

Managing National Assessment Report

Taranaki Diocesan School

September 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Taranaki Diocesan 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
- *Taranaki Diocesan School – Staff Handbook 2019*
- *Taranaki Diocesan School – Assessment Guide for Students 2019*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Assistant Principal who is also the Director of Subject Area Sciences
- the Director of Subject Area Humanities
- Head of Department for English
- Teachers of:
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, two Assistant Principals 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

Taranaki Diocesan School

19 September 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

Taranaki Diocesan School uses the flexibility of the NCEA model to meet the individual career aspirations of its learners. A school-wide philosophy of meeting student needs is demonstrated in the co-construction of courses and differentiated assessment programmes negotiated. Engagement with outside providers enables students to undertake assessment programmes towards a broad range of academic and vocational pathways.

Effective processes that ensure valid and credible results are reported are in place for the management of assessment for national qualifications. Teachers interviewed demonstrated a clear understanding of school requirements and consistent assessment best practice. Assessing students when ready and strategies to assist students to present their best evidence are features of teacher practice.

Internal moderation is embedded practice. Directors of Subject Areas monitor the completion of internal moderation for all standards to ensure credible results are reported and moderation documentation reflects actual practice. External moderation follow-up by the Directors of Subject Areas includes monitoring agreement rates, teachers documenting required actions and the provision of assessor support.

Deans and mentor teachers effectively track student achievement progress toward qualification goals. This enables the early identification of those at risk of not achieving a qualification or to their potential. Where appropriate, additional support and modifications to assessment programmes are implemented. Mentors meet regularly with their students to facilitate reflection on their 'Vision Board', monitor wellbeing and provide ongoing support and advice including career pathways and subject selection.

Taranaki Diocesan School has high expectations for student achievement. The school's NCEA attainment is above national and decile rates for all NCEA qualification levels.

Teachers' annual reflection and NCEA data analysis is used to inform assessment programme changes to meet the changing needs of individual students.

The Principal's Nominee leads assessment practice with confidence, clarifying expectations and facilitating discussion on best practice. She works collaboratively

with the Directors of Subject Areas to ensure that the school's quality assurance processes confirm that results for national qualifications reported are credible.

Areas for improvement

Clarification of the difference between resubmission and further assessment opportunities is required to ensure consistent understanding and the requirements for providing a valid opportunity are met.

Assessments that may provide evidence for a derived or unexpected event grade must be subject to a quality assurance or justification process. The school plans to introduce a justification process for those teachers who are sole teachers to provide confidence that assessment decisions are consistent with the standard.

The staff handbook requires updating to reflect the assessment and monitoring procedures developed in 2019 as a result of the new leadership structure and reviews by the Principal's Nominee.

Agreed action

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

- clarify the correct process for offering of resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensure evidence that may be used for an unexpected event or derived grade has been quality assured.
- update the staff handbook as detailed in this report.

Kay Wilson
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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

13 November 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 23 April 2015 Managing National Assessment Report The staff handbook has been updated as a consequence of the 2015 review. Further updating to reflect the changes to the school's assessment processes developed in 2019 is required.

Response to external moderation outcomes The consistently high agreement between the assessor and moderator in external moderation reflects the school's robust internal moderation processes and effective response to external moderation feedback when an issue is identified.

Directors of Subject Areas review with subject teachers the outcomes of external moderation to develop and document specific actions to address any inconsistencies in assessor judgements. Actions are checked and their completion recorded. Low agreement rates are monitored to identify developing trends in a subject area to enable the timely provision of additional support. External moderation outcomes and actions are reported annually to the Principal and Board of Trustees.

The school is encouraged to use the NZQA Moderation Application tool to request standards for external moderation. Targeting standards where actions are required to address an issue provides a way for the school to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies to improve assessment decisions.

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)

Taranaki Diocesan School's teachers demonstrate a shared ownership of the school's vision of meeting student needs in a holistic and inclusive learning environment and ensuring the credibility of assessment for qualifications.

Since the last review, two new Assistant Principals, who are also Directors of Subject Areas, and a new Principal's Nominee have been appointed. The change in Senior Leadership in 2019 has provided the school with the opportunity to review and develop new management areas and responsibilities. This new structure is being used to:

- align Directors of Subject Areas' responsibilities and tasks alongside the school's updated annual plan and goals
- enable cross-curricular discussion and sharing of good assessment practice
- facilitate the school's strategic goal to improve numeracy
- facilitate communication of consistent assessment messages and to check that school processes are being followed.

