

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **St Kevin's College**

**June 2023**

## **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

### **St Kevin's College**

**8 June 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.

| Action  | Timeframe |
|---|-----------|
| <b>External and internal review</b>   |           |
| <b>Credible assessment practice to meet student /needs</b>  |           |
| Clarify the resubmission rules with all teachers.   | Immediate |
| <b>Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results</b>  |           |
| Further clarify verification sufficiency and purposeful selection so that all staff have a common understanding of NZQA's requirements. | 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:

- Ensuring all staff, and staff new to NCEA assessment, have access to Pūtake and the *Request clarification of an internally assessed standard* form
- Sharing ownership for the monitoring of internal moderation with Heads of Faculty.



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28 June 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 Item from 19 September 2018 Managing National Assessment Report**

The school has resolved its one agreed action to ensure all course outlines have the required information by including whether a standard offers Further Assessment Opportunities and whether a standard contributes to NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** External moderation documentation and its follow up are highly visible through the school's online storage and monitoring system. Follow up from past years is well archived and easily retrieved to inform future assessment of previously externally moderated standards. The school had more than 80 percent of its external moderation reported as "Consistent" in 2022, capping off continued improvement over the past three years. Teachers interviewed were positive about the professional learning component in the feedback they received and either acted on the moderator's advice directly or sought further professional advice where necessary. One faculty purposefully selected unfamiliar standards in 2022 for external moderation where they hoped to gain insights to some of the new standards being offered from 2024.

A next step for the Principal's Nominee is to evaluate and record the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up during his audit of departmental assessment practice. An effective practice that the school might like to consider is to report on external moderation outcomes as part of the faculty review process and include this in annual reports to the Principal and/or Board of Trustees.

**Quality assurance check of the examination centre** As a result of the 2022 Examination Centre quality assurance check, the school was found to be fully compliant.

### 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)*

Since the last Managing National Assessment review in 2018, St Kevin's College has had a change of Principal and Principal's Nominee and is in the process of revising its strategic priorities to better meet all students' qualifications and goals. The school uses its own processes of self-review, based on highly effective data analysis and use of staff/student voice to review programmes and implement changes that reduce barriers to success for all students.

The leadership team has supported and resourced students' readiness for a digital first approach to assessment by scaling up its involvement in digital assessment over the past three years. As a special character school, senior leaders are very mindful of the pressures and stresses on some students in their school community and the impact this has had on assessment outcomes for students in this target group. A key focus for the team is the improvement of overall student wellbeing, which is managed and monitored through the pastoral care network. To support this goal, the school

has expanded its senior leadership team to include two Assistant Principals who jointly oversee the pastoral care portfolio.

**Timetable changes in response to staff/student voice** The school has altered the structure of its timetable from 50 minute to 60 minute periods to extend the time available to complete tasks in practical subjects and allow for deeper learning in academic subjects. Typically, students on vocational pathway programmes and Gateway are off-site on a Friday. With diminished attendance in Friday classes, an alternative Friday timetable has ensured that students off site on Fridays do not miss out on new learning. As a result of internal review, the Friday timetable has seen the abolition of unstructured study periods for Years 11 and 12, and reversion to a normal timetable. Where a significant proportion of a class is off site on a Friday, the teacher can offer a tutorial, or support ongoing internal assessment, with any new learning only carried out Monday to Thursday. This change has ensured all learning is purposeful and all students' learning is supported.

**Developing dual pathways** For several years the school has offered an alternative qualification at Year 11 alongside NCEA for the purpose of enrichment. The school leadership, convinced of its role in improving achievement and endorsement outcomes, is currently exploring how it might extend use of this qualification across other subjects by offering dual pathway programmes. Heads of Faculty interviewed during this review were open to the idea, where the two qualifications could easily be derived from one programme of learning.

## **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.)*

**Strategies to strengthen literacy and numeracy** The school has identified a relatively small number of students at each level of the NCEA for whom the new Literacy and Numeracy Co-requisite might be a barrier to their overall success. The Education Review Office, together with the school, is looking at ways to extend the teaching of explicit literacy and numeracy strategies across the school. Every faculty and department develops actionable steps through their Action Plans following their annual analysis of achievement data. Most subject areas highlighted literacy and/or numeracy strategies they plan to use in their subject areas in 2023.

