

Managing National Assessment Report

Whangaparaoa College

August 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Whangaparaoa 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
- *Whangaparaoa College Charter 2019*
- *Whangaparaoa College Assessment for Qualifications Handbook for Staff - 2019* (staff handbook)
- *Whangaparaoa College Assessment for Qualifications Handbook for Learners 2019* (student handbook)
- *Whangaparaoa College NCEA Powerpoint*
- *Whangaparaoa College Academic Counselling Powerpoint and handbook*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Data Manager
- Heads of Learning for:
 - English
 - Health, Physical Education and Outdoor Education
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Science
- Head of Department
 - Visual Arts
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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

Whangaparaoa College

29 August 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

Whangaparaoa College has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications supports its strategic vision of developing hauora/wellbeing for all students. This is supported through student agency and managing assessment workload to meet student needs.

Internal review provides the impetus for ongoing improvements in course design, intervention for specific student cohorts or individualised learning programmes.

The school has robust processes in place to respond to issues identified through external moderation. Heads of Learning monitor actions to address issues identified through external moderation and the Principal's Nominee holds discussions to follow up any action plans where necessary. He documents and signs off actions to show resolution.

The school is increasingly using the flexibility of NCEA to identify learning and assessment pathways that will effectively meet student needs. Students are provided with a range of academic and vocational assessment opportunities. Programmes are personalised through use of project-based learning, optional standards or multi-levelling.

Internal moderation is an embedded practice across learning areas and discussion on grade boundaries is documented for future reference. Only those results that have been quality assured are reported to NZQA.

Accurate and timely reporting of data allows the school to mentor students through deans and kaiarahi (mentors) and track those at risk of not achieving the qualification. Comparative and longitudinal data analysis informs course design and teachers respond by developing engaging contexts and providing assessments that will meet student needs.

Assessment information is shared in a variety of physical and digital forms so that students and their families understand the school's assessment procedures and NCEA requirements.

Areas for improvement

The school needs to ensure that its system for selecting samples of graded student work for external moderation meets NZQA requirements by ensuring that all aspects of internal moderation are complete before selection of student samples is made. This expectation should be documented as part of the school's process in the staff handbook.

To improve the effectiveness of its communication the school should complete a review of its staff handbook so that it better aligns the section on internal moderation with current school practice. This current practice meets NZQA requirements. Terminology should also be checked for currency.

A statement on review and reconsideration for external assessment should be added to the staff handbook.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that student work selected for external moderation has been internally moderated
- update the staff handbook to reflect the school's current internal moderation requirements.

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4 November 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 26 May 2016 Managing National Assessment Report The three agreed action items from the 2016 Managing National Assessment review have been addressed by adding relevant information to staff and student handbooks. The internal moderation monitoring process has been documented as a “*Department Assessment Systems and Procedures Check*” in the staff handbook and is completed by the Principal’s Nominee. *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* provide evidence of purposeful verification discussions.

Response to external moderation outcomes School external moderation processes provide confidence to senior leaders that issues raised by NZQA moderators are being addressed. Heads of Learning are expected to review external moderation reports and develop action plans to address any concerns that have been raised. Documented responses are provided to the Principal’s Nominee who follows up any further issues and monitors their completion through teacher appraisal. Effective responses include rewriting assessment materials, finding new verifiers and seeking professional development. The Principal’s Nominee’s completion check ensures that teachers have completed any action plans and this also forms part of the *Department Assessment Systems and Procedures Check*. As a next step the school could consider formally documenting a measure of the effectiveness of its ongoing review processes.

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 developed an effective culture of self-review which is reflected in the Whangaparaoa College published *Strategic Thinking and Improvement Plans*. These outline the school’s shared strategic vision to focus on “knowing and growing learners and staff so Hauora is developed” to meet student needs.

Plans are underpinned by ongoing data review and credible assessment practice. Senior management and the Principal’s Nominee have reviewed NCEA procedures to further develop the school’s NCEA assessment practice. These include:

- monitoring and tracking student achievement through the introduction of Academic Counselling for one hour each week to support student wellbeing
- developing a project-based learning class in Year 11, including combining standards across subjects to bring together multiple curriculum areas under a single context, and resourcing this with administration and teaching time. This aims to engage students in purposeful assessment pathways and use the flexibility of the NCEA system

- restricting the number of credits in a one-year course to 18 and each semester course to 9 to make assessment workload more manageable for students and teachers
- encouraging learner agency through discussions with teacher/kaiarahi to confirm their learning plans before entry or subsequent withdrawal from standards or courses
- reviewing the roles of the deans within the school to support kaiarahi and academic tracking.

Self-review is based around improved tracking and data analysis that engages the flexibility of the NCEA system through courses that meet student need.

For consideration

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

- formally documenting a measure of the effectiveness of its ongoing review processes.

