

**Managing National Assessment
Report**

School Assessment Systems

2010

**Aidanfield Christian
School**

Report on Managing National Assessment School Assessment Systems 2010

Aidanfield Christian School

The purpose of the Managing National Assessment (MNA) review is to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment. It is a partnership between schools and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and has two components:

- a visit to check and report on the school's assessment systems at least once every three years
- the annual external moderation of assessment materials and assessor decisions for a sample of internally assessed standards across all curriculum areas.

This report summarises the findings of the assessment check carried out by a NZQA School Relationship Manager (SRM) on 20 May 2010. The SRM met with the Head of Middle School (HOMS) who is the Principal's Nominee to review progress since the last visit on 17 April 2008 and to appraise the school's assessment policies and procedures against the *Assessment and Examination Rules and Procedures for Secondary Schools*, the *Quality Assurance Standard for Accreditation of Secondary Schools* (QASS) and national practice.

The SRM also met with Heads of Department (HODs) or Teachers in Charge (TICs) of English, Mathematics and Science to check that the school's policies and procedures are consistently and effectively applied. There was a report-back session with the Principal and HOMS at the end of the visit to highlight strengths and weaknesses, with suggested strategies for good practice.

This MNA report will be used in combination with the most recent Education Review Office Report in the reconfirmation of the school's accreditation.

Background

Prior to 2009, Aidanfield Christian School, formerly Canterbury Christian College, made NCEA entries and reported results for Year 11 to 13 students using the Middleton Grange provider code. The school now no longer accepts students beyond Year 10, taking responsibility for assessment for qualifications and reporting results to NZQA using its own provider code.

In year 11, 12 and 13 Middleton Grange is the school of choice for most if not all of Aidanfield's leavers. The two schools work closely to provide a seamless assessment environment. All Year 10 students are offered assessment opportunities from a selection of standards in English, Mathematics and Computing. In addition, selected students are offered a full Level 1 NCEA programme of Mathematics and Science standards, with the view that they will move on to study these subjects at Level 2 in year 11.

School Policies and Procedures

2008 Managing National Assessment Report (QASS 1.3v)

Evidence was sought that action items in the previous MNA report have been addressed.

All items from the 2008 report have been actioned.

Review of Policy and Procedures (QASS 1.2.6, 1.3v)

Evidence was sought that school-wide assessment policies and procedures have been reviewed and are in line with national practice.

Documents provided for this assessment check were:

- for staff, *Policy on Managing National Assessment for NQF*
- for students and caregivers, *NCEA Student and Parent Handbook*.

The documentation on NQF assessment policies and procedures is clear, concise and comprehensive. Reviewed annually by the HOMS, a copy is available on the school's shared drive and is also tabled with the Board of Trustees. The three teachers involved in NCEA assessment receive a copy as well as the student handbook.

Students in year 10 receive a copy of the student handbook prior to their first NCEA assessment which usually takes place in the third or fourth term of the year. All students are assessed in a small number of standards while selected students receive a full Level 1 course of Mathematics and Science standards.

The students' handbook introductory section contains a lengthy description of "What is NCEA?" To improve coherency this section could be revised to remove the comparison with earlier assessment approaches and instead, focus on the National Qualifications Framework and the place of the NCEA qualification within this. Similarly, the section on "Endorsement" would benefit from including an explanation of what Certificate Endorsement is and how it works.

Course outlines The HOMS explained that course outlines differ from student to student, reflecting the school's ability to offer more individualised assessment programmes with low student numbers. School policy requires that a course outline be sent home at the beginning of the year in each NCEA subject, indicating the standards being assessed, approximate timing and further assessment opportunity. The examples sighted by the SRM varied in their distribution date and completeness. The HOMS has undertaken to ensure that requirements are consistently applied.

When the policy document is next reviewed, the section on information provided to students should be revised to match school practice and NZQA expectations. Version numbers should be added to the list of expected information.

Further assessment opportunities The school's policy on further assessment opportunities and resubmission provides excellent advice and guidance to staff on NZQA rules and procedures. The description in the student handbook is less confident and would benefit from revision in line with the staff document.

Documentation Discussion between the HOMS and the SRM identified that when next updated the documents for staff and/or students should be amended to:

- replace all wording "not receive credit" with "a not achieved result"
- reword the section on appeals in the staff handbook to match that of the student handbook which includes appeals for all assessment matters
- reword the section on Derived Grades in the student handbook to match that of the staff handbook, removing all reference to "compassionate consideration"
- include that students may sit a missed assessment at a later date provided that this will not compromise authenticity
- rework the section in the student handbook on special assessment conditions to match the information in the staff booklet.

