

Managing National Assessment Report

Middleton Grange School

September 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Middleton Grange School

6 September 2023

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 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 2022.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Further develop processes to ensure that all results reported from external providers are covered by a current Memorandum of Understanding	For the reporting of 2024 results
Further strengthen the monitoring of curriculum areas internal moderation processes by sharing the recorded outcomes	Next round of curriculum area visits
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure approved sub-contracts (third party consent) are in place when assessing students from other schools	For the assessing and reporting of 2023 results

For consideration

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

- including the *derived grade comparison outlier* reports in the annual review process
- encouraging staff to use the function in the external moderation application to query external moderation reports where they need further clarification.

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22 November 2023

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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 12 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The school has responded to all the action items, though two require some further development.

The Principal's Nominee receives and records all Memoranda of Understanding with consented external providers so knows what agreements are in place. To ensure that all results reported from external providers are covered by a Memorandum of Understanding the Principal's Nominee should share their records with the person responsible for making entries and submitting the results.

The Principal's Nominee is recording the outcomes of her annual checks of each curriculum areas internal moderation process. To further strengthen this the recorded outcomes should be included with the documents already shared with the Deputy Principal (School Management). This will ensure senior management are fully informed of the findings and aid continuity of knowledge when there is any change in staffing.

Teachers have been reminded of the need to ensure student privacy is protected when signing off the acceptance and accuracy of assessment results, and the process has been updated to make this easier to comply with. All samples of student work sent for external moderation no longer undergo any additional marking. Staff and student handbooks reflect the current expected resubmission process and state the appeals procedure covers all aspects of the internal assessment process.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school has an effective process to respond to issues raised in external moderation reports. The school's moderation history has shown their actions usually resolve issues with a standard and/or in a subject area. The Principal's Nominee is well informed of any current concerns and the actions underway to solve them.

The Principal's Nominee reads each moderation report and follows up any issues, including comments in reports where the outcome is Consistent, with the Curriculum Leader for the subject area. The Principal's Nominee monitors any required actions through to their completion and records the issue and the progress in an online document shared with the Deputy Principal (School Management). A summary report is also shared with the Senior Leadership team.

Where there are inconsistent judgments, the school should consider encouraging teachers to use the function in the moderation application to query reports where they feel they would like further clarification or feedback.

External moderation where a Work Development Council is the standard setting body follows the same process.

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)

School self-review is effective. It is driven by the school's senior leadership team and identifies what is working well, what might need strengthening, and how that might be done. Teacher input can also initiate and influence changes, and student and community voice are sought where appropriate. The impacts of changes are evaluated and lead to further development where required. This provides assurance to senior management that potential improvements and concerns relating to assessment practices are effectively identified and appropriately addressed.

Focusing annual review on required change Annual reports have moved towards a professional conversation style focusing on better learning outcomes. They aim to help subject areas move from data analysis to reflect more on why something has happened and address any changes that may be needed. Each member of the Senior Leadership team has subject leaders allocated to them who they meet with to have a deeper discussion of the contexts of their results and goals to help them consider what is needed to get the best attainment for their students. This can then tie into individual staff members growth cycle, or lead to whole school staff development or improved school process such as the tracking of student achievement.

Reviewing subjects and standards offered The school is currently considering the place of compulsory subjects, considering the needs of 21st century learners and the change to NCEA literacy and numeracy co-requisites. This investigation will continue to evolve as the school develops the best process to support students who do not attain the NCEA co-requisite in Year 10 and once the requirements for University Entrance are known.

Alongside this the school is investigating how it can broaden the curriculum it offers to meet students' needs and if changes to the timetable structure can offer greater option choices. They also plan to consult with their community to see if the traditional academic subjects they teach are still appropriate or if they need to also offer a wider range of vocational focused courses. A recent change already enacted is the offering of Media Studies at NCEA level 2 and 3.

In the past the school has identified their students are being over assessed and have reduced the amount of assessment. However, they realise at Year 11 students still engage in six subjects and Christian studies so plan to only assess three standards in each NCEA level 1 subject.

