

Managing National Assessment Report

Cashmere High School

August 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Cashmere High 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, 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 2021* (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
- *Assessment Procedures and Policies – Staff Handbook*
- *Information for Students – Student Handbook*
- *Curriculum Policy*
- *Studies Guide (school website)*
- *School Curriculum Matautangaā-kura 2021*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Achievement and Attendance
- Heads of Faculty /Department for:
 - Biology/ Science
 - Creative Arts
 - English
 - Geography / Social Sciences
 - Health / Physical Education
 - Mathematics and Statistics
- three students.

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

Cashmere High School

4 August 2021

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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

At NZQA's request in response to the restrictions of Covid-19 in 2020, and with the school's agreement this review was rescheduled from 2020.

What the school is doing well

The vision of Cashmere High School is to encourage students to achieve personal excellence and develop a sense of service and belonging. Staff at the school are led by an experienced and capable leadership team which focuses on ensuring this strategy is put into practice school-wide. Review of teaching and learning is based on developing effective practice to support high student achievement. Students have attained excellent achievement outcomes since the last review.

Cashmere High School has an embedded culture of self-review, enabling continuous improvement of assessment practices to meet student needs. The school has developed the capability of all teachers to take ownership of NCEA assessment practice, ensuring results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible.

Cashmere High School's moderation system is robust and ensures that all results reported are verified and valid. NZQA moderators report a very high agreement rate between teacher judgements and the assessment standard. The use of digital tools for assessment opportunities is encouraged by all teachers and is now the main method of submission for external moderation. Teachers interviewed value the feedback from external moderation, and the school's rigorous internal moderation processes support improved assessment judgements.

Data analysis is effectively used to support student achievement outcomes. Priority learners and students at risk of not achieving a qualification are identified and early intervention and support are put in place to support them to achieve. Data is used to inform change to programmes and future planning. Course review is underpinned by the analysis of achievement data and what changes need to be made to support improved student achievement.

The school's community is well informed with appropriate, fit for purpose communications about NCEA requirements and school procedures. The school uses a variety of methods to ensure all staff, students and whānau are well informed.

Areas for improvement

Cashmere High School has no action items relating to consent to assess requirements. However, a refinement that the school could make to grade verification practice for internal moderation is noted in the report.

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15 September 2021

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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 20 October 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

Cashmere High School has addressed the issues identified in the last Managing National Assessment review. They have:

- updated the documentation to ensure standard-specific evidence is used for reporting derived grades
- put in place a process for the Principal's Nominee to ensure Industry Training Organisation standards are subject to the same moderation processes as NZQA standards.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. The Principal's Nominee acknowledges all external moderation reports with a letter to departments. Staff are required to develop an action plan and the Principal's Nominee monitors these to ensure actions are completed. NZQA moderators have identified that assessor judgements are consistent with the standard. No departments have widespread or ongoing concerns.

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)

Cashmere High School has a culture of self-review. It is supported by a school-wide commitment to excellence and collaborative ownership of NCEA assessment practice. A collaborative culture has been developed through robust discussion about teaching, assessment and achievement at all level of the school's operation. Teachers value assessment feedback for professional learning and demonstrate a shared responsibility for quality assurance processes and consistency of assessment practices.

The school has reviewed and strengthened its use of data to inform change to respond to student need and best support students to achieve. Analysis of assessment outcomes and feedback data by teachers following each unit of learning informs decision-making about courses, strategies and assessment tasks. Changes that have been made include adaptation of courses, changes of standards within a course, and selecting more appropriate assessments to meet the learning needs of the students. With continued analysis of achievement outcomes, departments can evaluate the effectiveness of these changes to ensure they are continuing to meet the learning and achievement needs of their students.

Cashmere High School's use of digital practices is extensive. A review of the infrastructure was undertaken to ensure that their systems are stable for students and teachers to work digitally. This has increased the confidence of staff, whānau and students to continue on this journey.

There has been an increase in digital assessments for both internal and external assessments. The school has increased the number of digital external assessments they are offering and the percentage of results from external assessments has increased. Most external moderation is submitted digitally. Guidelines have been added to the assessment handbook to reflect this, including processes for authenticity checks and digital storage of students' work.

To ensure consistency and robust assessment processes, the school has shared responsibility in the administration of NCEA. The Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal share roles in administering assessment systems in the school. To further develop shared ownership, leadership, and future focus they are developing the knowledge and skills of another staff member to maintain their quality assessment practices.

Review of Māori achievement Due to concerns regarding Māori Achievement Cashmere High School surveyed students, whānau, community and staff and analysed data within departments and across the school. This clearly identified the disparity between Māori student achievement and their peers resulting in the need to foster an environment where Māori students can succeed as Māori.

The Poipoi Rangatira review was completed by the Deputy Principal Achievement and other staff members to provide a baseline understanding of where faculties, whānau and ākonga were at. Initiatives to address the findings and the disparity of achievement include:

- as part of their professional learning, teachers using the Te Korowai Mātauraka framework to focus on an area from Te Āo Māori, Hononga, Mana Ākonga or Knowing your Ākonga.
- Establishing Kahu Ako positions to promote and embed Te Āo Māori into the school curriculum
- guidance and support for Māori students to achieve to their potential
- a teacher from each faculty being a member of the Te Korowai Mātauraka which provides the framework to progress through this journey.

