

MANAGING NATIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls

July 2016

Managing National Assessment Review

The purpose of reviewing the management of national assessment is:

- 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 2016* (Assessment Rules); and
- 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.

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of assessment materials and of teacher grade judgements for student work selected by the school's random-selection process.
- A random sampling of aspects of assessment systems and data for review or audit on an annual basis.
- A visit to review each school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

Managing National Assessment Report

This report summarises NZQA's evaluation of how effectively the school:

- has addressed issues identified through the three components of 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
- manages and makes use of assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

In preparing this report, the School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee and Teachers in Charge of English, Learning Support, Social Sciences, Technology, and Te Reo Māori, and three students.

The school also provided pre-review information and the following documents:

- *Curriculum Programme Policy NAG 1 – Curriculum Policy #1.1*
- *Senior Options Guide 2016*
- *Waikato Diocesan School for Girls NCEA Assessment Policy Levels 1-4 Staff Handbook 2016*
- *Waikato Diocesan School for Girls NCEA Assessment Policy Levels 1-4 Student Handbook 2016*
- *Waikato Diocesan School for Girls Principal's Nominee Handbook*
- a variety of self-review documentation
- a sample of course outlines and assessment plans for the subject areas interviewed.

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 and next steps and to agree on any action required.

OVERVIEW

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls

1 July 2016

Areas of strength

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls has processes in place which ensure credible assessment for national qualifications. The school focuses on effective teaching and learning in the classroom and students are supported in meeting their academic and vocational needs. This is reflected in school's NCEA qualifications, and literacy and numeracy achievement rates, which are consistently higher than the national average.

The school reports only results for internal assessment that have been subject to the school's internal moderation process. High agreement rates for external moderation in 2015 provides evidence that internal moderation processes are effective. Feedback from external moderation is followed up by the Principal's Nominee with relevant teachers.

Assessment data is managed effectively to ensure results reported to NZQA are accurate. Systems are in place for ensuring that entries and results are checked before submission to NZQA.

The school has communications that allow staff, students and caregivers to understand NCEA and school assessment procedures. Assessment information is readily available as paper documents and through the school website.

The Principal's Nominee is experienced in the role. Since her appointment to the school she has made use of review to gain an understanding of current systems within the school and the application of these by the staff. The school is now well placed to broaden its understanding of what constitutes credible assessment, identify issues, meet challenges and develop policies and procedures to reflect this.

Areas for improvement

The school has addressed the one agreed item from the 2012 Managing National Assessment review around the use of a common template for assessment statements. Other forms of communication also support the common understanding of students, parents and staff around assessment. However, as outlined in this report, some documents need to be updated to reflect current practice.

Although internal moderation is standard practice throughout the school, one subject area was identified during the review as not having a suitable subject specialist as a verifier. In another area, robust marking processes currently undertaken already meet NZQA requirements for verification and, in such cases, an additional process is not required. Clarification for teachers on moderation expectations and requirements will help ensure consistent and robust practice across the school.

Next Steps

No significant issues This review did not identify any significant issues that would prevent the school from meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

Agreed action However, NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to further refine assessment practices. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure the subject expert used to verify teacher judgements has current standard-specific experience
- update documentation as noted in this report.

Next Managing National Assessment review Based on the outcome of this assessment systems check, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

15 August 2016

NZQA

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Response to External and Internal Reviews

Previous external reviews

Evidence was sought that external review recommendations and findings have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

Action items from the 1 November 2012 Managing National Assessment Report

There was one agreed action item in the 2012 report. The school undertook to develop and monitor the use of a common template for assessment statements. This has been actioned. Further refinements to the template were discussed during the current visit and these are outlined in the communication section of this report.

Response to external moderation The overall agreement rate for external moderation remains high. This is indicative of the close monitoring of internal moderation within the school and the follow up undertaken from external moderation feedback. The Principal's Nominee receives a response from all areas where issues have been identified or where there is a less than 100 percent agreement rate.

Materials were not submitted in two subject areas for the 2015 external moderation round. This led to a review of the systems for the storage of student work. As a result, the responsibilities for Heads of Department have been updated to ensure material is available if required for external moderation.

Internal review

Evidence was sought that the school was 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)

The Principal's Nominee and NCEA Data Administrator were appointed to their respective roles in 2015. Over the last year they have undertaken an appraisal of existing processes and procedures to review the effectiveness of these in meeting the needs of the school and requirements of NZQA. Outcomes of this review include:

- refining the Scholarship entry process for students
- strengthening and streamlining the process for students to appeal a grade
- updating authenticity procedures and forms
- renaming senior examinations as "derived grade examinations" to further impress on students the importance of sitting and completing these in case evidence is required for a derived grade application.

In 2015, the Principal's Nominee required departments to complete a self-review of their assessment practices. This has given her a sense an overview of staff understanding and knowledge of existing assessment practices within the school.

