

# Managing National Assessment Report

**John Paul  
College**

**May 2019**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively John Paul 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
- a selection of John Paul College Policy documents, including those on Curriculum Delivery, Assessment and Reporting, Optimising Māori student Achievement, Examinations and E-Learning
- *John Paul College Curriculum Delivery Booklet Guidelines and Policies 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 NCEA information and Course requirements* (Student Handbooks).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee who is also the Deputy Principal Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Health and Physical Education
  - Humanities
  - Languages
  - Mathematics
- Head of Department for Digital Technology
- Teacher in Charge of Careers
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting 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.

# SUMMARY

## John Paul College

30 May 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 most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

### What the school is doing well

John Paul College has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school provides a range of academic and vocational courses to meet the assessment needs of its students. Changes to programmes, including reducing the number of standards offered and assessing several standards through one task, allow students more time to focus on the quality, rather than quantity, of their credits. Students with approved special assessment conditions are appropriately supported.

Internal moderation is an embedded process and is monitored by Heads of Faculty and the Principal's Nominee to ensure only results that have been quality assured are reported to NZQA. Staff actively engage with external moderation and strategically request specific standards for moderation to confirm their understanding of the standard's requirements.

Assessment results are checked for accuracy and reported against the correct provider codes by key dates. Data is effectively used by staff to inform course design, track student achievement and identify those at risk of not meeting qualification requirements. Use of the NZQA Learner Login and the school's online portal allow students to monitor their own progress towards qualifications.

School communication ensures information on qualifications and assessment procedures is appropriately provided to its community. The range of formats used to distribute this information has assisted with the development of a shared understanding of NCEA qualification requirements.

### Areas for improvement

The school should use the evidence of learning needs it collects on students to support applications for special assessment conditions. Relying solely on professional reports for applications may result in eligible students missing out on an entitlement because of the cost of obtaining a report.

The number of late entries for externally assessed standards should be reduced. Students whose entries for external examinations are made late do not receive personalised examination papers. This can interfere with the smooth running of the examination centre and increase the possibility of examination material becoming misplaced.

The staff and student assessment handbooks require review and updating. The material they contain, especially that on the school's missed and late assessment processes and students' rights under the *Privacy Act, 1993* and the *Copyright Act, 1994*, should be consistent and reflect current practice. The addition of an index to the staff handbook would assist with its use.

### **Agreed action**

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

- ensure school evidence is collated and available to support special assessment conditions applications
- reduce the number of late entries for external examinations
- review and update staff and student handbooks to ensure the information they contain is current and consistent.

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26 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 17 October 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has fully addressed two of the action items from the 2016 review:

- the moderation monitoring system has been strengthened by the Principal's Nominee checking on moderation documentation during meetings with Heads of Faculty, as part of the school's appraisal process
- all Memoranda of Understanding signed with outside providers are held centrally so that reported results can be reconciled with the correct provider code.

The third action item has been partially addressed, Further actions are required to update the staff and student handbooks, and these are included in the relevant section of this report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school's 2019 external moderation outcomes show that its assurance processes are delivering variable assessment quality. Where issues are identified in moderation reports, the school's response process requires staff to indicate what actions they will take to address each issue. A response form is available for this, but its use is not mandatory. The school should consider revising this process to ensure all staff use the common form. This will allow them to work through an agreed process to ensure the issues, and actions planned to address them, are appropriately documented. This will make monitoring of all aspects of the process more accessible. Where moderation outcomes are inconsistent the school could consider requiring the use of an outside verifier with standard specific knowledge the next time the standard is assessed.

The Principal's Nominee follows-up with Heads of Faculty during appraisal discussions to ensure the planned actions have been completed, or if incomplete, what further steps are planned before the standard is assessed again. Adding a section to the response form that allows staff to evaluate the success of any action taken would further strengthen the response process. Reviewing the effectiveness of the action taken when the standard is assessed again, is good practice as it gives staff a chance to ensure all identified issues have been fully resolved.

Extending staff access to the External Moderation Application also has the potential to improve moderation feedback, and this is discussed further in the moderation section of this report.

### 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)*

While the school believes that its assessment processes are effective, there is presently no regular review cycle to identify areas for ongoing improvement. Issues

that arise are dealt with effectively and lead to improved outcomes for students. Examples of recent review include:

- decreasing the number of credits offered in courses with a resulting reduction in student and staff assessment workload
- ensuring students take more responsibility for meeting assessment deadlines through staff strictly policing completion dates
- reviewing communications between teachers and parents and, because of the increasing amount of email correspondence taking place, reducing the number of written school reports.

While these reviews involve staff, they have generally been driven by Senior Management and wider ownership may make them more effective. Staff review is focussed within teacher inquiries, usually involving data analysis, to help improve their assessment practice. Gathering and using student voice was mentioned by some of the teachers interviewed as being an essential part of their own practice.

Evaluating school-wide assessment practice is something the school should consider. A more systematic approach will help it identify issues that need to be addressed, areas for on-going improvement and good practice that can be shared. This will help ensure that its assessment processes remain effective.

#### **For consideration**

To extend good practice in external review and self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- revising the use and format of its external moderation response form
- implementing a systematic review of assessment processes to ensure they remain effective.

## 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)*

### **John Paul College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- extending the range of academic and vocational assessment opportunities available through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu, STAR and Gateway programmes and the Bay of Plenty Trade Academy
- providing selected Year 10 students with opportunities, based on future academic pathways, to be assessed against a range of Level 1 standards
- using unit standard literacy and numeracy assessment opportunities to assist those needing support to meet NCEA qualification requirements
- ensuring staff are well informed of those with an entitlement to special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

### **John Paul College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- providing valid resubmission opportunities
- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- investigating and resolving appeals and potential breaches of assessment rules
- collecting credible evidence to support derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act, 1993* when handling students' assessment information.

