

Managing National Assessment Report

Mangaia School

May 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Mangaia School:

- 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 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 2018* (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
- *Policy Document, Mangaia School, 2017 - 2019*
- *Information for Students and their Parents or Caregivers for 2018 NCEA Qualifications, Mangaia School, 2018* (Student Handbook)
- *Staff Handbook, Mangaia School, 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11 and 12.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and teachers of English, Horticulture, Maori, Mathematics and Science.

There was a report-back session with the 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.

Background

Mangaia School is the secondary school for Mangaia in the Cook Islands. It assesses a small number of students for New Zealand qualifications in Years 11 and 12. Students study a common course comprising Level 1 standards in Cook Islands Maori, English, Geography, Mathematics and Science and Level 2 standards in Cook Islands Maori, English, Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

In addition, a number of vocational courses are available which include BCAT, Horticulture, Electrical Engineering, Hospitality, Computing and Enterprise.

If a student wishes to continue their studies at a secondary level beyond Level 2, they can attend Tereora College on Rarotonga.

For the majority of students, English is their second language.

While most standards are assessed internally, the school is an examination centre for externally assessed standards with some students entered for examinations.

Managing National Assessment external reviews are normally undertaken in all Cook Islands schools in alternate years. The period of time that elapses between reviews is, therefore, not necessarily an indicator of the effectiveness of the school's management of assessment for national qualifications.

SUMMARY

Mangaia School

3 May 2018

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 respond to most identified issues.

By agreement with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education, Managing National Assessment external reviews are currently undertaken in all Cook Islands schools on a one or two-year cycle. Based on the outcome of this assessment systems check, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within two years.

What the school is doing well

Mangaia School has actioned all the recommendations following the previous Managing National Assessment review and is developing its capacity to self review NCEA practice. All assessment-related matters are ably managed by the Principal's Nominee who has grown in confidence in her role. Teachers are suitably qualified and determined to ensure the best qualification outcomes for their students.

A common academic programme is in place for students at Level 1 and Level 2 which is closely aligned with the requirements of Tereora College. Students can move to Tereora College on Rarotonga to complete Level 3.

The school is aware that not all students will take this pathway and, in response to the qualification needs of these students, further vocational courses have been introduced, the most recent being in Horticulture. This approach underlines the school's commitment to meeting the needs of all students.

Standards in Mathematics are being offered to students in Year 10. This initiative both helps to prepare students for the nature of NCEA assessments when they reach Level 1 and also starts the process of gaining the numeracy requirement for NCEA.

The entry of students into external standards is being more carefully considered to ensure that students who complete external examinations have a reasonable chance of success. This is explained to parents. This practice meets student needs and supports them to meet their achievement goals.

The Principal's Nominee is successfully using the external moderation application to submit digital samples of work required for external moderation. When concerns are raised in moderation reports, action plans have to be prepared by teachers to address these concerns and these are lodged with the Principal's Nominee.

Data is well-managed by the school and internal standard results are sent to NZQA when verification is completed. The Principal's Nominee is able to identify any data errors and correct these efficiently.

Information provided to teachers and students about NCEA requirements is up to date and complete. The school engages actively with parents through parent meetings and also through written communication. Currently, the school does not share all achievement information with parents, but has agreed to review this practice.

Areas for improvement

Although action plans are created by teachers and these are lodged with the Principal's Nominee, there is no active follow up to ensure that these actions plans have been completed by teachers. The Principal's Nominee must develop a plan to monitor the completion of the action plans and record that this has taken place. This will provide assurance to senior management that external moderation issues have been addressed.

The school has not yet made any applications to NZQA for special assessment conditions for students, although evidence is being prepared on behalf of one student and should soon be submitted. Now that the Principal's Nominee has information on how to identify potential special assessment conditions candidates and how to gather evidence, further applications can be expected to be submitted in future years.

The school is complying with verification requirements for internal standards. However, samples of student work are not being purposefully selected at grade boundaries. The school should change to this approach as it will give teachers more useful feedback on their assessment decisions and can reduce workload and cost.