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)

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

- offering vocational and academic advice to guide students towards their vocational and academic pathways
- negotiating individualised standards in students' assessment programmes to meet their abilities, interests and future pathways
- using the Online Learning Network to provide subjects that the school would not otherwise have the capacity to offer
- implementing strategies to create equitable outcomes in STEM subjects
- working with their Kahui Ako to support literacy and numeracy strategies leading towards NCEA in years 7-10
- applying for special assessment conditions for students who may be entitled to these.

Whangaparaoa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- providing an appeal process for students
- monitoring authenticity of student work using a variety of strategies
- providing consistent schoolwide practice for resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is based on authentic standard-specific evidence
- using digital platforms within the school to store student work and improve shared access to this material
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) equity The school has discussed their STEM equity data in Senior Leaders' meetings with Heads of Learning. The data shows Māori and Pacific students' STEM achievement is similar to that of other ethnicities. This achievement is supported through a school requirement for core Mathematics and Science until the end of Year 11.

Kaiarahi support individualised subject selection choices that provide appropriate access to success for students in one or more STEM subject, for their small Māori and Pacific student cohort.

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)

Whangaparaoa 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 both within and outside the school to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting and monitoring the internal moderation quality assurance process online by each learning area using a digital tool in the school management system
- retaining work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements.

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

- encouraging staff to request standards for external moderation on the school's assessment plan
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored digitally or physically
- aiming to submit most external moderation digitally and exceeding its own targets.

Clarify the selection system for external moderation To meet NZQA's requirements for selection of graded student work for external moderation, all aspects of the internal moderation process are to be completed before the selection of student samples is made. At present the Data Manager supplies the list of student names to teachers for external moderation for work that may not yet have been internally moderated. This expectation should be documented as part of the school's process in the staff handbook.

Continue to embed strategic selection of student work for internal moderation

The Principal's Nominee has provided staff with guidance on sufficient grade verification through the strategic selection of student work. Teachers can continue to strengthen this practice to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. Most staff interviewed understand that there is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified, and that 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.

Strategic monitoring of internal moderation The Principal's Nominee conducts the *Department Assessment Systems and Procedures Check* to monitor internal moderation. He focuses on areas where there have been issues identified by external moderation and department review. Changes made include such practices as maintenance of student samples, task design and annotation of evidence for future reference.

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 student work selected for external moderation has been internally moderated.

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)

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

- analysing results comparatively and longitudinally using a common template to reflect on, and identify next steps
- reporting analysis of achievement data and successes, challenges and next steps to the Principal and Board of Trustees annually
- reflecting on NCEA data to inform course design to meet the interests, abilities and aspirations of all students
- capturing student voice in end-of-topic surveys on shared GoogleDocs to support schoolwide understanding of students' assessment experiences
- encouraging students to use the school's student management system and their Learner login to check their progress towards achieving a qualification
- reporting results for standards for which the school has consent to assess, or against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

Whangaparaoa College reports accurate achievement data by:

- using *the NZQA Key Indicators* to identify and resolve data issues
- having students sign-off their results before they are entered into the school's student management system
- checking the accuracy of external examination entries to minimise late entries
- ensuring all internal entries have will have a reported result.

Effective tracking and monitoring of student progress at all levels All NCEA students meet with their kaiarahi in weekly meetings to set goals and access appropriate pathways. Academic conferencing occurs twice a year with kaiarahi, students and parents to discuss progress.

Kaiarahi and Deans identify students at risk of not completing qualifications in curriculum. They hold discussions throughout the year and use shared data sets to reflect on assessment progress across a student's whole programme. Courses are adjusted and interventions put in place by teachers according to student need.

Students commented that resulting interventions are supporting their academic progress.

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))

Whangaparaoa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive common templated outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to their community
- providing a student handbook that is accessible to students and is written in plain English.

Whangaparaoa College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- supporting teachers new to the school through induction processes and explicit professional learning on assessment
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

School values professional learning Staff are supported to take part in subject associations and work with local teacher cluster groups to develop professional understanding of standards. Within the school, teacher Professional Learning Groups review newly implemented programmes, survey student engagement and consider how best these programmes are meeting student needs. For example, as part of innovation through project learning, the Professional Inquiry Group considers the effectiveness of standards selected for each student in their cross-curricular programme.

Review of staff handbook The Internal Moderation section of the staff handbook does not reflect the process in use by teachers. Teachers interviewed all use the quality assurance process outlined on NZQA's *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*. Documentation in the body of the handbook needs to be updated to align its written process with the school's actual and effective practice.

This review should also include an update to vocabulary; "accreditation" should become "consent to assess" and "NQF" to "NZQF" to reflect current terminology.

Review information in student handbook The student handbook currently states that there is "no reassessment or resubmission of external achievement standards". This statement needs to be reworded to advise students that there is a review and reconsideration process and that this is accessible through the student's Learner login after results release in January of each year.

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 the staff handbook to reflect the school's current internal moderation requirements.