

Managing National Assessment Report

Tauranga Boys' College

June 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tauranga Boys' College:

- 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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 2017* (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
- *Tauranga Boys' College Student Assessment Policies and Procedures*
- *Tauranga Boys' College NZQA Assessment Policies and Procedures 2017* (Staff Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Department for English, History and Media Studies, and the Teacher in Charge of Chemistry. There was a report-back session with the Acting Principal, Deputy Principal (Learning and Achievement - Senior School), Acting Deputy Principal (Learning and Achievement - Junior School), Assistant Principal (Teacher Systems & Support) 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

Tauranga Boys' College

22 June 2017

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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

What the school is doing well

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes in place which ensure credible assessment for national qualifications. Assessment and moderation processes are well understood and followed by staff.

The school's culture of self-review is embedded, proactive and effective. Review of the school's assessment processes and practice has led to improved achievement outcomes for students.

Broadening the curriculum, extending the school's consent to assess and the use of outside providers has extended the range of assessment opportunities for students. Effective tracking and mentoring support students to reach their academic and vocational goals.

Students who would benefit from special assessment conditions are identified, tested, and have appropriate applications made for them to NZQA. Staff are well informed of who these students are, their entitlements, and how to access appropriate assessment support for them.

Internal moderation is an embedded process within departments, and well monitored by senior management. This ensures the school only reports results which have been quality assured. External moderation processes are effectively managed, including how staff respond to external moderation outcomes.

Student assessment data is checked for accuracy and reported using appropriate provider codes to meet key dates. Students are provided with assistance to access their data from the school's student management system portal and their NZQA Learner login. Data is effectively analysed to review school courses, set strategic direction, monitor student progress towards completing qualifications and identify students at risk of not achieving their goals.

Information on assessment is provided to staff, students and their families in a variety of physical and digital formats that allow them to gain a common understanding of NCEA qualifications and requirements, and school assessment policies and procedures.

Areas for improvement

The school can strengthen its internal moderation verification process by assisting staff to improve their understanding what constitutes best verification practice. Purposefully selecting sufficient samples of student work from around grade boundaries to be sure that teacher judgements are consistent with the standard will help reduce workload without compromising the robustness of the process for ensuring teacher judgements are at the standard.

Students do not understand their right to determine if their work is used as exemplars for other students. This right is also poorly understood by staff, and there is a lack of information available in the school's documentation. The school has acknowledged this lack of information and understanding, and will ensure students and staff are appropriately informed in future.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems:

- develop staff understanding of the need to purposefully select sufficient samples of student work for the verification process
- clarify school expectations on the use of student work as exemplars for other students.

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18 August 2017

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence found that external review actions have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3v)

Action Items from 23 May 2013 Managing National Assessment There were no agreed action items from the 2013 review.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation feedback. The Principal's Nominee reads each report, notes any issues and provides a questionnaire to Heads of Departments for them to provide feedback on the issues identified in their department's moderation reports. The Deputy Principal (Senior School) collates the questionnaires so that he can provide advice on appealing moderation reports, monitor the completion of any actions planned to address the specific issues raised, and ensure the school provides access to any necessary professional development. Heads of Department use the same process for responding to external moderation by NZQA and Industry Training Organisations.

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)

Tauranga Boy's College has an embedded, proactive and effective culture of self-review. Review of assessment processes is on-going, and is accompanied by an evaluation of the effectiveness of any changes made. This has led to improvements in both the school's assessment processes and practice, and achievement outcomes for students. Recent improvements include:

- breaking-down the *Tauranga Boys' College Staff Manual* into a series of smaller booklets, including a staff assessment policies and procedures handbook, to improve staff access to information
- introducing an Achievement Support Programme and appointing a tutor to improve support for students identified as at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements
- reducing the requirement for departments to report achievement data biannually to the Principal, to an annual in-depth analysis of the best and worst performing standards in each course, allowing an improved focus on next steps
- using the school's student management system to flag those students approved for special assessment conditions, providing a reminder for staff to request the appropriate support for assessments from the school's Learning Centre
- introducing an Academic Coaching programme where form teachers gather information from Year 11 and 12 students on their subject selection, academic goals and career aspirations, enabling more effective teacher-student-parent interviews

- improved communication on certificate endorsement for students doing mixed level study, to ensure they are aware of how endorsements are calculated by NZQA, and how to apply for an upgrade to an NCEA Certificate endorsement in a subsequent year, if they are eligible
- introducing a 20 credit maximum for courses in 2018 after surveying staff and students who felt that their assessment loads were a “burden”, and removing all prerequisites to NCEA Level 1 courses to provide improved option choices for students
- reducing the number of inappropriate option choices made by students by introducing an online options selection programme that provides students with feedback on NCEA requirements, Vocational Pathways, careers, and by linking selected courses to future career choices.

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.