As a result, data shows an improvement in achievement of Māori students at all NCEA levels since 2018.

The school's robust self-review and professional leadership of NCEA assessment practices illustrate its ability to effectively respond to changes in student learning needs and evaluate practices accordingly, with the aim of enhancing opportunities for student success. This approach has contributed to the school realising its vision as NCEA results have been consistently above the national and equivalent decile cohorts.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

Cashmere High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated courses across classes in the same subject, and optional standards with courses
- using school-based testing to identify students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and making applications for entitlements
- clearly informing staff of students' special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support
- using a variety of methods to gather evidence of achievement using the NZQA evidence gathering templates as a guide and including naturally occurring evidence
- assessing when ready.

Cashmere High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules and student appeals of assessment decisions
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard specific evidence for derived and unexpected event grades
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* when handling students' assessment information.

Māori and Pacific students achievement including STEM subjects The school is committed to meeting student need to achieve equity of qualification attainment and access to future opportunities for Māori and Pacific students relative to their peers, including in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

A number of practices have been reviewed to support this focus. The Head of School responsible for the guidance of Pasifica students monitors their achievement and progress to support them to achieve to the best of their ability.

Māori academic mentors regularly meet with the students and provide academic support with STEM subjects. A group of Māori students participate in the Pūhoro STEM Academy, receiving support and tutoring from Māori science specialists. The school also offers the He Puna Pūtaiao programme run by the University of Canterbury for Year 10 Māori students, to encourage participation in sciences at senior levels.

Consistency of Assessment Practice Cashmere High School provides valid and fair assessment opportunities for students supported by systems ensuring credible assessment. There is consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities. Staff use digital plagiarism checkers to monitor the authenticity of student work.

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 2021 6.4b)

Cashmere High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- staff reviewing standard clarifications, and using NZQA and school exemplars to improve assessor judgements
- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- documenting each of the internal moderation process digitally or physically
- requiring the Heads of Faculty to monitor the completion of internal moderation prior to results being reported to NZQA

Cashmere High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- adequately storing student work to ensure material is available for submission
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring Industry Training Organisation standards to ensure the moderation process required by the provider is followed.

Robust internal moderation monitoring process To provide senior leadership with confidence that quality assurance in each faculty is robust, annual monitoring of their moderation process by the Principal's Nominee and/or Deputy Principal Achievement is thorough and documented.

The processes for the documentation and monitoring of internal moderation completion is now digital reflecting the school's shift to this mode of assessment.

Focus on reducing workload by considering grade verification requirements for sufficiency The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on sufficient verification by the strategic selection of student work. At present facilities verify more samples of student work than this. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing staff with further guidance on sufficient verification.

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)

Cashmere High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring student progress to identify priority learners and students at risk of not achieving qualification
- annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions
- actively encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner Login to monitor progress and check results
- Heads of Faculties analysing results with a focus on next steps, which informs the modification of courses and teaching practice.

Cashmere High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA in a timely and regular basis
- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
- ensuring all students check that their entries and results have been entered correctly
- ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn, as appropriate
- holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers and reconciling them with results.

Data is used to effectively track and monitor student progress Achievement is carefully tracked and monitored by individual students, class teachers, Heads of Year, and academic mentors. Academic mentors are allocated to provide additional support to identified priority learners and students who may be at risk of not achieving a qualification. Data is regularly shared with academic mentors to guide their mentoring conversations with students. Identified members of staff track student progress for literacy and numeracy requirements.

Students interviewed spoke of support provided by subject teachers, academic mentors, and guidance from the careers department to assist them to achieve to their potential. Monitoring of students and their progress includes the Literacy and Numeracy coordinator identifying students who may be at risk and providing them with guidance and support to achieve these requirements. Students with special assessment needs are identified by the Head of learning support and tracked and monitored throughout the year. Within some courses there is the flexibility of assessments to be adapted to meet the learning goals and needs of the 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))

Cashmere High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive the assessment calendar and outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff and students and their families using a range of methods and media
- supporting and training teachers new to the school
- annually reviewing staff and student handbooks to ensure they are fit for purpose and current. This supports consistency of practice school-wide.

Cashmere High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- sharing good practice and information through Head of Faculty/Department meetings
- holding assemblies to inform students of assessment policies and procedures
- presenting NZQA and school assessment related processes in parent meetings and through frequently asked questions on the school website.

Clear understanding of processes The processes for resubmissions, further assessment opportunities, authenticity extensions, possible breaches of the rules and appeals are understood by staff and students.

Students understand how NCEA works and the school's assessment procedures Students interviewed could clearly articulate how NCEA works and the requirements to gain a qualification, certificate and course endorsement. They understand school processes and know who to contact to answer questions or if they need support. This shows that communication to students about the qualification and assessment practices is effective and supports consistent credible assessment schoolwide.

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.