

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**Villa Maria College | Te  
Whare o Meri**

**September 2024**

# **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

## **Villa Maria College**

**5 September 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 highly 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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2023.

### **Actions and considerations**

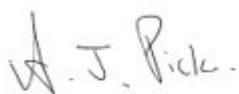
#### **For consideration**

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider within the next year:

- reminding staff to use the function in the external moderation application to query external moderation reports where they need further clarification
- analysing their derived grade profile to see if there are any outlier subjects in the context of the school's own result patterns.

#### **No action required**

The school has no action items relating to the quality of their assessment systems.



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8 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 24 July 2019 Managing National Assessment Report** There were no action items from the previous Managing National Assessment Report.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The school has an effective process led by the Deputy Principal Curriculum to follow up issues raised in individual moderation reports. The Deputy Principal, along with the Principal's Nominee monitors and guides the process but individual Heads of Faculty are empowered to resolve any issues. The school has introduced longitudinal tracking of external moderation outcomes to see if there are any patterns of concern that need to be investigated further and resolved.

The school's moderation history shows a high level of agreement between assessor and moderator decisions. Where reports indicate actions are needed issues are usually promptly resolved. Actions have included requiring departments to use verifiers outside the school and joining subject associations or cluster groups to access a wider range of resources and standard specific knowledge. Staff have also accessed material for a wide range of subjects on Pūtake, NZQA's learning management system, to support their understanding. The enquiry process leading to these actions and the progress with them are recorded in a shared online system. The Deputy Principal is aware of where further support is required and reviews the situation and alters strategies accordingly.

The school should consider encouraging staff to use the function in the moderation application to query reports as they have not used this since 2021. This enables them to have a two-way interaction with the moderator to gain further clarification or feedback where needed.

**Response to outlier reports** For the last three years results data showed subjects as outliers, as there was a difference between the school's internal and external results in the subject area and the national pattern for schools of a similar Decile/equity group. The departments concerned considered the possible reasons for this and the possible positive or negative impacts of altering their teaching and assessment processes based on this data.

### 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 effective self-review processes. They provide assurance to senior management that concerns and potential improvements relating to assessment practices will be effectively identified and appropriately addressed. It also helps ensure that the school utilises the flexibility of the NCEA model to best meet the needs of its students.

**Removing Level 1 NCEA as a target qualification** The school has removed Level 1 NCEA as a target qualification as it contributed to over assessment and student anxiety, was not a relevant leaving qualification for most students, and led to

assessment driving teaching and learning. This change came after wide consultation with Heads of Faculty, students, teachers, whānau and fono groups. This has led to students engaging in a broader range of subjects with minimal assessment, allowing them to focus on learning, whilst gaining familiarity with NCEA and building success towards a key target of NCEA Level 2. As part of this change NCEA assessment has been removed at Year 10, apart from students who are ready, being assessed for the literacy and numeracy co-requisites.

This change is being reviewed as the year progresses and there will be a full in-depth review at the end of 2025 to understand the impact on outcomes at NCEA Level 2.

**Ensuring assessment options meet student need** The school has made various changes to help ensure they meet the assessment needs of their students. This includes:

- semester courses at Year 12 and 13 covering financial literacy, legal studies, psychology, Tikanga Māori, introduction to Te Reo and outdoor education
- creating different courses within the core subject of Religious Studies so students can engage in a context to match their interests
- offering assessment and/or acceleration in language subjects to enhance the mana of students where it is a language used in their everyday life
- creating a timetable driven by student subject selection rather than prescriptive lines to better meets the learning and assessment choices of students
- the introduction of new subjects such as Level 1 Dance to meet the need of student interest established in the middle school
- including the careers adviser in the consultation process when considering new courses.

The school has also recently developed the use of dual pathways focused on vocational skills training, and is in the process of reviewing if the option is targeted correctly to effectively meet the overall assessment needs of learners.