The Principal's Nominee can now embed expectations and assist staff to move towards greater ownership of assessment within the school. One area identified for future focus is developing policy and procedure to cover the increasing digital environment being used for assessment by staff and students. This will include aspects such as moderation, storage and authenticity.

The school is well placed to continue to develop its own capacity to identify issues and respond appropriately and so ultimately improve the effectiveness of its assessment practice.

No action required

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

Assessment Practice

How does the school's assessment practice allow for the effective management of assessment for national qualifications? (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6, 3)

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls has effective processes and procedures for:

- missed and late assessment
- student appeals
- breaches of the assessment rules
- derived grades
- managing authenticity
- 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.

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls has effective processes to meet the assessment needs of all students by:

- offering a wide range of courses and encouraging multi-level options to meet the aspirations, abilities and needs of all students
- supporting students entitled to special assessment conditions
- adapting assessment materials to make use of contexts that are of interest to the students
- tracking each student's progress and identifying student who may be at risk of not meeting NCEA requirements
- having flexibility with the timing of assessments.

No action required

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

Moderation

How effectively does school internal and external moderation assure assessment quality? (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 3)

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls has effective processes and procedures for managing:

- internal moderation including:
 - critiquing assessment material
 - documenting discussions held around borderline examples of student work and the reasons for final decisions
 - recording the verification process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
 - storing a random sample of student work for external moderation purposes
 - holding current student exemplars.
- external moderation including:
 - using a valid random selection process
 - teachers responding effectively to the moderator's findings through relevant staff completing a *Response to External Moderation Sheet* and forwarding this to the Principal's Nominee
 - the follow-up of responses to external moderation, when required, by the Principal's Nominee.

Robust internal moderation The process of internal moderation is well embedded in the school. One department interviewed talked about their internal moderation process occurring with the entire student cohort for every standard, while another had a check-marking process that occurred in addition to verification. These are both very thorough and are more than sufficient to meet NZQA's requirements for verification. NZQA expects the verification process to include a focus on a sufficient number of pieces of student work, particularly at grade boundaries, to ensure grades awarded are consistent with the standard.

Ensure the appropriateness of verifiers used Although staff are aware of the requirement that verification must occur for all standards where results are reported to NZQA, the verifier used in some areas was not appropriate and should be reviewed. Any verifier used for the internal moderation of student work should be a subject specialist with recent standard-specific knowledge.

In other areas, continuing to seek and vary professional assistance, including expertise from outside the school, should be considered in order to ensure discussion around student work remains at the standard and teachers do not become isolated. This may be particularly relevant for standards at Levels 2 and 3 where there be only one class operating.

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:

- ensure the subject expert used to verify teacher judgements has current standard-specific experience.

Data Quality and Use

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 2.7, 3)

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls effectively:

- **manages assessment-related data by:**
 - having the NZQA administrator set up all mark books to act as an initial accuracy check
 - reporting accurate results to NZQA on a regular and timely basis
 - ensuring all internal entries have a reported result
 - encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner login and the NCEA app to track their own progress
 - managing any assessment results for Year 10 students
 - ensuring the accuracy of entries for external examinations, evident by a low number of late entry requests
 - using the correct provider code for assessment undertaken by external providers.
- **makes use of the following assessment-related data:**
 - Key Indicators; to identify and resolve any data errors
 - NZQA statistics and reports on student achievement; to analyse results
 - student management system reports.

Assessment data continues to indicate high levels of student engagement and achievement The overwhelming majority of students achieve the NCEA qualification appropriate to their year level within a single year. In addition, the school maintains consistently high achievement rates for literacy, numeracy, endorsements and qualifications, which continue to be above national achievement rates. The school attributes this success to its strong pastoral care focus that includes the ongoing monitoring of student results, engagement and progress, along with an effective assessment pedagogy that ensure students achieve academic success.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

Communication

How effectively does the school maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, and students and their families?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6, 2.7ii, 3)

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families
- ensuring that students are provided with sufficient assessment information about each of their courses.

Update documentation Documents sighted during the visit were of an overall good and consistent standard. When they are next updated, the school should consider the following amendments to the documents listed.

- student course assessment plans to:
 - ensure the version number refers to the NZQA standard version
 - remove reference to the status of each standard
 - include reference to further assessment opportunity
 - state if the course is eligible for course endorsement and qualifies as a university approved subject
 - include information relating to literacy and numeracy requirements at Level 1 and University Entrance reading and writing standards.
- staff handbook to:
 - include the term 'sufficiency' and 'purposefully selected' when referring to the selection of student work for verification
 - state the details of literacy and numeracy requirements for NCEA and University Entrance
 - remove reference to the former Optional Teacher-Selected Evidence process
 - detail the process for monitoring internal moderation
 - document the process used for reconciling memoranda of understanding with the use of outside providers.

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 documentation as noted in this report.