To enable consistent monitoring of assessment for qualifications the Directors of Subject Areas are responsible for:

- monitoring internal moderation completion
- checking teachers' moderation processes are robust and the documentation reflects actual practice
- ensuring external moderation feedback is followed-up with actions that will support the development of teacher understanding of the standard.

Teachers interviewed described the new leadership structure as providing them with the opportunity to engage in cross-curricular discussion, work collaboratively with colleagues and gain a 'bigger picture' of curriculum and assessment practice across the school.

The Principal's Nominee, working with the Assistant Principal, has conducted a number of reviews. They have identified next steps for 2020 will be to:

- gather learning data in Year 9 and 10 to enable special assessment conditions applications to be made in the year before the student commences assessment for qualifications
- develop digital external moderation folders to facilitate the storage of student work
- continue to monitor student waiora (wellbeing) and the number of credits offered in assessment programmes.

Self-review is an embedded practice at the school. It is integral to the ongoing development of teaching and learning programmes to effectively meet student needs. Existing processes have been reviewed and modified in 2019 to reflect the new leadership structure. Changes made ensure the ongoing development of good assessment practice and strengthen the quality assurance practices that enable the continued reporting of credible results.

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 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)

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

- extending assessment opportunities by engaging with outside providers to offer academic and vocational courses
- teachers co-constructing with students the list of standards to be offered in a course to reflect the abilities and interests of the class
- negotiating individual NCEA assessment programmes with students to support their future pathway plans
- using feedback and feedforward information to assist students to present their best evidence
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with a special assessment conditions entitlement and providing these resources for internal assessment where appropriate
- assisting students to present authentic work by helping them to understand plagiarism and the need to reference sources of information.

Taranaki Diocesan School has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted by using suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- ensuring derived grades are based on standard-specific authentic evidence from practice examinations
- ensuring consistency in the granting of extensions by the Principal's Nominee being responsible for managing missed and late assessment
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Clarification of resubmission opportunities is required There is inconsistent understanding of resubmission and further assessment opportunities. Clarification is required. Teachers described providing a "refinement opportunity" following the return of marked student work that included providing feedback in some cases. Students described a "refinement opportunity" being offered to all students in some subjects and also being given specific feedback in some instances to support them to improve their grade.

NZQA rules make it clear that resubmissions are to be offered only to individual students who are on a grade boundary who can independently identify the error or omission and correct it themselves with no further teaching and learning. It is recommended the school clarify the correct application of resubmission and further assessment opportunities. The use of NZQA terminology will enable consistent understanding by staff and students.

Māori student engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects The school effectively promotes and supports Māori student participation and achievement in STEM subjects. The success rate for these students in one Level 3 STEM subject is similar to that of other students within the school. Māori students are encouraged to consider taking STEM subjects and supported to explore science and health related career pathways. Senior students are involved in the Taranaki Base Hospital WhyOra Programme to assist them to identify possible health career opportunities. Science badges have been introduced for Year 10 students to strengthen students' foundation knowledge to assist success in NCEA Science in the following year.

Clarification of derived grade justification methods All teachers described using appropriate material for assessment used to generate evidence for a derived or unexpected event grade but were unaware of the need to quality assure or justify their grades. The school agreed to clarify the verification and justification processes for quality assuring assessment judgements where they could be used for a derived or unexpected event grade. This will provide confidence that grade decisions are consistent with the standard.

Agreed action

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

- clarify the correct process for offering of resubmission and further assessment opportunity
- ensure evidence that may be used for a derived or unexpected event grade has been quality assured.

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)

Taranaki Diocesan School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation:

Teachers:

- are clear in their understanding of the school's internal moderation expectations
- document the internal moderation process for each standard assessed before results are reported to NZQA
- use subject specialists within and outside the school to verify grade judgements of a purposefully selected sample of student work
- file a copy of the completed cover sheet with the student work and save a copy on the school intranet for the Directors of Subject Areas to monitor completion
- note discussions on grade judgements for future reference in most instances
- are supported by the school to become members of their Subject Associations to assist them to make connections with subject specialists.

Directors of Subject Areas:

- confirm that verifiers have appropriate standard-specific experience
- check that a completed coversheet is held for all standards for which grades are reported
- monitor the completion of internal moderation for all standards assessed in their subject area and confirm the documented moderation process reflects actual practice
- facilitate the sharing of moderation practice across curriculum areas at regular subject area meetings.

