

Managing National Assessment Report

Central Southland College

October 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Central 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.

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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 2017* (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
- *Central Southland College, Staff Handbook*
- *Achievement and Assessment Here@CSC, Student Handbook*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Department for Music, Social Sciences and Science and Teacher in Charge of Agriculture.

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.

SUMMARY

Central Southland College

25 October 2017

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

What the school is doing well

Central Southland College is responsive to external review and has implemented all the required and agreed action items from the 2015 Managing National Assessment report. The school is also developing an increasing capacity to undertake its own review and evaluation of the effectiveness of their NZQA assessment practices and procedures. Self-review has led to increased understanding for staff and students around assessment processes.

Assessment processes are managed to meet the qualifications needs of students. The school provides clear information to help students choose courses that will support their future pathways. Students have a degree of assessment differentiation through multiple course choices in certain subject areas and some variation within courses for individuals. New courses are established in response to student demand and opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and assessment against standards that the school would otherwise be unable to provide. These contribute to assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes.

Sound internal moderation processes and effective action plans in response to external moderation are embedded practice. Along with improved monitoring by the Principal's Nominee, this assures assessment quality.

Data management and use effectively supports student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Achievement data is analysed to review school courses, evaluate department and school wide achievement, and monitor and intervene as needed with student progress towards qualifications.

The school has a range of communications that allow staff, students and caregivers to effectively gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

The monitoring of internal moderation can be made more robust by ensuring each department's practice is checked annually and by aligning the process of attesting to the completion of internal moderation across departments. This would provide improved quality assurance of all results and give senior management the confidence that internal moderation has been completed each year for every internal standard assessed.

Information to students, parents and staff is clearly written but some minor changes and additions are required so that they include all the necessary information and reflect current school practice.

Agreed action

The school agreed that these actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- ensure that the triennial department reviews and interim checks provide an annual assurance that department practices guarantee all internally assessed standards are moderated
- update school documentation so it is current and provides full coverage of NCEA information.

Kay Wilson
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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence found that external review actions have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 9 & 10 June 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The review identified a significant issue. The school was required to:

- ensure internal moderation is adequately monitored by senior management (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii).

Progress with addressing this issue was checked in September 2016. The school had instigated a system of submitting all *internal moderation cover sheets* online, with the Principal's Nominee tracking their completion. This recording and monitoring process is now embedded practice. Actions for further strengthening monitoring are covered in the relevant section of this report.

The school also had two agreed actions. These have been addressed through increased use of assessment-related data and refinements to the process to select a random sample of student work for external moderation.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. Results show most departments do not have widespread or ongoing concerns. One learning area has received extra support and professional development to help resolve issues.

Each department discusses their external moderation reports and completes a response to moderation form for each standard. This summarises the report and lists any required actions. The forms are submitted online so the Principal's Nominee can check on any issues, and the forms updated when the actions are completed.

The school has the same process for responding to external moderation conducted by Industry Training Organisations.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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)

The school is developing a culture of reviewing its NCEA assessment practices in response to issues they have identified through staff discussion and student voice. This is helping ensure credible assessment and utilise the flexibility of the NCEA model to meet the needs of students. A number of assessment-related initiatives have been introduced to improve current practice and enhance student achievement. These include:

- creating an Assessment Committee; a forum for Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge to clarify and explore assessment related issues
- using the introduction of a new student management system to give staff greater ownership of assessment data and improve parental accessibility to their child's assessment information

- offering a wider curriculum choice at Year 10 so that students can make more informed decisions when choosing NCEA subjects
- reviewing authenticity processes to ensure a consistent approach
- a gradual move towards reducing the amount of credits assessed in a course to assist students in managing their workload.

The school's self-review includes forward planning as well as responding to issues as they arise. Further planned areas of future development include:

- considering creating a committee with responsibility for managing breaches and appeals to help ensure the decision process is objective
- strengthening the induction process for new staff in relation to the school's NCEA processes
- reviewing the curriculum delivery and the level of assessment at Year 11 to better support student outcomes
- considering ways to inform students of internal assessment grades if completing moderation outside the school delays the awarding of a final grade.

