

Managing National Assessment Report

Kelston Boys' High School

October 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Kelston Boys' 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.

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
- *Procedures for Assessment for National Qualifications, Kelston Boys' High School, 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *2020 Course Guides for Years 11, 12 and 13, Kelston Boys High School, 2019*
- *Policy Documents on Course Review and Evaluation, Course Development and School Self Review, Kelston Boys' High School, 2015*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Data Manager
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Geography
 - Mathematics
 - Music
 - Physical Education
 - Science
- 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.

SUMMARY

Kelston Boys' High school

22 October 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

Kelston Boys' High School provides appropriate programmes of assessment for students to meet their academic needs and to prepare them to achieve their qualification goals. Assessment matters are well-managed by an experienced Principal's Nominee and assessment rules are generally well understood by teachers.

All action items identified in the previous Managing National Assessment report have been addressed by the school.

Self-review, informed by data analysis and with a focus on meeting the needs of students, is an embedded practice. Teachers and Heads of Faculty prepare detailed annual reports for senior management. They are also expected to submit details of students' attainment in their courses at various stages throughout the year so that progress can be monitored. Self-review is a regular agenda item at senior management, Heads of Faculty and staff meetings and is the focus of a teacher-only day held each term. This is further evidence of the schoolwide emphasis on this process to improve student outcomes.

A number of initiatives have been introduced as a result of self-review, including the re-organisation of middle management into faculties, the appointment of a literacy coordinator and the introduction of a planned digital hub.

The tracking of student attainment is well-developed and students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals are identified and supported. Of particular note is the weekly after-school tutoring programme (Powerup) which is well attended by students.

Pacific students comprise over 60% of the school roll and the school has developed culturally-appropriate support for these students. This includes the appointment of young Pacific teachers where possible, welcoming Pacific role models to assemblies and the establishment of a Pacific teachers group who meet to discuss ways to support and mentor students. The attainment of Pacific students equals or exceeds the national average at all NCEA levels and a good number of Pacific students include at least one STEM subject in their course selection in Year 13.

Teachers interviewed during this review had a good general understanding of the requirements for both internal and external moderation processes and were following these in accordance with NZQA expectations.

The management of assessment-related data is effective. Datafiles are submitted to NZQA in a timely way and most issues are identified and corrected.

The school has effective systems to ensure the currency of information about NCEA in its publications. Assessment policy is communicated to the school community and any changes are discussed with teachers at meetings.

Areas for improvement

Although teachers interviewed were generally following NZQA requirements for internal and external moderation, there was some variation of approach that could lead to confusion. The school could consider clarifying these matters further as they develop professional development opportunities for Heads of Department.

Initiatives to further extend the number of Pacific students taking at least one STEM subject in Year 13 could be considered and the school could also consider establishing a schoolwide policy for digital storage of moderation samples to mitigate any risks.

The school should review the effectiveness of its current processes to ensure that moderation concerns are effectively addressed. The percentage of submitted moderation samples that are judged either Not Yet Consistent or Not Consistent remains relatively high.

The school should review its approach to the process of identifying students who may need special assessment conditions. It appears likely that eligible students may not be receiving the support to which they are entitled, possibly as a result of the school applying unnecessary restrictive conditions when considering potential candidates.

Agreed action

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

- review the effectiveness of school processes to address concerns raised in external moderation reports
- review the process for identifying students who may require special assessment conditions and making applications on their behalf to ensure that all eligible students receive the support to which they are entitled.

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9 December 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 18 August 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

Most of the action items raised in this report have been addressed by the school. These were to:

- provide clarification to teachers that student work for verification should be purposefully selected, particularly work at grade boundaries.
- ensure that all internal results have a reported result or, where appropriate, are withdrawn
- ensure that the number of late external entries is reduced to a minimum
- develop a stand-alone student handbook which lists school-wide expectations for students
- update the staff handbook to be comprehensive and reflect current practice.

One action item has been partially addressed by the school. This was to:

- effectively respond to concerns raised in moderation reports in order to improve assessor judgements.

Response to external moderation outcomes Heads of Department are expected to review external moderation reports and develop plans to address any concerns raised. The Principal's Nominee monitors that these plans have been enacted.

Although this is an appropriate process to ensure that necessary actions are developed, the percentage of submitted moderation samples that are judged either Not Yet Consistent or Not Consistent remains relatively high at about 40%. This raises the question about the effectiveness of school processes to address moderation concerns.

The school should review moderation processes to ensure that any planned actions result in positive changes.

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, based on the analysis of data, is an embedded practice and is integral to the ongoing assessment programme, and to students' achievement in qualifications. It is a regular component of weekly senior management meetings and of middle management and staff meetings.

Teachers are required to report an analysis of student achievement in their classes on an annual basis and Heads of Faculty also submit a report to senior management.

Throughout the year, teachers are required to report on student progress in their classes and any achievement concerns are addressed with individual teachers by senior management or Heads of Faculty. At the end of each term, a teacher-only day is held with a focus on self-review.

The development of good teaching practices has been identified by the school as a key component of students' successful attainment of qualifications. A significant change to the overall management structure of the school has occurred recently as a result of self-review, with Heads of Faculty being appointed who have a particular focus on pedagogy.

The school is focussing on the teaching and assessment programme in the junior school as a precursor to ultimate improvement in student attainment in national qualifications. Improving student engagement is viewed as particularly important. A curriculum team has been established to develop these ideas further.

