

Managing National Assessment Report

**Epsom Girls' Grammar
School**

March 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Epsom Girls' Grammar School

27 March 2024

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 assessment 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 2023.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

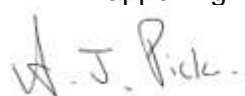
The school agreed that two actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Update staff and student handbooks to document the processes for producing derived grades and investigating breaches of assessment rules.	Immediate.

For consideration

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

- including Learning Area Directors in the monitoring process for internal moderation to provide further assurance that effective moderation is happening.



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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

22 May 2024

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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 4 July 2018 Managing National Assessment Report

Epsom Girls Grammar School has addressed three of the four action items from the 2018 report effectively. The school was required to remind teachers to ensure that student privacy is protected when returning results. Students interviewed for this report confirmed that the privacy of their results is maintained when their work is returned, and this is now an embedded practice across the school.

The requirement that internal entries have a result reported or are withdrawn if no assessment has taken place has been addressed. Though some entries are missed, the school has consistently minimised this over the last three years through their data management. This helps to ensure that the risk of students not being awarded a qualification through missed results is mitigated.

The Principal's Nominee has established an effective system to reconcile memoranda of understanding with results reported using other provider codes. This ensures that the correct code is used, and the provider is consented. All memoranda of understanding are stored digitally in a shared folder that the Principal's Nominee uses to reconcile against results.

Staff and student handbooks require further updating to maintain currency and reflect actual practice. This is discussed later in this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school is well placed to effectively respond to and resolve any concerns that may be identified through external moderation. External moderation feedback indicates that the school has consistently highly accurate assessor judgements against the standard. This reflects the effectiveness of their processes for internal moderation and responding to external moderation.

Action plans are established to address any issues identified from external moderation, as required. Initial discussions are held between Learning Area Directors and Heads of Department. A second interview is then held, including the Principal's Nominee, towards the end of the year to create the action plan and record agreed actions.

Teachers interviewed appreciated the affirmation of their assessment judgements that external moderation provides but it is the professional learning they gain from any feedback that they value most. Feedback is welcomed as an opportunity to improve teaching practice rather than just adjusting assessment schedules or their interpretation, so that outcomes for students are improved. This ensures that teaching and learning programmes are also changed to better meet the needs of students.

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)

Embedded culture of review and improvement Epsom Girls Grammar School benefits from having staff with a high capability for assessment and review. Staff at

the school are continuously improving their assessment capability by seeking feedback from moderation, actively participating in subject associations, as exam markers, moderators, and assessment standard developers. The knowledge that they gain from their involvement in these various roles allows them to develop their practice and review their assessment programmes to better meet the needs of students.

Staff also actively contribute to the building and strengthening of the school's assessment practice. Professional Learning Groups share best practice on current assessment matters with staff through professional development workshops. Recent topics have included strategies to strengthen student literacy and numeracy with the introduction of the dedicated unit standards for the NCEA co-requisite and using artificial intelligence as a teaching and learning tool in the classroom.

The school is well placed to respond effectively to any assessment issues that may arise. A recent example was addressing the difference in understanding of authenticity practices between international and domestic students. Students brought this issue to the attention of the school's International department. A department review identified that the international students had an inconsistent understanding about the requirements of producing authentic work for assessment, placing them at risk of breaching rules. The Qualifications Manager was asked for assistance and workshops were provided to the students to improve their understanding and practice.

Together, the highly experienced Principal's Nominee and Qualifications Manager adeptly manage any identified issues and guide the development of quality assurance processes. Staff feel confident coming to them for assistance and the support they provide. Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge provide new staff with extra support to develop their quality assurance capability, use assessment materials and make assessor judgements.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Quality assurance processes for producing derived grades strengthened

Epsom Girls Grammar School has strong practices for the collection and quality assurance of evidence for derived grade purposes. Practice exams are either acquired from subject associations or created by staff. To ensure that the exams are not shared with other schools that may be using them, scripts are kept secure and not returned to students until term four. Learning areas use various methods, such as check marking, to verify grades. Grades and decisions are documented on spreadsheets that are shared with the Principal's Nominee, who monitors this process. The robustness of this process is reflected by the grades reported for derived grade purposes closely matching the grades attained in the external exams.

The importance of good exam management has been reinforced with staff. Because staff supervise exams for subjects other than their own, senior leadership believes that it is important that teachers care about each other's examinations, so that students receive a positive experience and perform to the best of their ability. The school ran workshops for staff on why practice exams matter for derived grades and good invigilation practice. Guidance and a checklist for good supervision were provided, for example sitting at the back of the room so that computer screens can be seen and ensuring the exam room is at a comfortable temperature.

The school offers a full suite of digital exams using a digital platform to emulate the external exams. This provides students with an experience that closely matches that of the end of the year. As a fully BYOD school and an early adopter of digital exams, the school believes that it is important that the practice exams are sat digitally so that student preparation is fair and equitable.

Assessment practice to ensure authenticity strengthened Epsom Girls Grammar School has strengthened its practice to ensure students produce authentic work for assessment. The advent of artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT, as an accessible digital tool has created challenges for schools to identify authentic work. The school has proactively responded to this challenge by upskilling staff using workshops on how to use ChatGPT as a teaching tool and for student feedback. This provided staff with the ability to identify the difference between work produced by their students and that using ChatGPT, which looks formulaic in comparison. Knowing their students well is also key. The school's expectation for teachers to see student work in progress within the classroom, rather than doing assessments at home, and to set regular checkpoints has also strengthened school practice. Teachers also use digital tools to help maintain authentic work. Students interviewed confirmed the school's expectations and processes for authenticity are practiced in the classroom.

School documentation requires updating The school's staff and student handbooks require updating to reflect actual practice. The strengthened practices for conducting practice exams and collecting derived grades needs to be captured in the staff handbook. This should include the guidelines and checklist for invigilating exams, the process and expectation for exam material security, and the process for verifying and recording grades. The process for investigating breaches of assessment needs to be included in the staff and student handbooks. This should include the steps for investigation, who is conducting each step and who is responsible for making decisions. It is important to include these practices so that teachers, students and their families have something they can refer to for guidance and also, particularly for breaches of assessment, that the process is transparent.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Internal moderation assures credible results Robust moderation processes are well embedded within the school. Most learning areas are large enough to have verifiers within the school, but an external verifier is used when one is not available, or an external point of view is needed. The school's data manager uses a spreadsheet to track all standards that the school is assessing. Teachers are required to provide a completed internal moderation coversheet when reporting results for a standard. The data manager follows this up with teachers who fail to do so, and all completed coversheets are then handed to the Principal's Nominee for final checking. Some Learning Area Directors (LADs) also monitor that moderation is happening in their learning areas either through meeting minutes or direct observation. However, this is done informally and could be included as part of the school's process. Including the LADs as part of the monitoring process would add a shared responsibility for quality assurance that moderation is happening within the school.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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.

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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.

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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.

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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
- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

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

Epsom Girls' Grammar School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- 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 to understand school and NZQA assessment processes.

Epsom Girls' Grammar 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 Epsom Girls' Grammar 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 NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024*.

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 for Qualifications, National Certificate in Educational Achievement, Epsom Girls Grammar School* (Staff Handbook)
- *NCEA Made Simple, National Qualifications Framework, Epsom Girls Grammar School 2024* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Qualifications Manager
- Learning Area Directors for:
 - Languages
 - Mathematics and Statistics
 - Physical Education
 - Technology
- Head Department for:
 - Chemistry
 - History
- 12 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.