

Managing National Assessment Report

Catholic Cathedral College

May 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Catholic Cathedral 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 2021* (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
- *Catholic Cathedral College 2021 Staff NZQA Handbook*
- *Catholic Cathedral College 2021 Student NCEA Handbook*
- *Catholic Cathedral College HOD Handbook 2021*
- *Catholic Cathedral College Academic Achievement Report For the year 2020*
- *Catholic Cathedral College Policy 1.0 Curriculum and Student Achievement*
- *Catholic Cathedral College Management Policy Governing NCEA 2020*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

Two School Relationship Managers met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Religious Education
 - Science
 - Social Science
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Performing Arts
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and Head of English 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

Catholic Cathedral College

20 May 2021

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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to the impact of Covid 19.

What the school is doing well

Catholic Cathedral College is a small school and works in partnership with students and whanau to understand student needs and help them achieve to the best of their ability. They maximise student their achievement by offering a range of academic and vocational opportunities and support to meet their needs. Given their smaller size, they extend assessment opportunities by using other external providers to offer courses and standards that the school would otherwise be unable to provide. The school is making good use of school-based evidence to support eligible students' access to approved special assessment conditions and provides them with appropriate support.

Assessment practices are sound and consistently applied.

The school responds appropriately to issues identified by both internal and external review. Self-review is driven by the management team along with the Principal's Nominee and subject leaders. This often includes response to student voice, which leads to changes in assessment-related practice that better meet student needs.

Robust internal and external moderation processes, including monitoring and follow up of any necessary actions, are embedded across the school. These ensure that only credible results are reported to NZQA. This effective practice is reflected in the high level of consistency between teacher and NZQA external moderator judgements.

Data management and use effectively supports student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure that results reported to NZQA are accurate and timely. Achievement data is analysed to review department practice and course design, set strategic direction, and evaluate the effectiveness of changes. Students monitor their own progress towards completing qualifications through their portal into the student management system. Staff use data to identify and intervene with students at risk of not achieving to their potential.

The school has a range of clear and effective targeted communications in place to ensure all staff, students and whanau have a common understanding of the NCEA qualification and the school's assessment policy and procedures.

Areas for improvement

There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Kay Wilson
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9 July 2021

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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 24 August 2017 Managing National Assessment Report An agreed action item to clarify the guidelines for resubmission opportunities has been fully actioned with staff and students showing a common understanding, including the changes made to resubmission rules this year. A second action covering purposeful selection for verification of student work and not using the random sample for external moderation has been partially resolved but requires some further consideration. Teacher practice clearly shows that the work sent for external moderation is a unique random sample and not the work chosen for verification. A suggestion for consideration about the selection of work to be verified is in the moderation section of this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. These ensure senior management are fully informed of issues and involved in the review of outcomes where required. Feedback from external moderation shows there is a high level of consistency between assessor and moderator judgements overall.

The Principal's Nominee reads each report and shares them with the relevant staff. Subject areas are expected to reflect on the outcomes and complete a response to the Principal's Nominee for all standards moderated. She reviews the responses and monitors the completion of actions to ensure an effective resolution of the issue.

The school should consider encouraging staff to make greater use of the query option when they want further clarity about issues raised by the moderator.

Response to data issues The school will be putting extra emphasis on their end of year results checks this year. In both 2019 and 2020, the results for a standard assessed for a class of students were not reported to NZQA in time to award them qualifications in mid-January. Using the *Counts By Subject or Course Report* available through the NZQA Provider Login may assist their checking process.

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 effectively reviews its assessment-related processes in response to identified issues. These are mainly driven by the senior management team and the Principal's Nominee working alongside Heads of Department. Once implemented, the impact of a change is reviewed, which results in further refinements if needed.

The school brings in experts from outside a department to review each department every two to three years. This gives a fresh viewpoint on their processes and can affirm their practice and suggest changes to consider.

Current school-wide areas of focus include inquiring into growing student engagement in external assessment, increasing certificate endorsements and understanding the influences on University Entrance achievement rates. Some resulting changes the school has implemented are:

- moving prize giving/hui whakahōnere to Term 1 to enable acknowledgment of the importance of success in external assessment the previous year and to recognise achievement in course endorsements
- introducing a templated annual review so staff can focus on an in-depth reflection of the success of their course considering statistics and student voice whilst presenting it in a consistent and valid way to provide a clear picture to determine department and school future focus.