Other developments as a result of self-review include:

- the appointment of a literacy coordinator to work with teachers on strategies to improve student attainment in literacy
- the development of a digital hub to increase engagement in digital learning and assessment, and to prepare students for future assessment opportunities.

Agreed action

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

- review the effectiveness of school processes to address concerns raised in external moderation reports.

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)

Kelston Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- designing programmes of learning that are focused on their interests, needs and abilities
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready
- entering some students for digital external assessment this year
- extending assessment opportunities by offering courses through the Gateway and Academies programmes
- providing additional tutoring for students at the weekly Powerup after-school programme
- tracking student progress and providing additional support for those students identified as at-risk of not reaching their attainment goals
- holding academic counselling sessions involving parents twice a year to review progress and to set goals.

Kelston Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring grades awarded are valid, authentic and verified
- ensuring that teachers understand the requirements for:
 - providing one further opportunity for assessment when appropriate
 - providing suitable opportunities for resubmissions
 - managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals by students of assessment decisions
- addressing any authenticity concerns using the principles of natural justice.

Engagement in STEM subjects is encouraged The school has developed a number of partnerships with organisations to encourage students to choose STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects as part of their course selection.

Of particular note is the number of Year 13 Pacific students who are taking at least one STEM subject. Although the percentage is lower than for other ethnicities, almost 40 percent of all Year 13 Pacific students are taking at least one STEM subject at this level. This is encouraging. The school should consider how to further improve this situation so that the percentage of Pacific students taking at least one STEM subject in Year 13 rises to be similar to that of other ethnic groups.

Pacific students are well supported The results for Pacific students at all levels of NCEA equals or surpasses the national average. Pacific students make up over 60% of the total roll and the school is pro-active in providing culturally appropriate support for them.

The school appoints young Pacific teachers wherever possible, welcomes Pacific role models to speak to students at assemblies and celebrates language weeks. A group of teachers meets regularly to discuss the needs of these students and to initiate ways to improve support including mentoring opportunities.

Special assessment conditions application process should be reviewed The number of special assessment conditions applications submitted by the school is low and it is possible that eligible students may not be receiving the support to which they are entitled. A review of the school's approach to this process should be undertaken.

Special assessment conditions assist to remove some barriers to assessment for otherwise capable students. This includes students with illegible handwriting who would benefit from the use of a computer. It is possible that the school has applied unnecessary and restrictive conditions when considering potential special assessment conditions candidates, and this should form part of the review.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- review the process for identifying students who may require special assessment conditions and making applications on their behalf to ensure that all eligible students receive the support to which they are entitled.

For consideration

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

- strategies to further increase the number of Year 13 Pacific students taking STEM subjects as part of their course selection.

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)

Kelston Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify the selected samples and, where appropriate, using verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the process on *Internal Moderation Coversheets*
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring that internal moderation practices are being completed in departments.

Kelston Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are stored so that they can be provided for external moderation
- Heads of Department requesting specific standards be included for external moderation.

Further clarification of both the strategic and purposeful selection of samples of student work could be considered The school could consider ensuring that a schoolwide approach to strategic and purposeful selection of samples of student work for moderation is included in any professional development programme for Heads of Department.

The approach by the teachers interviewed to the selection of samples of student work for verification showed some variation. Although all the approaches were consistent with the requirements of NZQA, this variability has the potential to lead to confusion and, ultimately, to possible unsound practices. A clearer, schoolwide approach could be beneficial.

The school has explained that, with the reorganisation of middle management, the recent focus for professional development has been on the Heads of Faculty who have broad responsibility for pedagogy. Focussed support for Heads of Department who carry the responsibility for moderation is planned for the future.

Digital storage policy could be considered The school could consider a schoolwide policy that details the requirement for digital storage of moderation samples to mitigate any risks associated with the availability of valid samples for submission. This should include naming protocols and access rights.

The number of samples of student work selected for external moderation that are submitted digitally is increasing. This raises the risk associated with inappropriate

storage of these materials such as materials not being stored on the school's secure network, or permissions settings only enabling the teacher to view the material.

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:

- ensuring that the approach to strategic and purposeful selection of samples of student work for moderation is included in any professional development programme for heads of department
- developing a policy on the secure storage of digital samples of student work selected for external moderation.

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)*

Kelston Boys' High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- using data to monitor and track student progress and to identify students at risk of not achieving their goals
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their attainment goals, and to inform changes to standards offered
- annually reporting to senior leaders an analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Kelston Boys' High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that datafiles are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
- checking reports such as the Key Indicators to identify and resolve any errors
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of external providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding
- actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system and the NZQA Learner login.

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))

Kelston Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring all course assessment outlines and other materials provide consistent information for students
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and parents using a range of media
- annually reviewing staff and student handbooks to maintain current best practice and ensure consistency school-wide.

Kelston Boys' High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- publishing a staff manual containing assessment procedures
- providing comprehensive information for students about schoolwide NCEA procedures in course guides
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year.

Ways to improve contact with parents is being considered The school has already identified that improving contact with parents is a key component to their goal of improving student engagement and ultimately improving student attainment. Effective ways to do this are already under consideration

The school has hosted NZQA workshops that focus on Pacific Peoples but these have generally not been well attended.

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.