

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Aquinas College**

**June 2023**

## **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

### **Aquinas College**

**15 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 2021.

### **Actions and considerations**

#### **No action required**

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



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28 August 2023

**NZQA**

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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 16 May 2018 Managing National Assessment Report**

Aquinas College has addressed the actions from the previous report. External responses and action plans are documented, monitored and evaluated by the Principal's Nominee. Student and staff handbooks have been reviewed and are now current with Leaders of Learning reporting that they have read the latest information. Students receive a personalised information sheet about the requirements for NCEA and are well-informed.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** Teachers respond to external moderation and document action plans to address issues. These are monitored by the new Principal's Nominee who evaluates the action plan's effectiveness with staff concerned. Leaders of Learning regularly query external moderation and use the appeal process as required. Where assessor judgements do not meet the standard, assessors receive support through Pūtake, subject associations and peers from other schools. Teachers have a clear understanding of the purpose of external moderation and view it as part of their professional development and responsibility to ensure results reported are credible.

**Exam Centre Quality Assurance Check** The 2022 check of the school's examination centre found it 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)*

Aquinas College has a sound internal evidence-based review process based on the touchstones of its special character and the three key elements of its graduate profile - Belong, Believe, Become. Strategic decision-making provides clear direction and focuses on continuous improvement to improve assessment outcomes for students. Senior leaders set the expectations and all teachers participate in the review cycle at all levels including undertaking a professional growth cycle to ensure that their practice is sound. All staff members take ownership of their professional responsibilities, including ensuring that their assessment practice is credible, current and consistent.

**Internal review an ongoing process driven by data** Leaders of Learning review and analyse results and report bi-annually to the School Board. During their presentation to the Board, Leaders of Learning provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of their faculties. They are expected to identify variances within a cohort and make interventions in teaching and learning programmes as appropriate, for example, changing assessment strategies to suit priority learners.

From its data analysis, the school has identified Māori and Pacific students, and year 11 -13 boys as priority learners. The school has developed an inquiry template where priority learners' results are compared with the overall cohort. This digital tool is helping create a culture of review and reflection that incorporates student voice to improve teaching and learning through responsive assessment practice.

## Credible assessment practice to meet student/ ākongā 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.)*

**Systems to monitor assessment results ensure students/ākongā have valid up-to-date information** Students track their assessment information through various means, including the Student Portal to the Student Management System, the Deans and their NZQA Learner Logins. Teachers work with students in years 10 and 11 to ensure they can log in to NZQA and access their records of achievement to check results and report any errors or omissions.

Mentor teachers and Deans receive automated emails when Not Achieved results are reported for students that they are responsible for, and this may trigger extra support. All teachers have access to spreadsheets which track individual student progress. Where students are identified as requiring extra support, this triggers an intervention which includes discussions with Deans and families and in some cases tailored variations in the learning programme through a support class. Student achievement results indicate that the extra support is effective. Additional specialist Literacy and Numeracy classes are available to support those at risk of not meeting the new Literacy/Numeracy Co-requisites standards to support them to achieve the qualification.

**Pilots develop teacher reflective practice** The school has used its participation in the assessment of the co-requisite and pilot standards as an opportunity for professional growth where teachers are encouraged to think critically about how they teach and assess. This helps to ensure that their courses will meet the teaching and assessment requirements of the new standards. Leaders of Learning have been challenged to use different methods of assessment using the principles of Universal Design for Learning. The Principal's Nominee has an ongoing role, working with teachers and through regular discussion, using their reflections to inform how to assess students in ways that best suit their needs.

**Clear, consistent, current communication** All members of the Aquinas College community receive accurate assessment information in a variety of ways. Students receive a digital copy of the student handbook with an individually customised assessment statement that details the assessment opportunities available with approximate timeframes and standards details based on their individual course selection. Students have clear assessment guidelines for their academic year and can plan accordingly. Information is regularly communicated to students, teachers and families through newsletters, the school website, assemblies, information evenings and meetings.

## 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.)*

**Teachers take full ownership of the internal moderation process** Leaders of Learning attend curriculum leaders' meetings where messages are consistent around ensuring students are able to access assessment that is fair, valid and consistent.

This leads to teachers being committed to ongoing professional development including participation in subject associations, accessing Pūtake as required and responding to all external moderation. Leaders of Learning ensure all steps in the moderation process are followed and the Principal's Nominee has oversight of it. Results are published by the Principal's Nominee once they are satisfied that all steps have been completed appropriately. External moderation outcomes over the past few years are evidence that internal moderation processes are reporting credible results.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Aquinas College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its students / ākongā 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
- 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.

**Aquinas 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**

**Aquinas 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.

**Aquinas 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 of internal moderation processes.

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

**Aquinas 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 School Board an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

## **Aquinas 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/ ākonga and their families / whānau about assessment**

### **Aquinas 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.

### **Aquinas 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 Aquinas 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:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *Aquinas College 2023 Staff Assessment Handbook*
- *Aquinas College 2023 Operational-Policy-1-Assessment*
- *Aquinas College Year 11 Assessment Handbook*
- *Aquinas College Year 12 Assessment Handbook*
- *Aquinas College Year 13 Assessment Handbook*

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Leaders of Learning for:
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Social Science
  - Te Reo Māori
  - Visual Art
- three students

There was a report-back session with the Acting 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.