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 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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- offering a range of academic and vocational focused courses that are equally valued by the students
- tailoring assessment opportunities to individuals within a course through discussing if it is appropriate to be assessed in all the planned standards with them
- encouraging students to not see courses as age specific, but to focus on whether it supports their intended pathway, and where appropriate, supporting students to continue at school post 18
- extending assessment opportunities through using a range of external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against standards related to career pathways
- strengthening the literacy skills of English Language Learner students so they can access a full range of courses
- ensuring that students potentially entitled to special assessment conditions are identified, support trialled and updated, and that data is gathered to support school-based evidence applications
- clearly informing staff of students' special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance.

Catholic Cathedral College has effective processes and procedures for:

- proactively managing authenticity through teaching and assessment task design and monitoring student work during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, breaches of the assessment rules and appeals
- 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*.

Managing student assessment workload A digital assessment calendar has been introduced this year to help departments plan and reduce periods of excessive assessment. The Principal's Nominee maintains oversight and negotiates changes where required. The school is currently looking at ways to effectively share this with students and parents so they can clearly see when assessments are scheduled and any changes.

In 2018 and 2019 40% of Year 11 students gained over 120 credits. Students only need to attain 80 credits to gain their NCEA Level 1 qualification. The school should

consider the impact of assessing a high number of credits, and whether reducing the amount assessed could improve student assessment outcomes.

For consideration

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

- if reducing the number of credits assessed could improve student assessment outcomes.

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 2021 6.4b)

Catholic Cathedral 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, from within and outside the school, to verify a sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- retaining and updating work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- following appropriate processes for moderating Industry Training Organisation administered standards.

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

- teachers suggesting standards for external moderation to gain feedback on standards they feel need targeting
- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- ensuring student work is stored securely so it is available for submission.

Effective monitoring of internal moderation The monitoring of internal moderation assures senior management that all reported results are credible.

Heads of Department actively monitor the completion of all aspects of internal moderation. The Principal's Nominee visits each department at least annually to discuss moderation processes, check the evidence of it being completed for each standard and to share good practice. The outcome of these visits is recorded, highlighting any issues and how they have been resolved. This clear record ensures key staff are clearly informed and the school can mitigate possible continuity issues due to any personnel changes.

Consider further guidance to staff on grade verification requirements for sufficiency to potentially reduce workload The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on sufficient grade verification by the strategic selection of student work.

Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality assurance of grade decisions. The sample size for verification is determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

Departments do focus verification on grade boundaries, but many choose to verify further samples of student work. They should consider what benefits they gain from

the extra verification and if it can be reduced without compromising the validity of reported results.

For consideration

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

- providing staff with further guidance on sufficient grade verification.

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)

Catholic Cathedral College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- departments analysing results with a focus on next steps, which informs the modification of courses and teaching practice
- analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to guide strategic direction.

Catholic Cathedral College reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting data files to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- reporting Not Achieved results as appropriate
- having students sign off results in class, then checking and discussing them in their term 3 conference with their Hapori teacher
- closely managing withdrawals from standards and late entries
- only reporting results for standards for which the school holds consent, or against the correct code of outside providers with whom the school holds a centrally stored current memorandum of understanding.

Student progress is tracked effectively, and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes The school effectively uses data to track student progress, with mentoring focused on maximising the strong student/school/home relationship to improve achievement outcomes.

Students who are at risk of not achieving are identified and supported by their Hapori teacher and Head of House. Interventions are implemented as necessary to help students to improve their assessment outcomes. This year there has been an emphasis on staff informing the Hapori teacher and Head of House if a student has a Not Achieved result reported, to help clearly flag where there may be an emerging concern with their progress towards gaining a qualification.

Students and parents are encouraged to monitor progress through their portal into the student management system.

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))

Catholic Cathedral College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive clear and consistent outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to students and their families using a range of methods
- inducting new staff to familiarise them with the school's expectations for assessment and moderation processes.

Catholic Cathedral College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- discussing NCEA related processes in Heads of Department meetings
- using assemblies to brief students about assessment policy and procedures, with messages reinforced by class and Hapori teachers
- presenting NZQA and school assessment related processes in parent information evening and reinforcing them through other interactions with parents
- ensuring information in the student handbook, staff handbook and school website are aligned.

Students show 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 to assessment submission dates, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently. This shows that communication to students about the qualification and assessment practices is effective.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.