

Managing National Assessment Report

Onehunga High School

April 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively

- 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) 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 2018* (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 enhancing 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
- *Onehunga High School Curriculum Online 2017*
- *Onehunga High School Staff Assessment Manual 2018 (Staff Handbook)*
- *Onehunga High School Student Assessment Manual 2018 (Student Handbook)*
- Department End of Year Review template 2017
- Samples of course outlines from option selection links on school website, 2018

The School Relationship Manager met with the Deputy Principal of Assessment, Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Department for Curriculum Support, English, Languages, Mathematics, Physical Education and Health, and Social Sciences.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Deputy Principal Assessment 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

Onehunga High School

10 April 2018

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

Onehunga High School has shared ownership of NCEA assessment practice ensuring that results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible. The school delivers programmes and courses that meet the learning needs of a diverse range of students.

Assessment practice was consistent across all departments that participated in the review and was evident in the understanding students displayed about school procedures. To meet student needs, the school has developed pathways that meet the aspirations, interests and abilities of students. Academic courses are differentiated and a range of assessment opportunities are offered through vocational STAR and Gateway courses with strong links to industry and external providers.

Strategically the school is focusing on quality assessment with a limit on credits offered within most courses. Where applicable students are only entered in one external standard. This initiative has contributed to recent improvements in course and certificate endorsements and allowed the more effective management of teacher and students workloads.

A Curriculum Support Programme for Level 3 students and academic mentoring for all students, has resulted in overall student achievement trending upwards in recent years, particularly in Levels 2 and 3. Students interviewed had clear academic goals and felt supported by the positive relationships between teachers and students that these programmes foster.

Internal moderation practice is effectively managed school-wide. All teachers critiqued tasks, verified strategic selections of student work and documented the process. External moderation outcomes are addressed by Heads of Department who complete an action plan to resolve issues identified by moderators. Senior management were aware of historical and current concerns raised in external moderation reports.

Data analysis is used to track student achievement progress and inform changes to course design. Reflection on student achievement contributes to self-review as indicated in a number of recent initiatives outlined in the report.

The responsibilities for managing NCEA assessment are shared by a number of school managers, which creates school-wide consistency and understanding of

assessment practice. This culture is supported by effective communication at all levels of the school's assessment organisation, which is being enhanced by the increasing use of digital tools.

NCEA assessment practice is effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal of Assessment. They are supported in their work by the Principal and all the senior management team who work collaboratively to ensure students achieve.

Areas for improvement

As discussed with senior management, the monitoring processes for internal moderation by senior management could be strengthened by documentation being reconciled with actual practice, to provide assurance that all reported results are credible.

The management of Memorandum of Understanding with external providers should be centralised to ensure all results are reported with the correct provider code.

Documentation needs to be updated to provide clarification on the derived grade process and reflect the changes the school has made to strategic selection of samples of student work for internal moderation verification.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that all teachers understand that evidence to report derived and emergency grades must be valid, verifiable and standard-specific
- strengthen the monitoring process by senior management of internal moderation by reconciling documentation with actual practice
- reconcile Memorandum of Understanding with reported results to ensure the correct provider code is used
- update and clarify documentation as outlined in the report.

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31 May 2018

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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 22 September 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

Four of the action items from the 2015 report have been actioned and two items are partially addressed.

Responses to agreed action items include:

- development of a digital assessment policy has been completed
- a formal procedure where Heads of Department attest that internal moderation processes are complete
- a process for ensuring issues from external moderation are addressed
- documentation that corresponds to these actions having been updated.

As outlined in the report the internal moderation monitoring process by senior management needs strengthening and staff exit procedures need to be documented.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a sound moderation history with high levels of agreement between teachers and NZQA moderators.

All Heads of Department provided documented action plans outlining interventions they had instigated to address issues identified by moderators. The outcomes of these action plans are discussed with Line Managers during annual department reviews. Senior management agreed that to ensure they have confidence that issues are resolved these discussions should be documented as part of the departmental review report.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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)

Senior management have developed effective systems and processes to monitor and review NCEA assessment practices and how they impact on student achievement progress. Data has been used to inform a number of initiatives to ensure student assessment needs are well known and supported. These include:

- creating an accessible digital assessment calendar to assist the monitoring of student workloads
- reducing teacher and student workloads by managing entries into external examinations and setting credit limits on courses
- making academic mentoring with Kaitiaki a focus for all students by supporting them to achieve through goal setting and regular tracking of achievement progress

- using digital tools to engage students in the assessment process, including the use of Google Teacher and engaging in NZQA digital examination trials and pilots
- further developing Curriculum Support for all Level 3 students by providing study skill courses and a space to support students to complete assessments
- fostering formal discussion about consistent and credible assessment practice as part of annual department reviews between Line Managers and Heads of Department. Some Heads of Department suggested these discussions should be shared within the wider staff as part of professional development and inform best practice across the school.

