify areas of success or for improvement.

Villa Maria College reports accurate achievement data by:

- the Data Manager using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
- reporting results and entries to NZQA in a timely manner
- checking the accuracy of external entries to ensure minimal late entries and ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate
- supporting students to use their Learner Login and student management parent/student portal to track their NCEA progress
- the Gateway Coordinator annually reconciling reported results from external providers with memoranda of understanding.

External entries data check The school has acknowledged the high number of *Standards Not Attempted* in the external examinations. They have identified the introduction of personalised assessment programmes and students making strategic decisions on which assessments to complete at the examination as contributing factors.

To reduce the high number of voided papers, the school plans to encourage teachers to remove entries for external standards where this is possible before 1 September.

Class profiles support student achievement Class profiles are collated by all teachers, at the beginning of the year, to identify Māori and Pacific students in the class, those potentially at risk based on previous years data and the career aspirations of individual students. These profiles are used to:

- support the schools personalised learning focus by teachers reviewing the standards offered in their assessment programme

- develop strategies for students who need literacy support, such as scaffolding of tasks and understanding the specific language of the subject
- identify relevant teaching and assessment contexts for the cohort of students.

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))

Villa Maria College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and whānau using a range of media including information evenings
- ensuring students are provided with consistent assessment information for all courses they undertake
- annually reviewing the staff and student handbooks to reflect the school's evolving assessment practice and thinking
- providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system for students and parents to monitor NCEA progress
- ensuring teachers have an Education Sector Login to enable them to access copyright material, the Moderation Application and statistics data.

Villa Maria College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing an induction programme for new teachers to support their understanding of NCEA and the school's NCEA policies and procedures
- using Heads of Faculty and staff meetings to clarify changes of procedures, expectations and to facilitate discussion on assessment best practice
- providing the staff and student handbooks and information digitally to enable ease of accessibility for students and staff and assist with version control
- the Careers Advisor and Ako Kaiako regularly meeting with students to assist them to understand what they need to gain a qualification and for their planned pathway beyond school
- the SENCO providing newsletters to parents of students entitled to special assessment conditions to ensure they understand their child's approved entitlement.

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.