

Managing National Assessment Report

St Thomas of Canterbury College

October 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

St Thomas of Canterbury College

19 October 2022

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 2021*.

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 to five years.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that an action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure standards assessed by external providers are assigned to a course so that students can gain course endorsements	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:

- encouraging staff to use the function to query external moderation reports, and NZQA's online modules, when they need further clarification with a standard
- the most appropriate way to name semester courses and assign standards to them
- reviewing process to ensure students register and use their Student/Learner login so they can access the functionality it provides.



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12 December 2022

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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 27 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report St Thomas of Canterbury College has addressed the significant issue and action items identified in the last Managing National Assessment report. The school is now effectively monitoring internal moderation and following up external moderation. In response to the review the school introduced an Assistant Principal's Nominee role. This, along with centralised and shared online documentation, created time for the monitoring of department practice to be a proactive, fully integrated process covering all aspects of assessment. This focuses on ongoing support and forward planning.

Staff have received clarification of, and consistently follow, the required resubmission processes and the requirements for selection of student work for external moderation. Documentation has been updated so that terminology for Derived Grades is accurate.

The actions taken have resolved the significant issue found in 2019.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The school has clear processes in place to respond to external moderation. As they continue to embed the checking of the effectiveness of any actions taken this should ensure issues are fully resolved.

Leaders of Learning are required to complete a written response to any issues raised in reports. The issue and any required actions are discussed with either the Principal's Nominee or their Assistant, and the implementation of the action checked. This information is all recorded in a shared online document so that learning areas and senior management are fully informed of any issues, and to inform any changes needed in assessment practice.

Some departments are using the function in the moderation application to query reports where they feel they would like further clarification or feedback. The school should consider encouraging all departments to make use of this function as it enables a targeted interaction to support any required action. Departments should also be encouraged to use the online modules in Pūtake, NZQA's Learning Management System, to support their understanding of assessing particular standards.

Response to data issues Annual review of school data highlighted a concern that Supported Learning standards may not have been used in accordance with their stated purpose. This was discussed in an annual visit and the school is now using them appropriately.

The standards are designed for learners who require some form of support with their learning either through additional resources, specialised equipment, or adapted teaching programmes. They are intended for people with learning disabilities including those with intellectual disabilities. Their use should be considered on an individual student basis.

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 Thomas of Canterbury College has a strong focus on self-review. It provides 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.

An annual review cycle links the schools' strategic goals, to the annual plan, to learning area plans, to individual teachers' SWOT analysis as part of their professional growth cycle, which link back to the schools' strategic goals. This all feeds in to reporting to the Board of Trustees. Student voice is part of the annual review and also informs review of individual courses and the need to provide new courses, which has seen the reintroduction of Classics.

The sharing of the Principal's Nominee role with an Assistant has increased their capacity to lead review of assessment practice. It has created the time to allow assessment practice to be regularly reviewed to ensure best practice happens across the school. The conversations this has created within learning areas, and the opportunities the Accord teacher-only days have created, has also led to many teachers linking up with colleagues in other schools to discuss assessment related practice.

The school is making major changes to how it delivers teaching and learning, and assessment. The foundation of the change is in ensuring engagement, working together and forming relationships, and a focus on learning. This is being achieved through a Year 11 programme that does not focus on subjects or assessment standards, but on real world topics that will interest students in that cohort. These topics are delivered in half year semesters designed to maintain engagement until completion. The school has had the confidence to progress with this change despite the impact of COVID-19 and the upcoming changes from the Review of Achievement Standards

The changes came about through consulting with all stakeholders, and is a cornerstone of the school's change practice. This process was guided by a senior curriculum group which comprised interested staff from each subject area rather than being driven by middle or senior management. They then led the changes in their learning areas. The leadership model was designed to align with the concepts underlying the changes to teaching and learning, and assessment.