**Māori student success in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects** The school is aware that over the last five years, achievement rates in STEM subjects for its Year 13 Māori students have been lower than those of other students. The school is working on a *Bi-Cultural plan* to enhance the achievement of its Māori students, and STEM subject achievement will be reviewed as part of this.

### **Use school evidence to support special assessment conditions applications**

The use of school evidence will ensure the cost of a professional report is not a barrier to eligible students accessing special assessment conditions. The school already tracks students from Year 7 and should use this data to identify and collate school evidence so that it is available, if required, to support applications for eligible students.

The school has relied solely on professional reports to support applications submitted in recent years.



**Simplify missed and late assessment processes** The school should consider reviewing its missed and late assessment processes and the documentation provided to staff and students. Several of the staff and some of the students interviewed were unsure of how and when the processes would apply. Simplifying the processes for late submission of work and extension requests for missed assessments and communicating the same information in both the staff and student handbooks, will reduce confusion and assist staff to apply the processes consistently.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure school evidence is collated and available to support special assessment conditions applications.

### **For consideration**

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

- simplifying its missed and late assessment processes and ensuring these are communicated consistently to staff and students.

## 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)*

### **John Paul College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- critiquing assessment material prior to use to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and provides students with the opportunity to present evidence at all grade levels
- teachers using published clarifications and exemplars to inform their grade judgements during marking
- using subject specialists to verify samples of student grades
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes, including noting verification discussion and decisions, on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- Heads of Faculty and the Principal's Nominee monitoring the completion of internal moderation processes to ensure all reported results are credible.

### **John Paul College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- meeting NZQA requirements to randomly select samples of student work for external moderation
- staff strategically requesting inclusion of specific standards on the school's external moderation plan to confirm their understanding of the standards' requirements

**Clarify grade verification requirements for sufficiency** Staff should focus on grade boundaries when selecting work to verify assessor judgements. However, some of the staff interviewed randomly select part of their sample and most of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than is sufficient to assure consistency with the standard. The school should consider providing staff with 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 of the assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

**Provide staff with appropriate moderation access** Providing staff with appropriate Education Sector Login access to the External Moderation Application. will ensure they are better informed of the standards selected for moderation and the moderation outcomes. Giving Heads of Faculty *moderation processor* access would permit them to assist with the submission of material and improve moderation feedback by providing access to the facility to query issues identified by moderators in reports.

**Encourage digital submission of moderation material** Where student work is produced digitally, or can be simply converted to a digital format, staff should be encouraged to submit it digitally for external moderation. In the last two years seven of the standards selected for moderation have received Material Not Received reports. In some cases the material was sent but could not be viewed by moderators. In one instance material for the wrong standard was sent. Submitting material digitally can solve these types of issues, as it allows moderators to check that the required material is available. If it isn't, the submission can be rejected, allowing the school to restart the process.

### **For consideration**

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

- providing staff with guidance on sufficient verification by the strategic selection of student work
- submitting material digitally for external moderation
- providing staff with appropriate access to the External Moderation Application.

## 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)*

### **John Paul College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- faculties analysing NCEA data to report annually to the Principal and Board of Trustees, mapping trends in student achievement and identifying areas for development
- staff analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme design
- Senior Deans tracking progress towards qualifications so that appropriate support can be provided to those students at-risk of not meeting requirements
- encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner Login to monitor progress towards meeting qualification requirements.

### **John Paul College reports accurate achievement data by:**

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- checking for, and correcting where necessary, data submission errors shown on the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- students checking results and personal details held in the school's student management system and reporting any inaccuracies to the Principal's Nominee
- removing, where appropriate, internal entries of students who have left or changed assessment programmes, to ensure all entries have a reported result
- only reporting results for standards for which the school has consent to assess, or against the provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

**Reduce late entries for external examinations** The school needs to reduce the number of late entries it is making for external examinations. In 2018, approximately three per cent of external entries were made after the 1 September deadline. Reducing the number of late entries for external examinations will ensure that students have personalised papers, reduce the possibility of examination materials being misplaced or lost, and assist with the smooth running of the examination centre.

Use of the *External Entries Variance Check* on the school's NZQA Key Indicators page can help staff reduce late entries by identifying changes in the patterns of entries for externally assessed standards.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- reduce the number of late entries for external examinations.

## 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))*

### **John Paul College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive appropriate information to help them understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications by providing online access to achievement data held on the school's student management system
- communicating information on assessment policies and procedures to the school community through a range of digital and physical formats, including Facebook, emails, newsletters and face-to-face meetings.

### **John Paul College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- the Principal's Nominee explaining NCEA requirements and school assessment processes, as appropriate, at year level and school assemblies
- using a common template to provide students with consistent assessment information in course outlines
- providing teachers with information about assessment best practice and giving them opportunities to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements at staff, faculty and curriculum meetings
- distributing NZQA publications on NCEA to students and whanau.

**Updates required to assessment handbooks** Some updates are required to ensure school documentation is current and consistent.

Adding an index to the staff handbook will make finding information easier. Guidance should also be provided on collecting valid, authentic and verifiable grades from quality assured assessments in case students apply for derived grades.

The student handbook should be updated to provide the same information on resubmission/conferencing as that available in the staff handbook. Also guidance should be provided for students on how to request an extension where they cannot, for a valid reason, submit assessment material on time.

To match current practice, both handbooks should include information on students' rights to maintain the privacy of their information (*Privacy Act, 1993*), and decide if examples of their work can be shared with other students (*Copyright Act, 1994*).

### **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:

- review and update staff and student handbooks to ensure the information they contain is current and consistent.