

Managing National Assessment Report

Sancta Maria College

May 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Sancta Maria 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, 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; 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 2019* (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
- *NZQA Rules and guidelines for Internal Assessment*, Sancta Maria College, 2019
- Policies for Curriculum and Assessment, Sancta Maria College, 2019
- Reviewed procedures for: Special Needs, Religious Education Curriculum Delivery, Internal Moderation and Student Academic Misconduct
- *NZQA 2019 Staff Handbook, Policy and Procedures*, Sancta Maria College, 2019
- *NCEA Student Handbook*, Sancta Maria College, 2019
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Head(s) Department for:
 - Careers
 - Commerce
 - English
 - ESOL
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Social Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, four Line Managers 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

Sancta Maria College

23 June 2019

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

What the school is doing well

Sancta Maria College is effectively meeting student needs through its shared vision that all learners should have the opportunity to learn and achieve in an inclusive, respectful, safe and positive environment. Underpinning this vision is an embedded culture of self-review and shared ownership of NCEA assessment practice which ensures high levels of student achievement and maintains credible assessment.

Assessment practice was consistent across all departments that participated in the review and was evident in student responses to interview questions. Overall student achievement is equitable across all ethnic groups, reflecting the school's vision of meeting the needs of all students. Data is effectively used to inform course design and to identify students at risk of not completing qualifications. To ensure students can meet their aspirations, intensive extra language support is provided as many of the students are from recent migrant families. The number of credits offered in each course has been reduced to address workload for both teachers and students.

Internal moderation processes are managed effectively by the Principal's Nominee who has a commitment to ensuring all results reported are credible. Robust internal moderation processes are reflected in the high external moderation agreement rate between teachers and NZQA moderators. External moderation issues are addressed by Heads of Department preparing action plans which are supported and monitored for completion by Line Managers.

Data analysis and use is a strength of the school, informing good practice and self-review by teachers and school management. Entries and the reporting of results is complete and accurate due to the efforts of the Data Manager ensuring staff follow all processes.

Shared ownership of improving NCEA assessment practice results from effective communication at all levels of the school's operation. This is evident in the collaboration between teachers, Heads of Department and Senior Management to work together to meet the needs of a diverse student body and community. Student, teacher and, where appropriate, parent voice is fundamental to the school's decision-making processes.

NCEA assessment practice is effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee and the Deputy Principal with responsibility for senior curriculum. They are supported in

their work by the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team, who with staff work collaboratively to help ensure students achieve an appropriate qualification.

Areas for improvement

As discussed with the Senior Leadership Team, two assessment practices have to be clarified in documentation to ensure understanding by all staff. These are the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* in relation to students results and samples of work and the management of commercial tasks used to generate standard specific evidence to report derived grades.

Agreed action

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

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 documentation as outlined in the report.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

12 August 2019

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

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

External review

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

Action Items from 20 September 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

The two action items from this report have been completed. Resubmission and further assessment opportunities have been clarified to all teachers and the selection of samples of student work for internal moderation is now purposeful at grade boundaries.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has an excellent external moderation history with high levels of agreement between teachers and NZQA moderator judgements.

Heads of Department are required to develop action plans to address issues identified in external moderation reports. Line Managers and the Principal's Nominee monitor the completion of these plans and supports teachers, to appeal reports or request clarifications. Teachers are encouraged to attend NZQA Best Practice Workshops or engage with external subject experts and advisors.

Response to data issues Over the last two years, five separate subjects have been identified by NZQA as outliers when internal and external results were statistically compared. The school had identified in their own data analysis these statistical variations and provided satisfactory explanations.

Internal review

Evidence for 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)

The school has an effective culture of self-review, based around a shared vision of meeting student needs. All teachers take ownership for ensuring students are provided with the best opportunity to achieve. This culture is underpinned by professional development, student, teacher and parent voice, and collaboration

Recent documented review projects include NCEA workload, reporting to students and parents, internal and external moderation, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) achievement for Maori and Pacific students, assessment policy, staff and student NCEA handbooks, the provision of special needs support and digital assessment.

School management is very supportive of professional development opportunities, encouraging staff to participate in a range of curriculum and assessment workshops and using NCEA data to inform teacher as inquiry projects. All departments are provided with professional development "sharing time" to provide them with the time and space to plan, address issues and clarify and update current practice.

A collaborative meeting structure school-wide encourages parent, teacher and student voice to inform review projects. NCEA assessment issues are regularly discussed at Board of Trustee, Senior Leadership, Head of Department and staff meetings. Parent and student input to decision making is gained from regular surveys and discussion at parent teacher meetings and year level assemblies. Information discussed at these forums has resulted in a number of recent initiatives to improve NCEA assessment practice including:

