

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Northern Southland College

September 2022

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Northern Southland College

14 September 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 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 2020.

### Actions and considerations

#### No action required

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

#### For consideration

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

- developing a school-wide strategy for implementing the NCEA Change Programme to ensure that staff and students are prepared adequately
- further encourage students to register for and use their learner logins to give them access to the range of functions available
- review methods of communicating NCEA information to students to assess if they are fit for purpose.



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8 November 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 22 June 2017 Managing National Assessment Report**

Northern Southland College teachers now have a clear understanding of what constitutes a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure sufficiency for verification of assessor judgements. Expectations are clearly communicated in a flow chart and discussed in the staff assessment handbook.

The Principal's Nominee has a robust system to confirm that the school reports results against the correct codes of external providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding. These are regularly reconciled with individual standard results.

**External moderation processes and response to outcomes** The school has clear processes for submitting external moderation and responding to moderator feedback efficiently. Heads of Department and the Principal's Nominee document the evaluation of actions taken in response to moderator feedback and note any required improvements in the school's internal moderation processes. These contribute to the conversations held between the Principal's Nominee and relevant Heads of Department. A range of responses is taken to resolve issues identified by external moderators, including seeking a wider range of external grade verifiers for a subject, professional learning for teachers including traveling for subject-specific support, and in-school mentoring. Teachers value external moderation feedback for the opportunity it provides to develop their assessment practice.

### 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)*

**Ongoing and effective review of assessment practices** The experienced Principal's Nominee has identified areas for improvement in assessment systems, led reviews, and implemented responses that have resulted in consistent and robust assessment across the school. Assessment goals have resulted from analysis of results data, teacher questions, and departmental reviews. Teachers are able to clearly articulate the assessment procedure priorities for the year and are supported to develop their understanding through frequent communication from the Principal's Nominee and discussion in staff meetings. Goals for 2022 include monitoring the quality assurance process for all results that may be submitted as derived grades, completing marking processes and recording results in a timely manner, and ensuring that moderation monitoring processes include tasks used for further assessment opportunities.

**Goals are aligned across the whole school** Teachers engage in review processes at subject, department and whole-school levels, contributing to ongoing improvement in assessment programmes to enhance student achievement. Whole school focuses include developing evaluative capability to supplement existing teachers' reflective practice. A staff working group is collecting data on boys'

cognitive engagement and evaluating this data in the context of the school's community and individual student learning needs. The intention is to ensure that any actions implemented as a result of this process will be targeted, rigorous and embedded in school practice.

**Further adapting assessment practices to meet student needs** Northern Southland College teachers are committed to using the flexibility of NCEA to support student assessment. Teachers have made adaptations to assessment practices as a result of COVID disruptions. These illustrate the benefits of assessment flexibility in improving student engagement and achievement outcomes. Adaptations made include using digital tools to monitor and give feedback on student progress towards assessment and increasing the number of set checkpoints in long-term projects. As a result of these adaptations, students are more confident that they are being assessed when achieving the standard is within their reach. The school has also relaxed its previous requirement for the provision of medical certificates when a student is absent, removing a barrier to fair assessment. Students appreciate the increasingly student-centred yet still rigorous approach.

**Preparing to implement changes to NCEA** Northern Southland College is continuing to clarify its strategy in response to the requirements of the NCEA Change programme. Some students have participated in digital external assessments and given positive feedback, and the school is increasing its digital entries in 2022. The school is piloting Level 1 Science standards this year and reviewing the experience. The school could consider holding further discussions with teachers about how the new standards will be introduced and any associated implications for assessment practice and school courses. This would contribute to planning at whole-school and curriculum area levels and help to ensure that all teachers and school systems are suitably prepared for the changes.

## **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)*

**Fair and credible collection of evidence for assessment** Teachers' understanding of the valid collection of evidence for assessment ensures that the school is well-placed to implement the new and larger internal standards of the NCEA Change Programme. Students are assessed when ready, using a range of evidence drawn from both class work and formal assessment activities. Evidence is recorded in ways that can be checked by another subject specialist. Forms of evidence include written assignments, portfolios, tests, videos of performances, detailed checklists of observed performance, photographs, transcripts of verbal performance and student-teacher conferencing. Teachers are familiar with annotating student work to ensure that evidence is valid and verifiable. Teachers are encouraged to supplement evidence of achievement with standard-specific work drawn from authenticated assignments or class activities, ensuring that students can present their best evidence of achievement.

**Valid evidence gathering for derived grades** Northern Southland College procedures ensure that all assessments for derived grades have been subject to a quality assurance process. The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion of quality assurance processes including the use of external verifiers. School evidence exams are critiqued, grades verified, and the process documented before grades are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner. School examination expectations and

requirements mirror external examinations so that students are familiar with examination rules. This ensures the validity of their grades and that students receive feedback to help with their preparation for external examinations.

**Supporting students to understand NCEA requirements and assessment practices** The school could consider reviewing the methods used to communicate information used to support students' understanding of assessment for qualifications. Students spoken to for this review said that there were aspects of assessment about which they needed further explanation, and they would appreciate receiving more detailed information to assist with decision making and tracking their progress. They were confident that they could approach staff to clarify assessment requirements and ask about their individual programmes.

**Further encourage students to register for and use their NZQA Learner logins** Students are encouraged to create their NZQA Learner logins to access digital examinations, check their results, and access functions such as reviews and reconsiderations. The school could consider further strategies to make sure that all students have accessed their logins. Students are currently using both the school's Student Management System and NZQA to monitor their progress towards qualifications.

## **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)*

**Proactive and purposeful internal moderation processes** Heads of Department have strong leadership and ownership of internal moderation processes within their departments, ensuring that only quality assured results are reported to NZQA. The Principal's Nominee has oversight of moderation systems and supports Heads of Department to evaluate their processes. Teachers refer to NZQA clarification documents and other assessment support materials, documenting any networking with colleagues and subject associations outside the college to maintain their understanding of the national standard. Teachers select from a range of grade verification strategies, including strategic selection at grade boundaries, to ensure that new assessors are supported, tasks are thoroughly reviewed, and that the process contributes to ongoing improvement.

**Documentation and monitoring of internal moderation** Clear and comprehensive records of internal moderation are recorded in a shared document and monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Once moderation records are complete, an automated email system returns a message to teachers to inform them that they are allowed to publish results to NZQA. The school's internal moderation system allows for a quick snapshot of all moderation partnerships with other schools to encourage teachers' ongoing development in assessment practice and accurate assessor judgements. Teachers retain exemplars of student work to illustrate verification discussion points and support future assessor judgements. They appreciate the purposeful systems that have been introduced and maintained by the experienced Principal's Nominee and her ongoing support of their use.

# Appendix 1: Effective Practice

## Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

**Northern Southland 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 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 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.

**Northern Southland 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
- 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**

**Northern Southland 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.

**Northern Southland 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 on internal moderation processes

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

**Northern Southland 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.

**Northern Southland 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**

### **Northern Southland 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.

### **Northern Southland College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- 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 Northern Southland 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 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
- *National Qualifications Procedures – Northern Southland College, 2022*
- *Assessment Guidelines for Students – Northern Southland College, 2022*
- Board of Trustees Student Assessment and Achievement policy – Northern Southland College, 2020.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
  - Accounting
  - Art
  - Design Technology
  - English
  - Humanities
  - Science
- two students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.