

Managing National Assessment Report

Verdon College

October 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Verdon College

18 October 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 years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2021.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Strengthen the monitoring of responses to external moderation, to ensure actions effectively address identified issues	To support the 2024 round of external moderation

For consideration

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

- updating the staff and student NCEA handbooks and make the student handbook accessible to students and whānau on the school website
- reporting outcomes of external moderation in the Learning Area reports.

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27 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 7 June 2018 Managing National Assessment Verdon College had no action items to address from its previous Managing National Assessment report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes While the school's external moderation outcomes have improved between 2021 and 2022 with fewer Not Consistent reports, the proportion of assessor judgement consistent with the standard require further improvement. Strengthening the monitoring of learning areas' responses to external moderation reports would address an ongoing low rate of consistency in some subjects. When teachers are unsure about any outcomes, they should be encouraged to use the query and appeal functionality in the external moderation application to enhance their understanding of grade boundaries for the standard.

When issues are identified via external moderation, teachers are supported to develop their practice and are often connected with mentors from outside the school. Feedback is also taken to local subject associations where there is regular sharing of moderation outcomes. Prior to assessing, teachers could be supported to make greater use of Pūtake, NZQA's Learning Management System, to engage with the most up-to-date interpretation of standards. Teachers value the feedback that they receive from external moderation, and this is used to improve courses and assessment practice. Teachers' engagement in this professional learning provides the school leadership with confidence that assessor practice is developing greater consistency.

The Principal's Nominee who took up the role in term 3 of 2023 has reviewed the school's storage of materials for external moderation, so that she has greater oversight of the process. She has introduced electronic monitoring of the completion of the school's internal moderation processes to ensure all selected standards will have materials submitted for future external moderation rounds. This will address the situation from 2021 and 2022 where materials were not available to be sent for moderation for some standards.

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)

Verdon College's Catholic principles underpin building and maintaining positive relationships between staff and students. The school prides itself on its approach to equity, as evidenced by high achievement results for Māori students. The school's principles are embedded in teacher practice for self-review of assessment which is informed by knowledge of the students and by assessment data. Student voice is a key contribution to the self-review process.

Since the school's last Managing National Assessment review in 2018, there have been changes in the Senior Leadership Team, with two new Assistant Principals

(Curriculum and Assessment), one of whom is also the Principal's Nominee. There has also been a review of the school's middle leadership structure and the introduction of the Head of Learning Area role. This provides clear lines of responsibility and improved support of teacher assessment ownership and capability.

The school's Curriculum Committee, comprising senior leadership and Heads of Learning Areas, has reformed after Covid and is active in review of the school's curriculum and assessment. The Curriculum Committee provides a forum for discussion of assessment matters and coming to a shared understanding of effective assessment processes.

Heads of Learning Areas are responsible for ensuring that teachers' assessment practice reflects this understanding and that all teachers are supported to engage in effective self-review. Teacher reflections on the teaching of their units and courses overall, and analysis of achievement data contribute to the Learning Area report to the School Board.

To enhance school self-review, each Learning Area should report on the outcomes of external and internal moderation in the Learning Area Annual report to the Board.

Deciding on an approach for NCEA Level 1 The school's approach to the assessment of NCEA Level 1 in 2024 has been developed by the Principal meeting with each Head of Learning Area to decide on the best fit between learning and assessment for the courses in their Learning Area. Time and support have been provided for Heads of Learning Areas to develop the Level 1 courses.

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)

Tracking and monitoring of student progress At Verdon College there is a coordinated approach by deans, mentor teachers, the Careers Advisor, and Senior Leadership Team in tracking student progress. Each learner's progress towards achievement of literacy and numeracy and NCEA is documented and discussed in the student's support team. When a student is at risk of not achieving their qualification goals, interventions are put in place to support them. Programmes are readily adapted to ensure that the student has opportunities to succeed. The school is developing strategies to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy in all subjects and mentoring for identified students. As a result of early identification of learning and assessment needs, students have access to their future educational, vocational and employment aspirations,

Increased provision of Special Assessment Conditions Since the last Managing National Assessment review, the number of students accessing Special Assessment Conditions has grown substantially. Using the student tracking process, deans and the Learning Support team identify the students who would benefit from the provision of conditions targeted to their specific requirements. The provision of support has been extended to a wider group of students in both internal and external assessment and is well communicated to teachers, students and whānau to ensure student access to assessment is accessible and fair.

Building digital readiness The school has increased use of digital platforms for learning and assessment, to reflect their preferred learning style and digital use in their everyday lives. Most students use digital methods to complete assessment for internally assessed standards and this has been used to prepare students for digital external assessment. This year, students were entered for the numeracy co-requisite to give them familiarity with the Assessment Master platform. This approach supports student readiness for the digital first approach of the NCEA Change Programme.

Strengthen assessment communication Since starting in the role in Term 3, the Principal's Nominee is actively updating staff and student assessment handbooks to reflect current NZQA advice. Once this is completed, she should consider making the student handbook available electronically on the school's website for easier access for students and whānau during the year. Reviewing assessment communications annually will help ensure they are current, fit for purpose, and support school-wide understanding.

Students report that they get their assessment information mainly from their teachers who regularly remind them about assessment and NCEA information. Reminders include using their student management system and NZQA learner login to check on their progress and ensure their results are accurate.

The Principal's Nominee uses the school ethos and character when working with new staff, especially those new to NCEA, to build their assessment capability. The school's supportive and collaborative culture supports Heads of Learning Areas to reflect on their own assessment practice and learn professionally. In turn they share ownership of assessment processes and build teachers' capability for ongoing improvement. This has enabled school-wide understanding of the purposeful delivery of credible assessment and robust quality assurance. New Heads of Learning Area are supported in a similar way to develop as assessment leaders.

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)

Strengthening internal moderation monitoring Verdon College is continuing to develop the strength of its internal moderation processes to maintain robust quality assurance, transparency of moderation effectiveness and issues to inform future decisions, and consistency across all subjects.

Teachers at Verdon College have shared understanding and take responsibility for critiquing assessment tasks, marking of student work and verification of grades using internal and external verifiers.

The Principal's Nominee checks that all internally assessed standards are moderated before results are reported and that documentation is completed. She also audits markbooks to support this process. This approach helps ensure the credibility of the results that are reported. Similar effective quality assurance is followed to ensure that the derived grade process is similarly robust.

The Principal's Nominee has introduced an electronic system to monitor the completion of internal moderation. This will be school-wide in 2024 and will give

better access to completed internal moderation materials via the shared drive. Where issues are identified in internal moderation processes, the Principal's Nominee addresses these.

Heads of Learning Areas take responsibility for gathering feedback from external moderation and from students, alongside assessment data, to reflect on and improve courses and assessment processes.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Verdon 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 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 opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- 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.

Verdon 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 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

Verdon 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.

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

- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Verdon 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 an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Verdon 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

- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

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

Verdon College has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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.

Verdon 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 Verdon 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 whānau.

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
- *Assessment Rules and Procedures for Managing National Assessment, Verdon College 2022*
- *Student Handbook: Assessment Rules and Procedures, Verdon College 2022*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Deputy Principal
- Heads of Learning Areas for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Religious Studies
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- three students.

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