

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Freyberg High School

September 2019

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Freyberg 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
- *NCEA Student Booklet 2019, Freyberg High School*
- *NCEA Assessment and Moderation Staff Handbook 2019, Freyberg High School*
- *Curriculum and National Assessment Policy Document, Freyberg High School*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Head of Department for:
  - Careers
  - Drama and Media Studies
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education
  - Visual Arts.
- Assistant Head of Department for:
  - English.
- three students.

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, next steps and to agree on any action required.

# SUMMARY

## Freyberg High School

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

### What the school is doing well

Freyberg High School's shared vision is to be "the best secondary school for each of our learners." The principles of *Innovation, Caring* and *Excellence* are central to meeting the diverse needs of its students and are enabled through ongoing inquiry into practice, shared expectations and responsibility for student outcomes, and building collaborative relationships across the school community. The school's effective use of digital tools and close monitoring of student progress are also important components contributing to positive achievement outcomes.

The school responds effectively to review, and is improving and embedding NCEA practices. Teachers use achievement data and student voice to inform course and programme design. Clear processes and collective ownership of NCEA assessment practice ensure that results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible.

The school offers a wide range of academic and vocational opportunities to provide relevant and engaging assessment pathways to cater for students, including through outside providers.

Effective support and monitoring of student progress towards assessment goals occurs through academic coaching. Teachers described a variety of programmes used to differentiate and support opportunities for achievement.

Effective leadership of assessment practice is evident. The Principal's Nominee, new to this role in 2019, is committed to maintaining a consistent understanding and application of NCEA processes. She is supported in her role by the Principal, senior leaders and teachers. The Principal's Nominee effectively manages changes and issues to support student achievement and improve current practice.

Robust internal moderation is embedded practice. An annual audit of departments confirms that documentation reflects actual practice and ensures that only credible results are reported to NZQA. Senior leadership ensure that Heads of Department address any issues identified in external moderation through the actions of the Quality Assurance Team and reporting outcomes to the Board of Trustees.

The management of assessment data is effective, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Entries and results are thoroughly checked at all levels of the school, using information and reports available from the student management system and the NZQA website.

Student results are tracked to monitor progress towards meeting personal goals and qualification attainment. As appropriate, support and interventions assist students to improve their assessment outcomes. Heads of Department analyse results data to reflect on the previous year's programme, reporting achievement outcomes to senior management and the Board of Trustees, informing strategic direction.

Effective communication of NCEA information informs professional learning and promotes consistent understanding. The school has a range of communications that allow staff, students and their families to gain a common understanding of NCEA, school expectations, and assessment procedures. The students interviewed for the review were well-informed about the NCEA and considered teachers positively supported them to achieve.

### **Areas for improvement**

Student work for external moderation must be selected to NZQA requirements. This will enable the school to confidently use external moderation results to measure the effectiveness of their internal moderation quality assurance practices.

### **Agreed action**

The school agreed that this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- ensure process for the selection of student work for external moderation meets current NZQA requirements.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

22 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 20 October 2016 Managing National Assessment Report**

The three items from the 2016 report have been actioned. Documentation on appeals and reporting Not Achieved grades has been updated in the staff and student handbooks. Assessment statements generated from the school's student management system provide consistent and accurate information for each course. The Work and Study Skills Numeracy unit standards are offered to students only as appropriate.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has a history of high levels of agreement between teachers' and NZQA moderators' assessment judgements.

The Principal's Nominee reviews each moderation report and discusses with the Head of Department any concerns that have been identified. An action plan is implemented in response to issues. Appropriate support to improve practice is provided, where required. The Quality Assurance Team comprised of senior staff monitors the completion of the identified actions.

Heads of Department provide a summary to the Board of Trustees evaluating the effectiveness of the changes made and expected improvements.