Taranaki Diocesan School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- proactively monitoring external moderation feedback and agreement rates to identify low agreement rate trends and potential issues in a subject area
- using an external moderation selection method that meets NZQA requirements
- using the same external moderation follow-up procedure for ITO and NZQA owned standards.

Grade verification sample and sufficiency clarified The Principal's Nominee shared information from the NZQA Managing National Assessment Seminar on strategic selection for verification of grades awarded to student work. While most teachers select work around grade boundaries for verification, some described checking all work where the class is very small. A purposeful selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. The school is encouraged to check teachers of very small

subjects are verifying grade boundary samples to manage their and their verifier's assessment workload.

Internal moderation grade verification is valued To prevent assessment isolation school policy requires that grades awarded for one standard at each level each year must be verified outside of the school. Teachers, who could carry out all their moderation within the school value the professional discussion and learning gained when they meet with an outside verifier. This policy supports their ongoing understanding of the standard.

Development of digital storage protocols is encouraged Digital evidence is collected in most subjects with teachers describing storing work on external hard drives, their laptop and pen drives. The school is encouraged to develop digital storage protocols to enable assessment evidence to be available for external moderation. Centrally storing digital material with appropriate permissions and file names will facilitate the work being easily accessible, if selected.

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:

- developing protocols for the storage of digital student evidence.

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)

Taranaki Diocesan School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement annually
- enabling Deans to track and monitor student progress toward an NCEA qualification, identify students at risk and to negotiate programme changes as appropriate
- supporting teacher inquiries on improving student achievement
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their achievement goals and career aspirations
- informing changes to standards, contexts and programmes offered.

Taranaki Diocesan School has effective processes for:

- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
- reporting results and entries to NZQA in a timely manner
- checking the accuracy of external entries to minimise late entries
- ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate.
- reporting results using the correct provider code of external providers with which the school holds current memoranda of understanding
- supporting students to register for their NZQA Learner Login and encouraging them to use this to check the accuracy of their entries and results.

Mentoring programme supports student achievement An effective mentoring programme designed as an academic tracking system supports students to achieve their goals. The *Vision Board* students create with their mentor, at the start of the year, provides the platform for discussion and review throughout the year. Mentors regularly meet with students to review academic, spiritual, and sporting goals and track progress towards qualifications. Students' wellbeing is monitored and those at risk of not achieving a qualification are referred to Deans. The *Vision Board* is used at student/parent conferences to discuss qualification progress, career pathways and subject selection for the following year. Students described appreciating the support and guidance provided by their mentor.

Enabling and encouraging staff use of the NZQA Provider Login Currently staff do not have Education Sector Login (ESL) access that would enable them to use the school's Provider Login. This would allow them to view a range of NZQA data reports and information. Provider Login visibility will support the checking of student entries and results. It will allow teachers to download and view copyright material and to submit external moderation and view reports. Teachers having access to the Login gives them visibility of data that can enhance assessment practice.

No action required

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

For consideration

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

- providing teachers with Education Sector Login access.

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))

Taranaki Diocesan School has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and parents using written, digital and face-to-face methods
- providing students with consistent course information both digitally and in hard copy using a common template
- supporting teachers new to the school to understand school policy and procedures through an induction programme
- communicating with individual and groups of students using the school's learning management system's (LMS) virtual learning environment
- using the LMS to create, manage and share academic resources and assessment timeline information with students.

Taranaki Diocesan School assists a common understanding of assessment practice by:

- using staff meetings to clarify changes of procedures and expectations, and to facilitate discussion on good assessment practice
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through targeted evening meetings.

Directors of Subject Areas support effective communication and consistent assessment practice

The Directors of Subject Areas ensure accurate communication of school assessment processes to teachers. They are proactive in developing consistent teacher assessment practice and work closely with the Principal's Nominee to support teacher understanding, including facilitating professional discussion and sharing of best practice across subject areas.

Staff Handbook to be updated to reflect current practice The new leadership structure and reviews by the Principal's Nominee have resulted in a number of changes to the school's assessment and monitoring processes in 2019. The Principal's Nominee has provided information sheets and flow charts, and the Directors of Subject Areas have discussed and clarified the changes with teachers. These now need to be incorporated into the Staff Handbook. Teachers demonstrated a consistent understanding of the school's updated expectations. This reflects the effective communication by the Principal's Nominee and Directors of Subject Areas.

When the handbook is next updated the school should:

- include how evidence used for a derived or unexpected event grade can be justified
- update and clarify resubmission information
- detail the school's updated internal and external moderation processes.

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 the staff handbook as detailed in this report.