- providing all teachers with a learning support handbook that includes photographs of students identified as requiring special assessment conditions, alongside strategies that could be used to support learning difficulties
- development of Individual Education Plans for students at risk of not completing qualifications or requiring extra support due to learning difficulties or language barriers
- providing academic writing courses for all students to mitigate language barriers
- removing streaming of students in multi-level courses based on research that supports better outcomes for all students
- reduction of credits for all courses to address teacher and student workload
- focusing on the introduction of literacy and numeracy strategies for teachers to engage students in learning and assessment as part of the Kahui.
- providing additional assessment opportunities for all students in term four to support students to complete qualifications
- introduction of intervention programmes to support students to transition into vocational pathways, including links with external providers
- development of a colour coded reporting process for parents through the student management system, to facilitate early identification of students who are not fulfilling their potential
- centralising the missed and late assessment procedures to ensure school wide consistency

The culture of self-review reflects the school's vision of allowing students to succeed in an inclusive, respectful, safe and positive environment. This is reflected in student achievement rates, which are considerably higher than similar schools for all ethnic groups.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and/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 for assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 5.5)

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

- investigating strategies to address inequality in STEM subjects
- using a range of methods during assessment to gather evidence of achievement
- scaffolding and contextualising learning and assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage student interest
- increasingly collecting school-based evidence to support applications for students identified as needing special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support
- managing student workload through the development of an online assessment calendar and reducing the number of credits offered in all courses.

Sancta Maria College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practices on missed and late work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- investigating appeals following the principles of natural justice
- using a range of strategies to ensure student work is authentic including the use of digital tools
- effectively managing NZQA external examinations.

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 for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 6.4b)

Sancta Maria College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to check that they are valid and fit for purpose
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded to a purposefully selected sample of student work
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future grade verification decisions
- documenting the internal moderation process, including noting discussions between markers and verifiers to justify a grade decision.

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

- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- encouraging teachers to select standards for inclusion in the school's moderation plan.

Strengthening moderation processes through an audit process Since the last Managing National Assessment review the Principal's Nominee has introduced an audit process for both external and internal moderation to ensure senior leadership are confident in the credibility of reported results.

Completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* are submitted to the Data Manager before results are reported to NZQA. The Principal's Nominee visits each department annually, recording that internal moderation paper work reconciles with actual practice. A checklist is also used to ensure samples of student work for external moderation are randomly selected and work adequately stored.

Line Managers in appraisal meetings with Heads of Department discuss the completion of action plans to address external moderation issues. Copies of these plans are filed with the Principal's Nominee who evaluates the outcome of improvements to practice.

The robust internal moderation processes are reflected in the consistently high agreement rate between teachers and NZQA moderators.

No action required

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

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

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

Sancta Maria College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- using NZQA statistical reports and analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform decisions about future course content and design
- annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions
- celebrating student achievement through student awards and recognition.

Sancta Maria College reports accurate achievement data by:

- using Key Indicators to identify and reduce data issues
- timely reporting of results to NZQA
- ensuring that internal results are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate
- requiring students, teachers and Heads of Department to check the accuracy of entries and reported results
- actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system and NZQA Learner Login
- holding current of Memorandum of Understanding with external providers and reconciling them with entries
- ensuring a low number of late entries for external examinations.

Effective monitoring and tracking of student achievement progress All NCEA student progress is tracked during the year to allow interventions to be made at strategic points to support students at risk of not completing qualifications.

Students awarded not achieved results are reported to the level Dean and the Deputy Principal in charge of senior curriculum. They are tracked using the *Data Register Document* which identifies patterns of achievement across their subjects. Identified students are interviewed and if appropriate, an individual education plan is developed. The plan involves changes to that student's assessment programme and support through mentoring, tutorials and attendance at the homework room.

A digital tool has recently been introduced to the student management system so Deans can more readily identify students to provide earlier wrap around support and intervention.

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 for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Sancta Maria College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through
 - staff and student NCEA handbooks, student course and subject selection information
 - the school website
 - student assemblies
 - parent, teacher and student report evenings
 - career information supporting student to select appropriate pathways
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications to parents, including providing online access to information held on the school's management system.

Sancta Maria College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- discussing best assessment practice at Heads of Department meetings
- holding regular meetings with the Principal's Nominee and senior management to discuss and clarify issues
- requiring all teachers to partake in professional development to upskill and update current practices including an annual teacher as inquiry project which often has a NCEA focus
- having a common template for all courses ensuring, there is consistent up-to-date assessment information which is reviewed annually
- inducting new teachers to familiarise them with assessment and moderation processes and expectations
- requiring deans and form teachers ensure that students understand what they need to achieve to gain qualifications.

Privacy Act 1993 requirements need to be documented The specific requirements for privacy of NCEA assessment practice needs to be documented in the staff and student handbooks. This should state that results must be kept secure and permission is necessary if student work is used as exemplars.

Discussion with teachers and students did however indicate that these practices were met in the management of student work and publication of results.

Document all processes required to provide evidence for derived grades The requirement to keep commercial tasks secure when used to provide evidence for derived grades needs to be documented in the staff handbook.

Teachers interviewed for the review were aware that tasks from public sources had to be modified, commercial tasks kept secure and student work justified, when providing evidence to report derived grades. However, to ensure consistent understanding by all teachers documentation needs to be updated to ensure that commercial tasks used to generate derived grades are kept secure until all schools accessing them have completed practice examinations.

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 documentation as outlined in the report.