These initiatives indicate that the school has the capacity to continue self-review of its NCEA assessment practices.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews 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 found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6 i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated assessment through course choice in core subjects; some courses offering a selection of standards and others personalising entries where appropriate
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school does not have the capacity to offer
 - assessment against standards related to career pathways
- clearly linking courses to vocational pathways so that students can make informed decisions to best support their future direction
- offering Year 10 students assessment against some internal achievement standards to give them an introduction to NCEA and to support them in meeting the NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements
- trialling and reviewing the success of special assessment conditions with identified students from Year 9 onwards to provide information for school-based evidence applications
- ensuring that staff are well informed of each student's special assessment condition entitlements and that appropriate assistance is readily available
- establishing new courses in response to student demand
- providing an assessment calendar in the student handbook to help students manage their workload.

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Students undertaking distance learning are well supported To maximise their achievement, students are counselled to consider if distance learning courses are appropriate for their learning style and an eDean provides support throughout the year. Distance Learning students also receive learning support from school staff where possible.

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 found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify assessment judgements for a sample of student work, with most departments focusing on work at grade boundaries
- documenting the process on an *internal moderation cover sheet* and storing the completed documents in a centralised online system
- following identical processes for moderating both Industry Training Organisation and NZQA administered standards.

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring student work is readily available for external moderation by being adequately stored
- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan and negotiating appropriate changes
- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements.

Strengthening the monitoring the completion of internal moderation The school needs to ensure that the triennial department reviews and the interim spot checks provide annual coverage of each department to confirm practice matches the information recorded in the *internal moderation cover sheets*. This will strengthen the annual assurance that all internally assessed standards are moderated. Some departments not have been checked this year.

Clarify the process for the final sign off of the completion of internal moderation Currently the final sign off of *internal moderation cover sheets* is completed by a variety of staff and they are not confident they are following a correct process. Deciding upon a common process, whether it is the teacher responsible for the particular assessment, the Head of Department or Principal's Nominee, would confirm where this attestation fits in the school's monitoring of internal moderation. It would also emphasise the importance of this step for quality assuring internal moderation and help give senior management the assurance that internal moderation has been completed.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that the triennial department reviews and interim checks provide an annual assurance that department practices guarantee all internally assessed standards are moderated.

For consideration

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

- clarifying who has responsibility for, and the intended purpose of, signing the attestation statement for the completion on internal moderation on the *internal moderation cover sheet*.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Central Southland College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - Deans and tutors monitoring students' progress towards NCEA achievement, and putting in place interventions where necessary
 - analysing results to track cohort progress as well as year on year comparisons
 - providing information for departments to make decisions on teaching and learning and choice of standards to be assessed
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge of a Subject setting up markbooks in the student management system, with individual teachers checking accuracy
 - reporting results to NZQA in a timely and regular basis
 - reporting Not Achieved results, as appropriate
 - effectively encouraging students to track their own progress using the NZQA app
 - having a check on external entries at key entry dates and an end of year teacher check and sign off process of internal results recorded on the NZQA website
 - holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers
 - using the NZQA Key Indicators to identify and resolve any data errors.

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 found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families using a range of methods
- publicising information on NZQA fees and financial assistance applications.

Central Southland College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing an information evening to parents and Year 10 students on NZQA and school assessment-related processes before they commence a full NCEA programme
- the Deans and Principal's Nominee using year level meetings to remind students about assessment policy and procedures
- the Principal's Nominee conducting a briefing before school examinations to ensure they mirror the end-of-year examinations and to emphasise the opportunity to gather information for potential derived grade applications
- providing parents access to the student management system to track their child's entries and progress.

Students interviewed showed a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures Students could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently. They valued the clear and detailed NCEA-related information in the option booklets as it helped them make informed decisions when choosing courses to study the following year.

Changes required to staff, and student and information School publications require some minor changes and additions to give full information and reflect current practice. This includes:

- providing more detail to students about the derived grade process
- altering the flow chart for missed assessment deadlines to include the awarding of a Not Achieved result as a possible outcome
- documenting the process for monitoring the completion of internal moderation
- clarifying that approval of special assessment conditions is required for both internal and external assessment
- removing incorrect references to the moderation national systems check.

Consistent inclusion of information in course outlines All departments provide course outlines to students, but they could be improved with consistent information on which standards count for literacy and/or numeracy, whether a course is endorseable, and inclusion of standard version numbers. Most of this information is

clearly presented in the course option booklets and this could provide a starting point for a common template.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- update school documentation so that it is current and provides full coverage of NCEA information.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing students with consistent assessment information in course outlines.