**Developing faculty centred Professional Learning** For the last two years regular weekly professional learning sessions have been focused on faculty time. This has enabled deeper, reflective conversations supporting curriculum familiarity, curriculum design and responsive teaching practices. It has enabled the sharing of good practice with faculties presenting to each other, engagement with outside providers and drawing on the skills within the Kāhui Ako.

It also provides the opportunity to effectively implement the outcomes from SCOT analyses completed for reporting to the Board of Trustees, such as altering the balance of internals and externals in a course.

**Planned next steps** The school undertakes regular Teaching and School Practices surveys to identify areas of upcoming focus. Teachers have identified that peer-observation is an area that they would like to develop further. This aligns with the school's desire to de-privatise practice, to learn from each other, and include a critical friend in the professional growth cycle process. The school is currently working through how to enable this whilst keeping faculty leaders in the loop.

Other areas of intended focus include:

- introducing student voice and reflection into reporting

- using the skills teachers have in the intermediate school to develop more differentiation techniques to support learning in the senior school
- reviewing if the streamlined extension and appeals processes are working effectively and are applied consistently.

## 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)*

**Student progress effectively tracked, and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes** The school effectively uses data to track student progress, updating class profiles termly, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. Students are in vertical groups where their ako teacher helps them to set goals and track their progress towards key targets. They involve subject teachers and Heads of House in resolving issues as required, and encourage students to sign up to student led tutorials when they need extra subject support.

**Strong support for students with special assessment conditions** The school has good processes in place to identify students who need special assessment conditions. Those who are identified are well informed of their entitlements and processes are in place to ensure they receive appropriate support. This support also extends to working with subject areas to help them include immersive reading and dictation tools in teaching and learning and to redesign assessments to improve accessibility.

**Including derived grade results in annual faculty review** The school should consider incorporating NZQA's Derived Grade Profile report and Derived Grade Outlier reports in their annual faculty review process. This would help the school understand if any subjects are outliers in terms of the school's own result patterns and national results. This would show if there were a need to consider any mitigations to reduce possible negative impacts on students who may need to have derived grades applied.

## 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)*

**Staff engage in effective internal moderation practice** The school has rigorous processes to ensure internal moderation effectively assures assessment decisions. Some subjects have multi-layered processes involving panel marking and revisiting borderline pieces of work. Often this may exceed NZQA's requirements, but staff stated that they value the professional discussions this creates. Some faculties do focus on the sufficiency of moderation and vary the amount required, and ensure extra support is given, depending upon an assessor's experience with the standard. Many subjects complete some of their verification with colleagues outside the school. This does include some subjects who could complete verification within the school as they value the difference perspective this can give.

Teachers are encouraged to make connections with colleagues in other schools and both national and local subject associations where available. This means they have

access to a wide knowledge base to effectively inform the critiquing of assessments and task design, and for verification of grades.

Heads of Faculty monitor the completion of internal moderation. This is through regular discussions with teachers in charge of a subject and/or subject teachers and through checking the recording of the process in OneNote/Teams. The Principal's Nominee also checks on faculty practice at least annually. The Senior Leadership team have access to the online recording ensuring both senior and middle managers have a clear picture of assessment processes in each subject area, and where additional follow up may be required. The school is considering moving to recording the internal moderation process in the Student Management System next year and is trialling this with some standards this year. It is hoped this will standardise the recording process making it easier for all staff to follow and for senior leadership to monitor.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**Villa Maria 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

**Villa Maria 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**

**Villa Maria 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 subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

**Villa Maria College 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
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

## **Effective management and use of assessment-related data**

**Villa Maria College 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
- 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.

**Villa Maria 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 whānau about assessment**

### **Villa Maria College 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
- supporting kaiako new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

### **Villa Maria 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 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 whānau.

### 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
- *Villa Maria College Assessment Handbook (Staff Handbook)*
- *Villa Maria College Assessment Regulations (Students)*
- *Various curriculum and assessment related policies.*

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Languages
  - Mathematics
  - Religious Education
  - Science
  - Technology
- Shared Heads of Faculty for Social Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal Curriculum 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.