

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Hamilton Girls' High School**

**June 2023**

## **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

### **Hamilton Girls' High School**

**26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

#### **Consent to assess confirmed**

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

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.

As a school with highly effective systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2021.

#### **Actions and considerations**

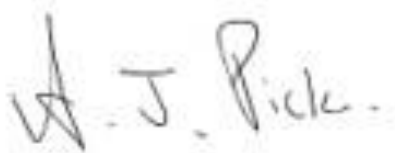
##### **No action required**

The school has no action items relating to the quality of its assessment systems.

##### **For consideration**

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

- providing a quick reference guide for students on assessment terminology
- exploring the use of the Internal Moderation Cover Sheet in the school's Student Management System.



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25 July 2023

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## External and internal review

### External review

*Evidence of external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)*

**Action Items from 25 July 2018 Managing National Assessment Report** The review identified a need to ensure resubmission requirements were reinforced and applied appropriately. The school addressed the agreed action and continues to reinforce the requirements through a cyclic enhancement of its assessment procedures that includes regular newsletters, Heads of Department meetings and use of NZQA's Myths resources. This ensures information is current and supports consistent assessment practice.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The school's response to external moderation is effective, comprehensive and timely, supporting the credibility of results reported to NZQA. Upon receiving external moderation reports, the Principal's Nominee, Heads of Department, and relevant staff collaborate to identify potential issues and create an action plan aimed at resolving them. Ongoing issues in specific subject areas are strategically addressed as they arise. The Principal's Nominee monitors the progress and completion of each action plan to ensure timely resolution.

Subsequently, the Principal's Nominee conducts an evaluation of the internal moderation process, considering the feedback received from external moderation. This evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the implemented actions in addressing the identified issues and seeks to measure the overall improvement and impact brought about by these changes. The process is seen as a professional development opportunity and those interviewed commended the school's response for being effective, meaningful, and non-judgemental. This comprehensive, inclusive approach to responding to external moderation feedback gives the school confidence in its quality assurance processes and the credibility of results reported to NZQA.

### Internal review

*Evidence of 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)*

Hamilton Girls' High School reviews regularly and deliberately with achievement outcomes for students at its core. The school places strong emphasis on self-reflection and continuous improvement to meet the needs of its diverse range of students. Effective leadership has fostered a supportive and inclusive learning environment. By prioritising student engagement and academic achievement, the school provides personalised pathways and study programmes that are refined and enhanced throughout the year, leading to successful student outcomes. A key aspect of the schools' approach is the thorough and timely tracking of student academic progress and the identification of at-risk students. This has been ingrained school wide. Through on-going data analysis and reflective practices, the school continually improves its academic tracking methods, identifying successful strategies and areas for improvement. As a result of responsive intervention strategies, priority learner pass rates have increased.

To ensure ongoing enhancement of programs, Hamilton Girls' High School requires Heads of Departments and teachers in Charge to complete Evidence Based Reviews following the publication of assessment results. These reviews serve as a catalyst for continuous improvement, as they involve data analysis, comparing ethnicity data, and addressing any disparities. The findings from these reviews inform future improvements and drive professional development initiatives, benefitting both current and subsequent students.

The Principal's Nominee is dedicated and committed to ensuring school-wide consistency, accountability, and ownership of NCEA processes. He leads changes to assessment and quality assurance processes effectively, offering support to teachers and resolving issues to enhance existing practices. The Principal's Nominee regularly disseminates assessment-related information through newsletters, staff meetings and individual interactions. He is well supported in his role by senior leaders and teachers, who acknowledged the efforts he has invested in streamlining school processes to align with both school and NZQA expectations.

**NCEA Change Programme preparation** In order to transition to a digital first approach effectively as part of the NCEA Change Programme, the school has successfully and extensively participated in piloting both the New Zealand Curriculum subjects and the Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) before their mandatory implementation in 2024. Through their involvement in these digital assessments, the school has enabled the students to become familiar with the NZQA digital platform, observed students' interactions with their devices, tested its digital infrastructure and enhanced teacher confidence in conducting these assessments. As a result, the school is well placed to implement these changes and has the capability to ensure student access.

## **Credible assessment practice to meet student needs**

*Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.*

**Special assessment provision is well supported** Hamilton Girls' High School has a highly effective school-wide approach to identify and assess students for special assessment conditions, resulting in approximately 95% of SAC applications being made through school-based evidence. Its comprehensive approach to identify and assess students who require special assessment conditions helps remove barriers, including financial barriers, that may hinder students' achievement in assessments. The school places emphasis on ensuring staff members are well-informed about student entitlements which in turn, ensures students receive the necessary support and assistance during both internal and external assessments.

**Assessment information to students** During the interview's students demonstrated knowledge regarding the availability of resources and individuals they could approach if they had assessment concerns, suggesting the potential benefit of a quick reference guide. It was evident that the students were well-informed and familiar with the student assessment handbook, which communicates the necessary information effectively. However, the students expressed the idea that a quick reference guide could further enhance accessibility and understanding for all students. They believed such a guide would provide a convenient and concise resource to easily access essential information related to assessments.

**Quality assured grades reported for use as derived grades if required** The school maintains a consistent approach in verifying both practice external assessment tasks and grades, mirroring the internal moderation process. The staff interviewed described the importance of using appropriate material and assessment conditions to generate evidence that may be used for derived grades. This ensures reported grades are founded on standard-specific evidence and that the decisions made align with the requirements of the standard. The school consistently uploads a high number of results to NZQA prior to the exam period. This practice enables students to apply for a derived grade if their attendance or performance in an external assessment is compromised.

## **Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results**

*Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.*

**Robust processes and monitoring of internal moderation** The Principal's Nominee has established a rigorous process to monitor internal moderation within the school. To ensure consistency and quality, learning areas are required to follow the school's internal moderation protocols, which are determined based on assessor skills and competencies. Teachers are encouraged to engage with assessors from other schools and rotate moderators periodically.

The Principal's Nominee reviews the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* prior to publishing results. This review ensures that verification of student work has been sufficient, thorough and purposeful, whilst also evaluating the quality of the verifier's judgement statements. The use of verifiers, including external verifiers where applicable, are also assessed by the Principal's Nominee. The school could consider exploring the use of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* within its Student Management System to further improve the timeliness of moderation, allow for the identification of any issues requiring attention and continue with its transition to a digital approach.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**Hamilton Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its students by:**

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Hamilton Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

## **Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality**

**Hamilton Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

**Hamilton Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

## **Effective management and use of assessment-related data**

**Hamilton Girls' High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Hamilton Girls' High School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data



- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding

## **Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families about assessment**

### **Hamilton Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

### **Hamilton Girls' High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

## Appendix 2: Overview

### What this report is about

**This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Hamilton Girls' High 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.

### 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 effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022* (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 *NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023*.

### What are possible outcomes

**Outcomes may include NZQA:**

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- 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's consideration 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 five 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 Guide, Teachers' Guide 2023* (Staff Handbook)
- *NZQA Information and Assessment procedures for Senior Students* (Student Handbook).

### **The School Relationship Manager met with:**

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
  - Art
  - Business Studies
  - Science
  - Social Studies
- Teachers in Charge of:
  - Classical Studies
  - Dance
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, 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.