Improving assessment related processes The Principal's Nominee works with the Deputy Principal (School Management) to create and review assessment related processes to ensure they are effective.

In 2022 there was an increase in the number of late entries and late reported internal results. This was highlighted to them by their Exam Centre Manager and through their own analysis of data. The school recognised the importance of recording a correct assessment programme to help students prepare for assessment and to track their progress. The school has tackled the issue with individual staff ensuring they have adequate mentoring, and checking processes. They have also introduced a student led process where they are required to take to class a printout of their entries

to check with their teacher to ensure data is accurate to meet key NZQA entry deadlines.

The Deputy Principal (School Management) has started to include analysing the new *Derived Grade Profile* report provided by NZQA in his annual review process. He should also consider including the new *Derived Grade Comparison Outlier* reports in his review as they will help him identify and highlight to subject areas any patterns of results that may need further investigation.

Other examples of recent changes to assessment practice through internal review include:

- moving the student diary to a digital format, which includes NCEA information, to better engage students
- expanding the tracking of at-risk students to include those with long term medical conditions or those with a high level of sporting commitments
- updating the late/missed/extension to assessment policy to cover preliminary exams and to be an application to the Principal's Nominee to ensure consistency after relaxing processes to be flexible to meet student need during the Covid outbreak
- developing a process for the Principal's Nominee to monitor and intervene where required in each subject areas' quality assurance process for derived grades
- creating a shared online folder so the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal (School Management) can share assessment related material to provide transparency and minimise institutional knowledge loss.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)

Ensure approved sub-contracts (third party consent) are in place when assessing students from other schools In previous years the school has assessed students from its feeder schools in an internal achievement standard. The feeder school does not have NZQA consent to assess. For this practice to continue the school must complete a sub-contract (third party consent) covering this relationship and have it approved by NZQA.

The school already has an approved sub-contract in place covering some of its feeder schools for the external standards for the co-requisite for literacy and numeracy/te reo matatini me te pāngarau.

High level of engagement in digital external assessment Students are supported to access digital assessment in all available NZQA subjects. The school has implemented a planned rapid expansion of digital assessment over the last couple of years. This has included creating a BYOD policy, improving internet connectivity, and a dedicated network for exam access. They have also invested in a platform to complete school preliminary examination digitally to help students prepare for NZQA digital exams. This has resulted in over 90% of their students completing NZQA external assessments digitally in 2022 and 2023.

Students requiring special assessment conditions are well supported. The school has a high number of students with special assessment conditions. There are good processes in place to identify students and most of the applications are supported through school-based evidence. As well as providing assessment assistance the school's learning centre provides practical strategies to help teachers support the students with their learning.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)

Strong internal moderation processes are in place Curriculum areas showed evidence of good internal moderation practice with the verification of grades awarded to a strategic selection of student material central to their marking process. Curriculum Leaders are aware of their responsibility for ensuring correct practices are followed.

The school has processes in place to allow the Principal's Nominee to effectively monitor the completion of internal moderation. The process and completion is tracked through the student management system and the Principal's Nominee follows up any concerns. The Principal's Nominee also regularly discuss moderation with Curriculum Leaders and complete annual visits to each curriculum area to check on their processes, and provide additional follow-up and support as required. The Principal's Nominee records the outcomes of these discussions. As covered in the external review section, to further strengthen the process this record should be shared with the Deputy Principal (School Management).

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Middleton Grange School 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 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 expansive 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.

Middleton Grange School 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

Middleton Grange School 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.

Middleton Grange School 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

Middleton Grange School 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.

Middleton Grange School 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.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families about assessment

Middleton Grange School 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
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

Middleton Grange School 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 Middleton Grange 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.

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 Candidates 2023*.

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
- *National Qualifications Framework, 2023 Teacher Handbook of Policies and Procedures* (Staff Handbook)
- *National Qualifications Framework, 2023 Student and Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures For NCEA* (Student Handbook)
- *Staff Manual Reporting Assessment and Conventions, Year 7 - 13, 2023.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal (School Management)
- Curriculum Leaders for:
 - Commerce
 - English
 - Humanities
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Associate Principal, Deputy Principal (School Management) 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.