

Managing National Assessment Report

Tereora College

May 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tereora 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 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
- *Assessment Information for Teachers, Tereora College, 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *Assessment Information for Students, Tereora College, 2019* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal
- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - Commerce
 - English
 - Science
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal 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

Tereora College is the National Secondary School for the Cook Islands. It offers a wide range of academic and vocational courses at all three levels of the NCEA. Because most of the other six secondary schools in the Cook Islands offer only limited subject choices beyond year 11, many students from these schools continue their education at Tereora College after completing their NCEA Level 1.

For many students, Cook Islands Maori is their first language with English their second language.

Annually in November, the school is an examination centre for its students entered in externally assessed standards.

Many of the staff at Tereora College with subject expertise have been selected by the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to act as verifiers for the national verification process. As part of this process they quality assure samples of student grades provisionally awarded by teachers at the other secondary schools in the Cook Islands.

To provide support for their management of assessment for national qualifications, Managing National Assessment external reviews are normally undertaken in all Cook Islands schools in alternate years.

SUMMARY

Tereora College

7 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.

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

Tereora College continues to provide students with assessment opportunities for NCEA that meet their needs and lead to the submission of credible results to NZQA.

Self-review that is based on the analysis of assessment-related data is a schoolwide process. Senior leadership has allocated a significant period time in teachers' programmes for this to occur. Self-review informs school and faculty goals as well as the direction for teacher inquiries. The timing of review processes at the start of each year rather than at the end of a year ensures that teachers new to the school are fully involved in the data analysis that informs that year's course design.

A feature of this MNA review was the innovation in assessment practice that was evident. Examples include the use of video and podcasts, verbal assessment (sometimes in Cook Islands Maori) and the use of one context to provide evidence for more than one standard. This approach uses the flexibility inherent in the NCEA structure. Teachers were confident to be innovative and were supported by senior leaders to do so.

Assessment practices such as the managing of missed or late assessments, and the use of resubmissions are consistent across the school and in line with NZQA expectations.

Both internal and external moderation occurs according to NZQA requirements. These processes are valued by teachers as a means to improve their assessment practice.

The processes to manage assessment-related data are effective. Data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner and any issues identified are addressed. The analysis of data both informs goal setting and decision making, and is used as the basis for tracking the progress of students.

Information about assessment procedures and expectations is clearly communicated to teachers and students in staff and student handbooks. Students are provided with

course information that follows a consistent template. NCEA information evenings are held for parents and the process to induct new teachers is thorough.

Areas for improvement

The school should consider taking advantage of the benefits of submitting work for external moderation digitally. By using NextCloud, efficiency will be enhanced and material may be submitted earlier in the year, thus providing quicker feedback. A single schoolwide method to randomly select samples for external moderation is also suggested.

The agreement rate between the assessment decisions made by assessors and external moderators has declined in the past year. Although the school has a system in place for senior leaders to monitor that action plans prepared in response to concerns raised in external moderation reports are completed, this has not been followed with sufficient rigour. The school should take steps to rectify this situation to ensure that these actions are completed as planned.

All teachers should have access to the school's Provider Login to the NZQA website to access current assessment data and statistics. It is suggested that the school continues to engage with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to resolve this.

Agreed action

The school agreed that an action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- ensure that the agreed process for monitoring the completion of action plans, developed in response to external moderation reports, is followed in all cases.

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12 July 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 28 March 2017 Managing National Assessment Report All the agreed action items from this report have been addressed by the school. These were to:

- develop processes to collect school-based evidence to support special assessment conditions applications to NZQA
- develop an assurance process to confirm that all results reported in the December data file have been through an internal moderation process
- update documentation as outlined in the report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Principal's Nominee distributes moderation reports to Heads of Faculty who develop action plans to address any concerns that have been raised. This is an appropriate process to follow.

Senior leaders must ensure that the agreed process to monitor the completion of these action plans is followed in all cases. Monitoring has not been occurring as rigorously as in previous years. This could be one of the causes for the variable overall external moderation results the school has received.

The school should consider submitting work for external moderation as soon as possible in the year rather than waiting for the November deadline. The 2017 Managing National Assessment Report referred to the implications for the school of having a November external moderation date, namely that reports, and therefore follow up, would only occur the following year. The report suggested that earlier submission would be helpful and this should be considered.

Although requested and mentioned in the previous Managing National Assessment Report, the school's verifiers do not consistently receive external moderation feedback from the schools using Tereora College verifiers as part of the Cook Islands national verification system. If this were to occur, it would strengthen their own, as well as the national verification process. The Cook Islands Ministry of Education is willing to assist and the school should follow this up.

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)

Self review is an integral and school wide process, underpinned by the analysis of data with the aim of improving the outcomes for students.

Senior leaders have allocated a significant time component for all teachers to review and analyse achievement data. The result of this analysis informs schoolwide, faculty and teacher personal goals for the coming year, and is integral to teachers' inquiries.

A challenge for the school is to ensure that teachers new to the school and to the Cook Islands are efficiently inducted. Incorporating these teachers into the review process early in the year and using the outcomes of this review to plan courses at the start of a year rather than at the end of the previously year, aids their understanding of school processes. All current teachers would therefore actively participate in the course design for the current year.

