

Managing National Assessment Report

Gisborne Boys' High School

July 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Gisborne Boys' 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 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 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
- Policies on assessment and moderation
- *Gisborne Boys' High School Staff Assessment Handbook for National Qualifications*
- *Gisborne Boys' High School NCEA Information* (student guide)
- 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 and Assistant Heads of Department for English, Humanities, Mathematics, Physical Education and Health, and Science, and the Head of Department for Art.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal 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

Gisborne Boys' High School

25-26 July 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

Gisborne Boys' High School is responsive to external review and has effectively addressed all the agreed action items from the 2015 Managing National Assessment report. The school also demonstrates the capacity to undertake its own review of the effectiveness of its assessment procedures and practice, leading to on-going improvements. Staff and student feedback is often an integral part of these reviews, helping to ensure shared ownership of the reviews and their outcomes.

The school provides a range of academic and vocational courses to meet the assessment needs of its students. Changes to programmes including credit capping, allow students to focus on the quality, rather than quantity, of their credits. Identified students are provided with approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported. Assessment processes are effectively managed within the school to ensure that assessment is credible and student rights are protected.

Internal moderation is well embedded within departments. All parts of the internal moderation process are documented and monitored by Heads of Department. External moderation is also well managed. Staff assist with submitting material, viewing moderation reports online and responding to identified issues. Similar procedures are used for all external moderation required of the school, regardless of the standard-setting body.

Accurate assessment data is regularly reported to NZQA. This data is used effectively to track student achievement and identify those at risk of not meeting qualification requirements, setting strategic school, department and individual student goals, and to annually inform course design.

School communication ensures information on qualifications and assessment procedures is appropriately provided to its community. The range of formats used to distribute this information has enhanced the development of a shared understanding of the school processes and NCEA requirements.

Areas for improvement

Senior Leaders must ensure that actions planned by staff in response to issues identified by moderators during external moderation are timely, appropriately documented and their effectiveness evaluated.

The school's review processes do not adequately confirm that all results from internal assessment have been through internal moderation before they are submitted to NZQA in the end-of-year data file. Without this confirmation, senior leaders lack the necessary assurance, that the results they send to NZQA are credible.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that staff response to external moderation is appropriately documented, timely and effectively addresses identified issues
- develop a process to document internal moderation monitoring to confirm that all reported results are quality assured before being reported to NZQA.

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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 19 August 2015 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed the action items from the 2015 report. This has included:

- reviewing the actions taken in response to the 2012 review
- regularly reviewing department moderation processes
- submitting material digitally for external moderation in 2018
- reporting a result for every internal entry.

The other items have been addressed by introducing an online portal to the student management system. This allows students to:

- effectively track their achievement
- see the literacy and/or numeracy status of standards within a course.

Response to external moderation outcomes There is an expectation that where moderation reports contain concerns raised by moderators, departments will record the action plans developed to address these. Heads of Department noted in interviews that while planned actions are generally discussed with the Principal's Nominee, there was not always a check to see these were appropriately documented, completed in a timely manner or adequately addressed the issues raised. Without these checks senior leaders cannot be confident that the school's response to external moderation is effective.

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)

Gisborne Boys' High School uses a range of self-review processes and procedures to help it identify areas of assessment practice for on-going improvement or respond to issues identified by external review, including:

- collecting parents and/or students feedback to help inform review aims and outcomes
- having regular staff, faculty and Head of Department meetings to discuss school-wide assessment processes
- teachers and departments analysing student achievement outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of assessment programmes
- reviewing department assessment and moderation processes through biennial audits by senior leaders to ensure they meet school and NZQA requirements.

During this review senior leaders and teachers commented on a number of developments resulting from self-review. These include:

- changing the date of school exams in response to parent and student concerns about their closeness to tournament week and the stress this placed on students
- school testing of identified students to provide evidence for special assessment conditions and reducing the need for reports from registered assessors
- introducing a selection of semester length courses at Level 3 to provide students with increased flexibility to mix vocational and academic pathways
- developing a Level 2 Science course for students who enjoy Science but may not have the need or ability to take one of the specialist science subjects
- the Technology department putting courses online so that students enrolled in Trade Academy courses are not disadvantaged by being away from school for a whole day
- providing speech-to-text software for some internal assessments that allow students with limited written literacy the ability to better demonstrate their best evidence of achievement.

Introducing academic coaching The school is currently reviewing the role of form teachers as mentors. One aspect of the review will consider the introduction of a non-teaching academic coaching day. The proposal is for staff to work with individual students to help them develop a clear picture of their academic progress, what they need to do to meet their goals and the options available to support their academic and/or vocational pathways. Staff and student feedback will help inform the review.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that staff response to external moderation is appropriately documented, timely and effectively addresses identified issues.

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)

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

- providing careers information and mentor support to assist with subject selection, academic goal setting and progress tracking
- extending the range of vocational assessment opportunities available through the school's Star and Gateway programmes, and Trade Academies organised by local tertiary providers
- introducing new and modifying existing assessment programmes based on staff and student feedback
- providing unit standard numeracy assessment opportunities to assist those needing support to meet NCEA numeracy requirements
- some departments capping the total credits available in courses to allow them to focus on the quality of their results rather than the quantity
- using a range of physical and digital methods to collect evidence of achievement during assessment
- ensuring staff are well informed of those with an entitlement to special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

Gisborne Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessments, further assessment opportunities and resubmissions, and student appeals of assessment decisions
- 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
- assisting students to present authentic work by using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules
- assisting with the management of the Examination Centre
- complying with the requirements of the Privacy Act, 1993 when handling students' assessment information, and the Copyright Act 1994 when using student work as exemplars.