These initiatives reflect the schools strategic goal of creating an assessment culture which is based on support systems and assessment practices that allow students to succeed. This reflects their shared vision of developing positive relationships between teachers and students. In this learning environment, students feel supported to follow pathways which reflect their abilities, aspirations and interests.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

For consideration

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

- documenting the outcomes of discussions on external moderation following annual department reviews to ensure senior management is confident issues have been resolved.

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 2018 5.5)

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

- developing differentiation within courses and across classes to meet the wide range of student abilities.
- allowing students to withdraw from standards if appropriate
- scaffolding and contextualizing learning assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage student interest
- extending assessment opportunities for students by engaging with external providers
- linking standards and courses to vocational pathways to provide alternative pathways for students
- collecting school-based evidence to support applications for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support
- ensuring all students have completed Level 1 numeracy and literacy requirements on entry to Level 3.

Onehunga High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on breaches of the rules, late and missed work, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- developing school-wide strategies to ensure the authenticity of student work
- investigating appeals following the principles of natural justice
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Clarification of the derived and emergency grade process The school needs to ensure all teachers understand the processes for collecting evidence to report derived and emergency grades. Teachers use evidence from practice examinations to report derived or emergency grades but were unsure of NZQA requirements. Documentation needs to clearly state that these grades must be valid, verifiable standard-specific evidence. This means public tasks must be modified, commercial tasks kept secure, and the marking of student work must be verified or justified as being at the standard. Evidence can also be collected from appropriate assessment opportunities other than practice examinations.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that all teachers understand that evidence to report derived and emergency grades must be valid, verifiable and standard-specific.

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 2018 6.4b)

Onehunga High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- using subject specialists to verify a strategically selected sample of student work
- documenting the internal moderation process by using the standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- keeping benchmark exemplars and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions.

Onehunga High school has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- encouraging teachers to submit digital samples of student work for external moderation using the External Moderation Application Tool.

Strengthening the monitoring of internal moderation The monitoring of internal moderation by senior management should be strengthened by reconciling documentation with actual practice.

Senior management have developed a robust internal moderation process which requires completed internal moderation cover sheets to be submitted to the data manager before results are reported. The data manager, using the assessment calendar, ensure all completed documentation is submitted for all standards before results are reported.

To strengthen the process and provide senior management with the confidence that all reported results have been verified, an annual audit process that reconciles completed documentation with stored student work for each subject should be instigated.

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:

- strengthen the monitoring process by senior management of internal moderation by reconciling documentation with actual practice.

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)

Onehunga High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - annually reviewing course assessments to inform teaching inquiry and modify assessment programmes as necessary
 - annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions
 - interrogating NCEA data to inform annual department review reports to Line Managers
 - celebrating student achievement through student awards and recognition.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - timely reporting of results to NZQA, and addressing error reports as necessary
 - ensuring that internal results are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate
 - actively managing entries for external examinations
 - ensuring all teachers and students attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly
 - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system and the NZQA learner login.

Managing relationships with external providers Memorandum of Understanding with external providers need to be reconciled with actual results reported to ensure the correct provider code is used.

Senior management reported that Memorandum of Understanding documentation is held by various school departments that operate courses involving external providers. To ensure the consent to assess requirements on the correct use of the provider code are met, these documents need to be checked against reported results.

Monitoring and Tracking of student achievement progress The school has developed very effective processes for monitoring the progress of all NCEA students and identifying learners at risk of not achieving qualifications.

All NCEA students are assigned a Kaitiaki who they meet with weekly to discuss goals, assessment issues and review predictive tracking of data. Since 2014, this process has been extended to include three-way conferencing with whānau.

Senior management report that regular meetings engage students in the assessment process and makes progress and qualifications information more accessible to teachers, students and caregivers.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- reconcile Memorandum of Understanding with reported results to ensure the correct provider code is used.

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))

Onehunga High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through staff and student's handbooks and the school website
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications through online access to information held on the school's student management system
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who are eligible
- ensuring student work and results are stored when staff leave the school.

Onehunga High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding an NCEA information meeting at the beginning of each year to inform and remind them about school assessment policies, procedures and updates
- having an online template for course outlines across subject areas which is reviewed and updated annually, ensuring consistent assessment information
- inducting new staff to familiarise them with assessment and moderation processes and expectations
- Deans ensuring students understand assessment procedures to maintain credible and consistent practice.

Update documentation to provide clarification to some assessment practices

As outlined in the report, documentation needs to be updated to clarify school expectations for the management of the following assessment practices:

- processes for ensuring derived and emergency grades are based on valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence
- the role of senior management in monitoring internal moderation
- procedures for managing memorandum of understanding with external providers
- the exit procedures for teachers to ensure results are reported and student work is stored appropriately.

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 and clarify documentation as outlined in the report.