Senior leaders are also aware of the need for teachers to be actively involved in professional learning. These opportunities can be limited due to the school's location, but teachers are encouraged to be actively engaged in subject associations, to participate in online teacher groups and to use online Best Practice Workshops to improve their assessment practice.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that the agreed process for monitoring the completion of action plans, developed in response to external moderation reports, is followed in all cases.

For consideration

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

- submitting work for external moderation as soon as possible in the year rather than waiting for the November deadline.

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)

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

- designing programmes of learning that are focussed on their interests, needs and abilities
- using local contexts to adapt assessments to ensure genuine and authentic learning and to engage student interest
- where appropriate, assessing them when they are ready
- extending assessment opportunities by offering vocational and trade-based courses through the Academies programme
- identifying those who may be eligible for Special Assessment Conditions and making applications to NZQA for entitlements for these students
- supporting students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals by using the Anau system to monitor their progress and intervene when needed.

Tereora College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring grades awarded are valid, authentic and verified
- providing one further opportunity for assessment when appropriate
- providing opportunities for resubmissions that meet NZQA requirements
- managing missed and late assessment processes
- investigating appeals by students of assessment decisions
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have not submitted work.

Innovative assessment practice is evident A feature of this review was the willingness shown by teachers to be innovative in the collection of evidence for assessment purposes. Teachers were confident to use various modes of assessment and were supported by senior leaders to do so.

Examples of innovative assessment practice include:

- using student submissions of videos and podcasts in a language subject
- students being assessed verbally in English and, occasionally, in Cook Islands Maori in non-Language subjects
- subject areas combining to collect shared evidence towards assessment
- using evidence from a single context towards the assessment of more than one standard.

Consider reviewing the overall credit load for students The school should consider reviewing the number of credits available for students to ensure that the total is appropriate. The credit total available for students varies from course to course. One Year 11 course offered 27 credits while another offered 19.

Over-assessment can be a workload concern for both students and teachers, with accompanying stress. Offering fewer standards can allow a greater focus on quality, resulting in an increase in the number of merit and excellence grades achieved.

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:

- reviewing the number of credits offered to students to ensure that the total is manageable.

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)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- purposefully selecting grade boundary samples of student work for verification
- being strategic in the selection process by not requiring that a particular number of samples be selected
- using subject specialists to verify the selected samples
- where appropriate, using verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the process on *Internal Moderation Coversheets* and lodging a copy of each coversheet with the Principal's Nominee
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions
- monitoring that all internal moderation procedures are completed as required.

Tereora 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.

Single schoolwide process to randomly select standards for external moderation should be considered Although the Heads of Faculty interviewed were randomly selecting standards for the purpose of external moderation appropriately, they were not using a single, standard method.

The introduction of a schoolwide method would make the random selection process clear and not open to an individual teacher's interpretation, possibly leading to inappropriate practice. If the random selection option available in the school's student management system is used, this would make the process easy, quick and consistent.

A move to the digital submission of external moderation samples is recommended There are a number of advantages to the school moving from submitting physical samples for external moderation to submitting digital samples. These include that:

- samples can be submitted immediately after verification is completed. There is no need to wait for the November submission deadline. This will ensure that teachers receive the moderation reports closer to the time of the assessment rather than in the following year.
- the process is more efficient, with direct submission of the samples to NZQA moderators rather than the need to give physical samples to the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to be sent on to NZQA

- responsibility can be devolved to Heads of Faculty to prepare the online external moderation submission prior to the Principal's Nominee making the final decision to submit it. This will spread the workload and provides every Head of Faculty with the opportunity to be more involved in the overall process.
- The use of NextCloud will facilitate the submission of digitized samples and enhance efficiency, particularly if the file sizes are larger.

No action required

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

For consideration

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

- introducing a single, schoolwide method for the random selection of samples of student work for external moderation
- submitting material for external moderation digitally
- using NextCloud to submit work for external moderation
- submitting external moderation samples as early as possible
- extending the involvement of Heads of Faculty in the preparation of the online external moderation submissions.

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)

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

- monitoring and tracking student progress to towards achieving their qualification goals
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their goals and inform changes to standards offered
- supporting teacher inquiries which focus on the school's strategic goals and the teachers' own goals.

Tereora College reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that datafiles are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
- ensuring low levels of late external entries and internal entries with no results
- using a "sign-off process" with students to confirm the accuracy of the internally assessed grades reported.

All teachers need access to the NZQA Provider Login There are currently a number of teachers without access to the NZQA Provider Login. The school should continue to engage with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to ensure that all teachers are provided with login access.

The information and statistics available through the Provider Login provide teachers with the ability to thoroughly review and analyse achievement progress. Without access to this resource, their analysis may be compromised. Other information such as a verification report are also available.

The school could discuss with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education the possibility of devolving the responsibility for authorising logins for teachers to the school.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- engaging with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to ensure that all teachers are provided with access to the school's NZQA Provider Login.

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))

Tereora College 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 procedure
- supporting teachers new to the Cook Islands and the school through an induction process
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Tereora College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- publishing a staff handbook and a student handbook containing assessment procedures.
- using staff meetings to clarify changes of procedures, expectations and facilitating discussion on good assessment practice
- encouraging teachers to participate in subject associations and online Best Practice Workshops offered by NZQA.
- providing targeted professional learning for teachers where needed.

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.