Agreed action

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

- develop a system to monitor that action plans prepared by teachers in response to concerns raised in external moderation reports are being completed
- ensure that teachers purposefully select student work at grade boundaries for verification.

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11 July 2018

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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 7 April 2016 Managing National Assessment Report This report listed three actions that the school was required to take to maintain its consent to assess and six actions that were agreed with the school would refine assessment practice.

The required actions were to:

- systematically monitor student progress to improve achievement (CAAS Guideline 2.5iii)
- respond adequately to the outcomes of external review findings (CAAS Guideline 3v)
- transfer student achievement data to NZQA accurately, on a regular and timely basis (CAAS Guideline 2.7iii).

The return visit to the school on 30 March 2017 by the School Relationship Manager, and his subsequent report, confirmed that the school has actioned these three required actions.

The agreed actions that have been addressed by the school were to:

- encourage staff to submit material for moderation digitally
- clarify with staff that an entry for an internal standard should be withdrawn where a student has not had an adequate assessment opportunity
- review the format of the assessment section of the staff handbook.

Two of the agreed actions require further action by the school and are discussed later in this report. These are to:

- monitor the completion of responses by teachers to issues raised in external moderation reports
- purposefully select student work for verification.

With regards to the third agreed action, the school has submitted the required documentation to the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to enable staff to access the school's NZQA provider login.

Response to external moderation outcomes External moderation reports are provided to teachers by the Principal's Nominee. Plans to address any issues raised in the reports are prepared by teachers and submitted to the Principal's Nominee.

However, there is currently no process in place for the Principal's Nominee to monitor that these actions plans have been completed. This means that senior management cannot be confident that the actions indicated in the action plans have been put into practice, and that the identified issues have been resolved.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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 developed self-review processes to both respond to the assessment and qualification needs of students and to provide professional development opportunities for teachers. Student assessment data is used to guide decision-making. Teachers who offer NCEA courses meet regularly to review progress and to discuss future development.

Initiatives introduced as a result of this self-review include:

- the introduction of a number of new vocational courses at both Level 1 and Level 2 to better meet the needs of students. These include BCATS, Horticulture, Electrical Engineering, Hospitality and Enterprise. Some of these courses are offered through the Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute and others (e.g Horticulture) have required an application to extend the school's consent to assess with support from the Primary ITO.
- the arrangement of a number of professional development opportunities for teachers with Cook Islands Ministry of Education subject advisors and teachers from Tereora College (including the Principal's Nominee) visiting the school for up to a week.
- the further development of the system to track student achievement to include progress towards the gaining of merit and excellence endorsements and the sharing of this information regularly with teachers
- the inclusion of some internal standards in Mathematics in the Year 10 programme to prepare students for the experience of NCEA assessments.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review. Senior management undertakes to:

- develop a system to monitor that action plans prepared by teachers in response to concerns raised in external moderation reports are being completed.

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 2018 5.5)

Mangaia School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- offering varied opportunities for the collection of evidence towards assessment
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready.
- monitoring and supporting Level 1 literacy and numeracy achievement
- extending the school's available standards through the submission of an application to NZQA, most recently for standards in Horticulture
- using student feedback to help determine their readiness for assessment
- using local contexts of genuine and authentic learning to adapt assessments and engage student interest.

Mangaia School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring grades awarded are valid, authentic and verified
- providing one further opportunity for assessment when appropriate
- providing suitable opportunities for resubmissions
- investigating appeals by students of assessment decisions
- ensuring valid evidence for derived grades
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work

Special assessment conditions applications are being considered The school is actively gathering evidence to support the application for special assessment conditions for one student and should be submitting this to NZQA soon.

The Principal's Nominee now has a clearer understanding than previously about which students may qualify for special assessment conditions and is more confident in being able to identify eligible students, gather suitable evidence and submit an application. She is also aware about who to contact at NZQA for specific help with regards to the applications process.

This will help to ensure that students with learning barriers that can be addressed through special assessment conditions will be supported.

The entry of students into external standards is being more carefully considered The success rate of students in external examinations is generally much lower than their success rate in internal assessments. As a result, the school is more carefully considering which students would benefit from attempting external examinations and, if so, in which standards. Parents are also being consulted to ensure their support for this approach.