Quality Assurance Processes (QASS 1.2.6, 1.3v)

Evidence was sought that systems are in place to ensure that:

- *internal moderation is taking place*
- *departments are linking externally to maintain a current understanding of the national standard*
- *concerns raised by external moderation are dealt with*
- *there is analysis of and response to results data.*

Internal moderation Since the 2008 MNA visit the school has documented the procedures used for internal moderation in the staff handbook sections on “Internal moderation of tasks” and “Verification and moderation of marking”. These contain sound guidance for teachers. As discussed with the HOMS, minor revision will ensure the handbook captures all information required to ensure the sound practices occurring in the school remain in the event of any change in staff.

The rationale for internal moderation is clearly understood by the three teachers concerned with assessment for qualifications. The school works co-operatively with Middleton Grange to ensure internal assessment is at the national standard. Tasks are shared between schools for critiquing, as is marked work for verification. This commitment to quality assurance by both schools provides an example of best assessment practice.

Currently low student numbers means all marked work is verified. In the event of student numbers increasing, specifying a maximum number of samples for verification would future-proof school policy. The HOMS and SRM discussed solutions to issues arising from a teacher’s misconception that school policy required them to return marked work within five days and the problem this poses in allowing time for verification processes.

Teachers use the *Internal Moderation* cover sheet to record compliance and the HOMS monitors these to ensure that all assessment meets expectations for internal moderation. Evidence of this process was confirmed by the SRM during teacher interviews. Again, this monitoring process now needs to be documented.

NZQA managed external moderation In 2009, seven standards were selected for external moderation. Materials were submitted for all standards. Six assessment materials were deemed to be at the national standard with one requiring modification. Student work was submitted for all but one standard. Assessor judgments were at the national standard for 31 of the 33 items of student work submitted.

School policy documents that all student work submitted should be randomly selected by someone other than the marker. With the amount of marked student work being no greater than the number of samples expected for external moderation, currently all student work is submitted for any standard selected for external moderation.

Upon return of materials from external moderation, the HOMS meets with teachers about the outcome and requires teachers to carry out all recommendations. Quality assurance sheets are used to document compliance. Any issues may also be discussed in fortnightly teacher meetings. Removing from departmental records any tasks that are invalid or have been superseded by subsequent review will ensure they are not used in error in the future. Again all aspects of the monitoring of external moderation now should be documented to ensure knowledge of management systems is preserved.

As a consequence of the reduced volume of assessment and the HOMS’s adherence to monitoring teacher process, external moderation results show improvement on

previous years. This can provide assurance to its community that the school is carrying out quality assessment practices. These practices do assume low student numbers and the high quality leadership shown by the HOMS. In the event of staff and/or student changes they will need review to ensure standards are maintained.

Industry Training Organisation (ITO) managed external moderation The school does not use ITO managed systems.

Accreditation The school does not use outside providers for assessment other than Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu - The Correspondence School, nor does anyone else assess using the school's provider code.

Analysis of results The HOMS identified that the school is reviewing what results they should analyse and for what purpose. This review should put the school in the position of being able to assess the impact of providing assessment for qualifications to year 10 students on achievement including course endorsement. Once this review has been completed, expectations on result analysis should be included in the staff handbook.

Administration (QASS 1.2.5v-vii, 1.2.6, 1.2.7)

Evidence was sought of suitable systems and procedures for the management of assessment-related data.

The information in the staff handbook provides clear direction on data management. The HOMS collects all marked student work and the *Internal moderation* cover sheet after results have been verified as having been subject to internal moderation. These results are then recorded by him on the electronic database.

Marked student work is returned with a cover sheet which the students sign to verify they agree with the grade. Students also have a tracking sheet to record their progress towards achievement of Level 1 literacy and numeracy. Later in the year results are verified for accuracy using printouts checked and signed off by staff and students.

Where parents request that results are reported in the year of attainment, these are sent by the HOMS directly to NZQA. Where the request is they be held over until Year 11, the HOMS forwards the results to the student's new school. Given that, for all students to date, the new school has been Middleton Grange, the SRM discussed with the HOMS developing a Memorandum of Understanding to meet the needs of all parties including ensuring accurate reporting of results using Aidanfield's provider code.

Action Items

The following action items do not indicate a lessening of standards within the school, but rather advocate further refinement or documentation of policy and practice.

In order to comply with the *Assessment and Examination Rules and Procedures for Secondary Schools* and the *Quality Assurance Standard for Accreditation of Secondary Schools*, the school must:

- document the process for the monitoring of internal assessment
- document the process for monitoring external moderation
- document the school's expectations for results analysis
- revise staff and student documentation as detailed on page 3.

In line with good practice as seen nationally, the school should consider:

- specifying a maximum number of samples of marked student work for verification
- removing invalid or superseded tasks from departmental records.

Commendations

Aidanfield Christian School is commended for its commitment to developing quality assessment against standards on the National Qualifications Framework. The leadership provided by the Principal and Deputy Principal and the commitment of teachers to ongoing improvement of assessment standards, ensures the best possible outcomes for students.