The school used student and teacher voice, and analysing predicted grades to review the impact of the first semester and there will be a full review at the end of the year to refine the changes. Another school wide curriculum group is planning how the principles behind the change will be applied to Year 12 and 13 courses. The implementation is likely to be different but still focus on real world engaging contexts.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of 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)

Catering effectively to students with a wide range of assessment needs and intended pathways The students at St Thomas of Canterbury College have a very wide range of aspirations and qualification needs. Vocational and academic pathways are equally valued, and the timetable structure and available courses ensure students can achieve in a mixture of pathways. Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu and multiple Tertiary organisations are used to complement assessment the school provides. Students participate in assessment offered by external providers when it is part of the plan to support their career goals.

Student progress effectively tracked, and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes The school effectively uses data to track student progress, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. Predicted grades are updated termly in an online system and these inform discussion between students/whānau and mentors/Deans. Students are currently in vertical groups where their mentor helps them to explore their aspirations and set goals, track their progress, check standard entries, and discuss any help they need to support their future desired pathways.

Once results are released by NZQA in January the predicted grades are compared with actual results to help review the effectiveness of the process.

Ensure standards assessed by external providers are assigned to courses

The school does not assign to courses some standards assessed by external providers, and as a result students cannot gain a course endorsement. The school needs to ensure the standards are assigned to an appropriate course in their Student Management System. This will provide students the opportunity to have their performance in individual courses recognised.

Consider the most appropriate way to name semester courses and assign standards to them With the school running non-subject based courses in half year semesters the school should consider the most appropriate way to report them to NZQA. Most semester courses will not be endorseable as they do not offer enough credits, but any that are, may appear on a student's Record of Achievement. The school should consider the most appropriate naming to be used in that context. The school also needs to consider the best way to assign external standards to courses that students complete in the first half of a year.

Increase the number of students who register their Student/Learner login In recent years, registrations by students to the NZQA Student/Learner login has been below 50 percent. The school has realised this is an issue, particularly for leavers who will not be able to continue to check their results through their portal to the Student Management System. The school will start to tackle this through end of year and pre-exam meetings.

The NZQA Student/Learner login provides functionality other than checking entries and results. This includes access to digital exams, applying for reconsideration and reviews for external assessments, and ordering certificates and their Record of Achievement.

The school should consider reviewing their processes to ensure students register their logins earlier in the year. Covering the NZQA Student/Learner login in the student handbook may assist with this.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)

Monitoring is focused on supporting learning areas Each learning area meets with the Principal's Nominee or Assistant Principal's Nominee at least twice a year. This is a chance for the Leader of Learning to ask questions and clarify their understanding of assessment related processes, and for the Principal's Nominee or Assistant to see evidence of their practice. Notes from the visits, results of external moderation, evidence of internal moderation (including emails discussing verification with colleagues at other schools) and ongoing comments around best practice and improvements are recorded in a shared online document. This means both senior and middle managers have a clear picture of assessment processes in each learning area, and where additional follow up is required.

The Principal's Nominee believes this transparent system has improved understanding of assessment processes, reduced the opportunity for issues to emerge and enables any issues to be collaboratively resolved.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

St Thomas of Canterbury College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their 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 expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing targeted 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 Thomas of Canterbury 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 and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

St Thomas of Canterbury 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.

St Thomas of Canterbury 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

St Thomas of Canterbury 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.

St Thomas of Canterbury 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

St Thomas of Canterbury 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 teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

St Thomas of Canterbury College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding 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 St Thomas of Canterbury 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 2021* (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 2022* (Assessment Rules).

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
- *St Thomas of Canterbury College, Assessment Procedures Year 10 – 13, NCEA Level 1, 2 & 3, 2022 Staff Information* (Staff Handbook)
- *St Thomas of Canterbury College, Assessment Procedures Year 10 – 13, NCEA Level 1, 2 & 3, 2022 Student Information* (Student Handbook)
- *Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy*.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Assistant Principal's Nominee and Academic Administrator
- Leaders of Learning for:
 - English and Drama
 - Learning Science
 - Music
 - Physical Education
 - Social Science
- Teacher of:
 - Physical Education
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee, and Assistant Principal's Nominee and Academic Administrator 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.