School courses are designed to meet the needs of students Academic courses are aligned to those of Tereora College on Rarotonga so that students following this pathway will have entry into Level 3 courses there. In 2018, six students transitioned to Level 3 at Tereora College.

The school has also recognised that a number of students will not follow this academic pathway and a range of vocational courses have been introduced in response to the needs of these students.

This provides evidence of the responsiveness of the school to meeting the learning and qualification needs of students.

Impact of the change from National Certificates to New Zealand Certificates should be considered The school should consider the possible impact on students of the change from National Certificates to New Zealand Certificates. A number of students have achieved National Certificates in the past but this will change with the move to New Zealand Certificates. The school will need to seek approval from NZQA to establish or be accredited to a programme that leads to a New Zealand Certificate.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

For consideration

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

- investigate applying for approval or accreditation for New Zealand Certificate programmes that replace National Certificates.

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 2018 6.4b)

Mangaia School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using the Cook Islands National Verification System to verify a sample of student work
- documenting the process using *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets*.

Mangaia School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- suggesting appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan
- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements.
- ensuring samples of student work are adequately stored so that they can be provided for external moderation
- submitting moderation digitally by using the external moderation application.

Samples of student work sent for verification must be purposefully selected

The samples of student work chosen to be verified should be purposefully selected at grade boundaries.

The current practice is to send eight samples of work (or all samples if the class size is less than eight) with a spread of grades represented. This approach may be of limited use to the teacher as it does not focus on those grades for which the teacher may be uncertain. The verification process is intended, in part, to assist the teacher to become a better assessor.

The number of samples selected will also depend on the context of the assessment, including the number of grade boundaries represented in the full sample, the experience of the teacher, the result of recent external moderation and whether this is a new standard that the teacher is assessing. The number does not have to be eight but can be less or (in some cases) more.

By selecting purposefully, there is the potential to improve feedback to teachers while also reducing workload (for teachers and verifiers) and cost. The *Mythbusters* publication from NZQA provided to staff provides valuable guidance.

Large digital files can be sent to NZQA using a USB stick An intermittent and slow internet connection can disrupt the uploading of samples for verification and through the external moderation application, particularly if the file size is large. These files can be copied to a USB stick and sent to the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to be forwarded to verifiers or to NZQA.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that teachers purposefully select student work at grade boundaries for 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)

Mangaia School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - evaluating student progress, most recently by considering the appropriate balance of internal and external standards for students
 - tracking student achievement to identify students at risk of not achieving their chosen achievement pathway.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - ensuring that datafiles are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
 - checking reports such as the Key Indicators to identify and resolve any errors
 - supporting students to use their NZQA Learner login to track their NCEA progress and identify errors
 - only reporting results to NZQA once verification is complete.

Some students' internal standard results remain unreported The school is following the correct procedure in not reporting results to NZQA that have not been verified. A number of results for internal standards for the previous year remain unreported to NZQA because the outcomes for samples sent for verification have not yet been returned to the school. This has the potential to seriously disadvantage students who should have results reported in the year in which they are assessed.

The school is working with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to both follow up outstanding verification and to find a solution to ensure that this concern does not re-occur.

Training in the use of digital tools is needed The Cook Islands Ministry of Education has provided the facility for the school to access One Drive and the Edge student management system. The school is currently using Edge to record student daily attendance.

Both of these digital tools have the potential to create efficiencies in verification, moderation, the transfer of students' results to NZQA, and achievement analysis.

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))

Mangaia School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring all course assessment outlines and other materials use the same template to provide consistent information for students
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and parents.

Mangaia School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding NCEA information meetings for parents
- publishing a staff handbook and a student handbook containing assessment procedures.
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes through regular, timetabled meetings.

Consider providing parents with further information on achievement The school is currently very active in keeping parents engaged through meetings with school staff and the supply of information. However, some specific achievement information is not expressly communicated to parents about their children.

The school has indicated that it will review their current approach to consider whether more detailed information on the achievement of their children should be given to parents.

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.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- reviewing the current approach to the supply of achievement information to parents.