### 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)*

The school reviews its learning and assessment programmes and processes continuously to innovate and develop, to best meet the diverse needs of students. Data analysis and interpretation, and staff, student and whānau voice inform self-review. The new Principal's Nominee, working alongside senior leaders, is committed to enhancing school-wide ownership and improvement in NCEA processes and practice, to assure the credibility of assessment. The school can be confident that any concerns related to assessment practice will be identified and addressed.

A number of new initiatives indicate the growing capacity of the school to address student assessment need and to strengthen the consistency of assessment practice and quality assurance processes, including:

- managing student workloads by removing the minimum number of credits offered and focussing on the quality of achievement
- offering new courses to match the needs of students and the school's strategic intent; for example, to increase the number of girls involved in Technology, a Textiles course has been introduced

- implementing strategies to address inequality for Māori and Pacific students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, including relevant departments comprehensively self-reviewing progress, setting goals, identifying support, and addressing barriers. Academic coaching supports students and engagement with whānau
- embedding an academic coaching programme for all students with coaches accessing current achievement data to inform support
- strengthening monitoring and support for students by investigating the effective use of a digital data tool and an academic goal setting / tracking platform to provide real-time information for academic coaches and students
- appointing a Learning Support Co-ordinator to complement current work in supporting student learning needs and providing strategies and resources for teachers
- undertaking a broad review of the curriculum over time, strategically reflecting on how the NCEA assessment model can be used to best meet the changing needs of students; for example, a revised Level 1 programme aligned to the outcomes of the NCEA review
- implementing a centralised repository for storing Memoranda of Understanding with external providers, in digital format, to strengthen annual monitoring and reconciliation of reported results.

These developments highlight the school's expanding strategic and innovative direction to respond to student need and to embed practices accordingly. This reflects the school vision of meeting student needs within a context of robust quality assurance of NCEA assessment practice that ensures credible results are reported.

#### **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)*

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

- increasing the number of academic and vocational options available to students, including with external providers
- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities within the same class and across classes in the same subjects
- designing courses with genuine and authentic learning contexts that engage student interests
- using milestone checks, feedback, and feedforward to assist students to present their best evidence of achievement
- broadening the ways evidence of student achievement is collected, including conferencing, portfolio and digital tools, to reflect student strengths
- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes, while acknowledging the need for students to meet assessment deadlines
- annually undertaking digital examinations
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA or University Entrance, or their qualification goals
- collecting school-based evidence to support applications for students identified as eligible for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

### **Freyberg High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- monitoring the authenticity of student work through teachers and students using strategies during assessment and marking
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- modifying publicly sourced assessments by changing the task or content, and keeping commercial tasks secure to assure valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is generated for derived and unexpected event grades
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- effectively assisting with the management of NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

**Academic coaching supports student development and achievement** The school has embedded an academic mentoring and conferencing programme. Academic coaches have a significant role in supporting student achievement and



monitoring progress throughout a student's schooling during weekly coaching sessions, based on building strong relationships between staff, students and whānau.

Academic coaches individually support students with goal setting, pathway progressions and completing the requirements of qualifications. Similarly, coaches discuss progress towards achievement goals and specific feedback from teachers with each student and their whānau during twice-yearly coaches' conferences.

Academic Deans have oversight for each level of the senior school and guide the academic coaches in ensuring students' programmes for learning and assessment are meeting needs. Deans identify early those students 'at risk' of not meeting qualification goals and inform coaches. Timely responses and interventions are offered when needed.

**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 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)*

### **Freyberg High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring assessment tasks reflect the standard by having amended or new tasks critiqued prior to use
- using clarification documents, benchmark exemplars, documented discussions on grade judgements and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment decisions
- using department marking process or appropriate subject specialists from within or outside the school to verify assessor grade judgements
- documenting internal moderation processes for each standard before results are reported.

### **Freyberg High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being appropriately stored
- teachers recommending standards to be included for external moderation
- encouraging digital submission of student work
- valuing moderator's feedback for professional learning to inform changes to assessments and assessor's judgements.