**Universal Design for Learning in focus for staff professional learning** In alignment with the changes being implemented through the NCEA Change Programme, the current focus for staff Professional Learning is to unpack and implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and practices across the school. Teachers are exploring ways to create environments that are deliberately designed for equity and inclusion by minimising barriers to engagement. Explicit formative feedback regarding each student's next steps is being used to improve access and understanding across a range of assessment instruments. Teachers are encouraged to use more flexible evidence gathering and to catch students achieving, in addition to the use of one-off assessment events.

**Managing student authenticity following the introduction of ChatGPT** In order to manage the authenticity of student work, the school has moved back to a pen and paper approach in all, or parts, of some assessment events where the use of ChatGPT could undermine the integrity of student work. This follows identification of a breach of authenticity in one learning area early in 2023 where students had used ChatGPT inappropriately. The students involved received a Not Achieved grade and

the school has clarified its authenticity requirements regarding ChatGPT with staff, students and families.

### **Clarification of new Resubmission rules and Further Assessment**

**Opportunities required** To prevent inconsistencies in assessment practice and preserve the credibility of the qualification, the school should expand its communications on Resubmissions and Further Assessment Opportunities by updating the staff and student handbooks and by familiarising all teachers with the content of the relevant NZQA Mythbusters, numbers 4 and 5 respectively.

Interviews with staff members revealed a mostly common understanding of NZQA's requirements. However, in one subject area, where a long term relief teacher had misinterpreted a standard, a resubmission was deemed inappropriate, as the errors amounted to more than those of a "minor" nature and the student was unable to correct the error by themselves, without additional teaching and learning. In this instance a Further Assessment Opportunity would have been the appropriate solution. Moreover, as the assessment was carried out over an extended period, milestone checks by a subject expert would ordinarily negate the need for resubmission.

Heads of Faculty need to ensure that the correct process is followed and that Resubmissions and Further Assessment Opportunities are managed appropriately and equitably.

## **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.)*

**Over-verification in evidence** Interviews with Heads of Faculty revealed some misunderstanding of NZQA's requirements in relation to the number of pieces of student work required for internal moderation. There is no prescribed number of pieces of student work required, but the sample size should reflect the assessor's familiarity, confidence and experience with the standard.

Where assessors are confident, fewer pieces are required, and these should be purposefully selected from around a grade boundary. Where assessors are new to a standard, or new to standards-based assessment, more pieces may be required for grade verification to provide confidence the assessor judgements are accurate.

Assessors need to be mindful of the workload for grade verifiers. Where more pieces of work are verified than would normally be required, there should be a valid reason for doing so, such as, the professional learning component.

**Share ownership for monitoring internal moderation** The school uses Assay 3 to manage and monitor internal moderation effectively and with ease. Responsibility for monitoring the overall quality of moderation can be shared with faculty and/or department leaders by having them provide the first pair of eyes and monitoring their internal moderation to ensure:

- that the grade verifier is a subject expert, with recent, successful experience with the standard

- that a subject with a poor external moderation history considers a change of verifier
- that verification discussions are recorded on the internal moderation cover sheet to inform future assessment of the standard
- that the verifier's grade and final grade are recorded on the cover sheet.

Finally, the Principal's Nominee, provides the second pair of eyes before confirming that grades can be sent to NZQA.

**Remind teachers to use NZQA's tools for assessor support** Most teachers have been given access to NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake. It is here that teachers can find support for internal assessment by subject, and NZQA's new modules on authenticity, and digital assessment using Assessment Master. Teachers may need to be reminded that if they require clarification of a standard, they can use the *Request clarification of an internally assessed standard* form available on the Internal Moderation page of the NZQA website to seek clarification from the moderator of that subject.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**St Kevin's 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 expanding 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
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**St Kevin's College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late 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 Kevin's 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 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 Kevin's College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

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

**St Kevin's 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 Kevin's 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 families about assessment**

### **St Kevin's 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 through special assemblies and issuing certificates and awards.

### **St Kevin's 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 St Kevin's 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 .

### 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:

- full access to a range of assessment and moderation documentation, including policies, procedures, reporting and evidence
- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *NZQA Assessment Policy Staff Procedures Handbook St Kevin's College* (Staff Handbook)
- *St Kevin's College Redcastle NCEA Student Handbook 2023* (Student Handbook)
- *St Kevin's College Strategic Plan 2023 -2025*.

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Religious Education
  - Sciences
  - Social Sciences
  - Technology
- 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.