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6 I & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:

- broadening the school curriculum to include courses with a more practical, or vocational focus
- providing opportunities for Year 13 students who have already achieved NCEA Level 3 to study for scholarship examinations or at university level in specific subjects
- broadening vocational assessment opportunities for individual students by extending the standards the school has consent to assess and through the use of external providers who deliver assessments relating to students' career choices
- encouraging staff to use a range of methods during assessment to collect physical or digital evidence of achievement
- identifying students who would benefit from special assessment conditions, collecting school-based evidence in case it is needed and submitting appropriate applications to NZQA
- ensuring that staff are well informed of students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and providing them with appropriate support, as required.

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic work using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessments, further assessment opportunities and resubmissions, and student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- reporting Not Achieved where a student has presented evidence that is not at the standard, or has had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
- handling student data so that the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 are met.

School assessment processes clearly understood The staff and students interviewed during the review demonstrated clear and consistent understanding of the school's assessment processes. A major contributor to this shared understanding is the consistent information provided on these processes.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists either from within, or outside of the school to verify samples of student grades
- staff documenting all steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- the Deputy Principal (Senior School) monitoring completion of internal moderation processes to ensure that NZQA and school requirements have been met before results are reported.

Strengthen the verification process NZQA recommends as best practice that verification should involve checking sufficient samples of student work purposefully selected at grade boundaries. The samples of work selected should be close to grade boundaries, or work that the assessor is unsure of, rather than chosen randomly. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The amount selected will be determined by factors such as the number of students assessed, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars and assessor experience. Reinforcing this with teachers will reduce the instances where their verification sampling exceeds these expectations. This should reduce teacher workload without compromising the robustness of the process for ensuring teacher judgements are at the standard.

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- providing teachers with appropriate access to the NZQA External Moderation Application
- senior managers providing guidance and support with external moderation processes, where departments are identified as having issues, and monitoring progress towards meeting school and NZQA requirements.

Develop a policy on the storage of digitally produced assessment material

Teachers and students are increasingly using digital devices for assessment and the resulting assessment material is not always stored in a secure and appropriate manner. The school is encouraged to develop a policy with specific procedures on how and where digitally produced assessment materials are to be stored. This will ensure the security of the material stored and its availability, if required, for verification and/or external moderation.

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:

- develop staff understanding of the need to purposefully select sufficient samples of student work for the verification process.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- developing protocols so that assessment evidence collected digitally is securely stored, and is available as required.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Tauranga Boys' College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school wide and department strategic goals based upon longitudinal and comparative analysis of achievement data
 - teachers analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme designs
 - effectively supporting students to set academic goals and track their NCEA progress
 - developing a database and using "estimated credits" to help identify students at risk of not meeting qualification requirements.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking for, and correcting, errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - having students sign-off on the accuracy of their results
 - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding
 - assisting students to register for their Learner login and encouraging them to use this, and the online portal to the school's student management system, to check the accuracy of their reported results.

Withdraw entries where students have not had an adequate assessment opportunity Approximately five per cent of entries for internally assessed standards did not have a result reported for them in 2016. Possible reasons identified for this include students leaving the school or transferring courses before assessment takes place. These entries are not part of the student's assessment programme and should therefore be removed.

The school's student management system has at least one report that can help identify these students, but staff and students can also assist management in cleaning up the data before it is reported to NZQA. It is recommended that the school further develop its checking processes to identify entries where students have not been assessed, or provided with an adequate assessment opportunity, so that these entries can be withdrawn before key dates.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- enhancing its checking processes to identify and withdraw student entries where an appropriate assessment opportunity has not been provided.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7iib)

Tauranga Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating appropriate assessment policies and procedures to the various sectors of the school community through a wide range of physical and online platforms
- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- reviewing communications to ensure they are current
- providing students with individualised assessment calendars.

Tauranga Boys' College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing staff and students with handbooks that contain consistent information on the school's assessment policies and processes
- making information on NCEA and assessment processes available at Academic Coaching evenings attended by form teachers, students and parents
- providing staff with timely opportunities to discuss changes in assessment policies or processes during scheduled staff, Curriculum Committee and department meetings
- using the NZQA Examination Centre Manager to go over the Examination Rules and instructions with students before they sit their NZQA external examinations.

Provide information on the use of student work as exemplars Students have the right to determine if their work is to be used as exemplars for other students. This is not clearly understood by students or staff and there is no information on this in either handbook. The school has acknowledged this lack of information and understanding, and will include appropriate information in the next editions of the handbooks.

Include consistent assessment information in course outlines The information contained in course outlines on the standards that will be assessed is inconsistent in detail and presentation. Using a common template, such as that available from the school's student management system, will ensure that the information is consistent, meets school requirements and allows students to understand how each standard contributes to qualification requirements.

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:

- clarify school expectations on the use of student work as exemplars for other students.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing students with consistent assessment information in course outlines.