

Managing National Assessment Report

**Ambury Park Centre
Incorporated**

September 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated

5 September 2024

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 two actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken in response to external moderation feedback	Begin after the completion of the 2024 external moderation cycle
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Update staff handbook to reflect school practice and NZQA requirements	Before the commencement of 2025 assessments

For consideration

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

- sharing monthly teacher reports with the Board of Trustees to help inform strategic planning.

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1 November 2024

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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 18 October 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

Two of the three action items from the 2019 report have been well addressed. The school strengthened the external moderation process to ensure that it leads to improvement, as detailed in the following section. Changing systems for recording and reporting assessment data will ensure that results are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner. Updating information in the staff handbook as required, has been partially addressed. Further refinements are still required, and this is discussed later in the report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school has taken effective steps to strengthen its response process following the 2019 review. Actions were implemented to address the low agreement rate between assessor and NZQA moderator judgements at that time. External verifiers are now used for all standards that the school assesses to ensure this is done by a subject specialist. An external moderation response form has been created and teachers are required to complete this for all outcomes other than consistent. The school has maintained a good consistency rate since the previous report, reflecting an improvement in assessor judgement accuracy. The next step to further strengthen this process is to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken to address identified issues. An experienced colleague at another school or a subject association could help with this. This should be done once any changes made have been embedded. Evaluating the effectiveness of the changes will help to ensure that accurate assessment judgements are being made.

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)

Embedded processes for self-review Ambury Park Centre has effective processes for self-review and benefits from having a small number of staff working closely together. Teachers meet weekly to discuss student progress, assessment, and achievement. Best practice is shared at these meetings, so that they may develop collective strategies for individual student achievement. External moderation reports are also discussed, and actions required by their feedback are planned and recorded. Teachers produce a monthly report for the Principal, including an analysis of results. The report is a good opportunity for reflection and evaluation to identify what is working well and issues that need addressing. As the Board of Trustees is undergoing a change, sharing these monthly reports could present the new Board with a good overview of what is currently happening within the school and inform strategic planning.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Trialling digital assessments In 2024, Ambury Park students will be entered to attempt the literacy and numeracy co-requisite online, so that the school may evaluate if this mode of assessment suitably meets their needs. Students at the school have learning and behavioural needs in which they find an exam environment particularly challenging and overwhelming. Having to go to another school that is an exam centre to sit exams compounds this matter. As such, students are rarely entered for external exams. Historically, the school has used the internally assessed numeracy and literacy unit standards US26622- US26627 to gain the literacy and numeracy requirement. The school continues to use supported learning credits to support learning for students who have learning difficulties or intellectual disabilities. However, trialling the online Common Assessment Activity will allow the school to determine how well students manage in an environment in which they are familiar and comfortable. The school can use its effective review processes to evaluate the support and preparation provided to the students and their experience attempting the assessment. This will help the school to determine whether this is a viable pathway for them and provide valuable feedback on how best to support them if so.

Staff handbook update required Updating assessment information is required to ensure it reflects school practice and NZQA requirements. Updates to the staff handbook arising from the 2019 report are still required, to include information about the resubmission of student work and further assessment opportunities. Information about the external moderation process is also required. This is timely given the improvements that have been made to the school's moderation processes. The investigation process for potential breaches of assessment rules should also be incorporated, so that it is clear about who is responsible for investigating and making decisions. Updating the handbook will help to maintain consistent assessment practice that meet the school's and NZQA's policies and expectations.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Robust moderation processes Moving to a digital platform has strengthened the robustness of the school's internal moderation system by improving its accessibility and transparency. The previous paper-based system limited visibility to the person overseeing the process and did not allow effective tracking of assessments happening within the school. All student assessments are stored in folders shared with the Principal's Nominee ensuring they are visible. Assessment which is completed digitally as well as scanned copies of those completed on paper are stored within these folders. Links to the assessments are shared with internal and external verifiers, including the moderation coversheet to capture commentary about assessment decisions. The Principal's Nominee uses a spreadsheet to track the moderation process for each assessment and to follow-up with teachers if necessary. The tracking sheet is shared with the staff and is updated at the weekly staff meeting. The cloud-based system has also strengthened the external moderation process as links can easily be uploaded to the external moderation application, the response form is completed digitally and stored in the appropriate assessment folder, and the tracking spreadsheet includes the tracking of external moderation processes. School leaders can therefore have confidence that moderation is happening within the school and credible results are being reported to NZQA.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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
- 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
- identifying individual students who may need special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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.

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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.

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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 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

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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.

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated 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 Ambury Park Centre Incorporated:

- 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 NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024*.

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 Procedures for Staff at Ambury Park Centre, Ambury Park Centre 2024*
- *Assessment Procedures Handbook for Students and their Families, Ambury Park Centre, 2024.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Teachers of:
 - English/Literacy
 - Mathematics/Numeracy
- 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.

Background

Ambury Park Centre Incorporated has students who have been referred to the school because they have been unable to succeed in the mainstream system. They may be operating at a curriculum level lower than their chronological age and are therefore not ready to complete NCEA Level 1 at Year 11. Programmes are focused on meeting the individual needs of students and assessments are only undertaken when the students are ready. Students' emotional and psychological wellbeing are a priority for the school.

The school's programmes are centred around horse therapy and therefore students spend a percentage of their day tending to the horses.