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 2018 6.4b)

Gisborne Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and provide students with the opportunity to present evidence at all grade levels
- teachers using exemplars and standard clarifications to inform their grade judgements during marking
- purposefully selecting samples of student work around grade boundaries for verification
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- using subject specialists from within, and outside of, the school to verify samples of student grades.

Document internal moderation monitoring The school should develop a way of documenting their monitoring of internal moderation. Heads of Department monitor the completion of internal moderation processes within their departments, but senior leaders must be able to confirm that all reported results are quality assured before being reported to NZQA. Some form of documentation would provide the Principal's Nominee with the necessary assurance of completion before he submits the end-of-year data file.

Gisborne Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- providing staff with appropriate access to the NZQA External Moderation Application, enabling them to view reports and assist with the submission process
- storing assessment material securely so it is available for external moderation
- requiring all external moderation, regardless of the standard-setting body, to follow the same process.

Encourage staff to strategically request standards for external moderation

The NZQA external moderation process allows the school to annually put forward standards for inclusion on the school's moderation plan. To date, the school has not taken full advantage of this opportunity. Encouraging staff to request standards will allow them to think strategically and ensure that:

- standards identified with issues are re-moderated within an appropriate time
- only currently assessed standards are included in the moderation cycle.

Provide guidance on storing digital assessment material Staff indicated that the amount of assessment material being produced by students in a digital format is increasing. However, there is no clear guidance on how, or where, digital material should be stored. Developing a policy and protocols for the storage of digital assessment material would assist staff ensure that student work is stored securely and can be easily accessed if required.

Clarify verification sufficiency with staff The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on the strategic selection of student work for sufficient verification. Staff who were interviewed verify more samples of student work than necessary. They assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries but often check extra samples as well.

Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. The number of pieces of student work that must be verified is not fixed, or predetermined. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

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 a process to document internal moderation monitoring to confirm that all reported results are quality assured before being reported to NZQA.

For consideration

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

- encouraging staff to strategically request standards for moderation
- providing staff with guidance on the storage of digital assessment material.

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)

Gisborne Boys' High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school-wide and department academic goals based upon the comparative analysis of achievement data with national statistics
 - departments reporting an analysis of NCEA achievement to the Principal and Board of Trustees annually to help identify where good practice has produced improved results
 - getting students to monitor their progress towards qualification requirements and meeting other academic goals such as certificate or course endorsements
 - arranging six-weekly mentoring and support meetings with individuals, or groups of students based upon their credit totals
 - the Academic Dean identifying students at risk of not meeting qualification goals or requirements so that appropriate support can be provided.

- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking for, and correcting where necessary, errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - removing internal entries where students have left or changed assessment programmes, to ensure all entries have a reported result
 - having students take ownership of their results by signing-off on the accuracy of their grades
 - confirming the accuracy of external entries prior to key dates to reduce late entries
 - submitting fees paid and financial assistance applications on time
 - reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

Assist students to use their NZQA Learner login The number of students that register and use their NZQA Learner login has declined since the last Managing National Assessment review. The school noted that while it provides students with information on registering, students tend to use the online portal to the student management system to check their results as it contains more current information. While the students interviewed had registered to use their login, they indicated they preferred to use the portal.

Students can use their Learner login to check the accuracy of their results reported to NZQA, request reviews or reconsiderations for external examination papers and order copies of their Record of Achievement and/or qualification certificates. None of

these functions is available through the student management system. To provide students with these abilities the school should consider how it can further assist students to register for and use their Learner login.

For consideration

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

- assisting students to register for and use their Learner login.

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))

Gisborne Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive course outlines that use a common template, for every course they take and an assessment planner at the beginning of each term
- communicating information on qualifications, and assessment policies and procedures to the school community through a range of digital and physical formats, as well as face-to-face meetings.

Gisborne Boys' High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- sharing the staff assessment handbook digitally for ease of use
- the Principal's Nominee explaining NCEA requirements and school assessment processes at year level assemblies
- providing teachers with information about assessment best practice and giving them opportunities to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements at staff, department and Heads of Department meetings
- working with NZQA to facilitate NCEA meetings for Māori and Pasifika parents.

Improving parent access to school assessment information Unless parents have access to the student guide, *Gisborne Boys' High School NCEA Information*, concise information on NCEA and school assessment processes is not readily available. Although much of the material is provided in other ways, such as at meetings and through newsletters throughout the year, it is not available in one easily accessible place. The school should consider how it can provide easier access to this information.

Helping teachers become familiar with school assessment processes New teachers are provided with an induction process that assists them to become more familiar with NCEA assessment, and the school's processes. However, the Principal's Nominee confirmed that there was no similar induction process for the more experienced teachers new to the school. Providing these teachers with a brief induction to the school's assessment and moderation processes would allow them to become familiar with these and quickly and consistently apply them when assessing 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:

- making assessment information more accessible for parents
- providing experienced teachers new to the school with an induction process on the school's assessment and moderation processes.