**Robust internal moderation monitoring** Internal moderation is effectively quality assured. The Quality Assurance Team, comprising the Principal's Nominee, middle and senior leaders, comprehensively audit the moderation processes of each department, including reconciling actual samples of student work with documentation. The completion of each step for a random sample of standards for each subject is recorded in a standardised template.

This annual audit provides a transparent account of the comprehensiveness of moderation processes and issues, where identified. Areas of concern are targeted and resolved, thereby ensuring school-wide consistency. Senior leadership can be confident that internal moderation procedures carried out in all departments are complete and robust, and results reported are credible.

**Strategic selection of student work for internal moderation** Teachers interviewed choose to verify grades for more samples of student work than required by NZQA. Teachers select a wider sample to provide confidence in their grade verification decisions, replacement benchmark exemplars and to inform review of the tasks and the standards offered.

The school is encouraging staff to undertake sufficient verification through the strategic selection of student work at grade boundaries. To support this change, the Principal's Nominee has produced a video and documents for departments to self-review their verification selection practice. The school should continue to support strategic selection as this has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process.

**Selection for external moderation should meet NZQA requirements** Some teachers select a set range of grades to generate the external moderation submission sample of student work. For consistency and ease of selection, the school intends to use the student management system to meet current NZQA requirements. The school agreed to clarify selection requirements with staff to ensure the outcomes of external moderation can reliably evaluate the effectiveness of internal 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:

- ensure the selection process of student work for external moderation meets current NZQA requirements.

## 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)*

### **Freyberg High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes, including using student voice, to inform changes to programmes, contexts and standards, to reflect student interests, abilities and learning styles
- using NCEA achievement data to guide teacher inquiries, and supporting the sharing of conclusions with teachers
- annually reporting a reflective narrative of NCEA achievement at departmental level to the Board of Trustees, reviewing progression and outlining next steps
- reviewing the school's annual achievement goals and plan and developing ongoing strategic direction.

### **Freyberg High School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- actively promoting teachers to use their Education Sector Logon to check submitted results and access relevant resources
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of external providers with which the school holds a current Memorandum of Understanding.

**Data management is robust** Established data management practices and processes, regularly promoted and monitored by the Principal's Nominee, ensure accurate and timely data is reported to NZQA. Entries and results are thoroughly checked at all levels of the school. Key Indicators, file submission and data reports are effectively used to identify and resolve data issues. Students sign-off their internally assessed grades to confirm the accuracy of the grades reported. Students are actively encouraged to use the student management system portal and NZQA Learner login to monitor their progress and check for accuracy of entries and results. Negligible levels of late external entries and internal entries reported with a result or withdrawn are evidence of thorough data management and a match to the students' intended assessment programme.

### **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))*

### **Freyberg High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive assessment outlines for all courses undertaken
- annually reviewing staff and student handbooks to ensure that they are fit for purpose and current
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including through the student and parent portal.

### **Freyberg High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification
- encouraging professional learning opportunities, including collaborating with external subject specialist and attendance at NZQA Best Practice Workshops, when available
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme on the school's assessment and moderation processes
- researching the development of a school app and redesigning the website to further enhance schoolwide communications.

**Clear communication of assessment practice** Effective leadership and regular communication of NCEA assessment procedures and processes provide clear expectations and promote responsibility for credible assessment practice at all levels of the school. Frequent use of digital, face-to-face and written communication opportunities ensure assessment information is accessible to all stakeholders and understood.

The Principal's Nominee and Academic Deans present NCEA information in tailored student assemblies. Academic Coaching Conferences and parent evenings support whānau understanding of the NCEA model. The development of assessment best practice is enhanced by discussion at Curriculum Leaders' meetings. An 'All Users' email has been developed to reinforce important assessment information to students and to gather student feedback about their assessment experiences. This is an example of the school's effective use of student voice to inform future assessment decisions. These activities contribute to school-wide consistency and understanding of assessment practice.

### **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.