

Managing National Assessment Report

Napier Girls' High School

August 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Napier Girls' 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 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
- *Policy on Assessment*
- *Napier Girls' High School Policy and Procedures for Assessment of National Qualifications 2017 Staff Handbook*
- *Napier Girls' High School Level 1,2 and 3 Policy and Procedures for Assessment of National Qualifications 2017 Student Guidelines*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, Data Manager and Learning Team Leader, three students, and Heads of Learning Area for Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences and Technology, and Teacher in Charge of Geography.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and Learning Team Leader 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

Napier Girls' High School

10 August 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 three years.

What the school is doing well

Napier Girls' High school has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school responds effectively to issues raised by external review and has fully addressed the action items from the 2013 Managing National Assessment review. Its own review processes enable it to identify and respond to assessment and moderation issues and change assessment practice to improve outcomes for students.

The school supports students to reach their academic and vocational goals. It uses outside providers to extend the range of vocational assessment opportunities available. Students with special assessment conditions are appropriately supported and staff are well informed of their entitlements.

Internal and external moderation are effectively managed within the school. Samples of marked student work is securely stored so that it is available for external moderation.

The school has effective processes for ensuring the achievement data it reports is accurate and timely. Assessment-related data is effectively used to set school-wide, learning area and individual academic goals, track students' academic progress and to reflect on student achievement to improve course and programme design.

Staff, students and parents are kept informed of the school's assessment policies and procedures through a range of easy to access digital and physical communication processes.

Areas for improvement

Strengthening staff understanding of the moderation verification process will help reduce verifiers' workloads, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. Not all staff are aware of best practice for the internal moderation verification process. Samples of student work for verification should be purposefully selected from around grade boundaries, or from work the assessor is unsure of. In some learning areas more work is verified than would be considered sufficient.

This review identified that not all the assessment information that is provided to staff, students and parents is current. The school has agreed to review the information it provides to ensure it is still relevant, up-to date and accurate.

Agreed action

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

- strengthen staff understanding of verification and sufficiency requirements
- review the assessment information it provides staff and students to ensure it is relevant, up-to-date and accurate.

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27 October 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 25 September 2013 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has addressed the agreed items from the 2013 review. This has involved:

- Heads of Learning Area documenting the systems they use to monitor the moderation processes within their learning areas
- giving access to the school's Provider login to a wider group of staff
- consistently formatting the assessment information contained in course outlines.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a robust external moderation response process. The Principal's Nominee provides staff with copies of their external moderation reports. Where external moderation has identified an issue, the teacher responsible for that standard is expected to respond using the school's *Moderation Report Feedback* form. A timeline has to be provided for any recommendations for change or action plans developed, and the Principal's Nominee monitors these for completion.

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)

The school uses its self-review processes to identify and respond to assessment and moderation issues and implement changes in assessment practices that help it to better meet student needs. Examples of this include:

- reducing the number of standards assessed in courses to provide students with greater opportunity to achieve at higher levels and meet certificate and course endorsement goals
- providing opportunities for students with strengths in specific subjects to complete higher-level courses earlier, enabling them to broaden the base of their learning by the time they leave the school
- trialling the use of digital tools, such as Google Classroom and content matching software, in assessments, and using e-learning experts in learning areas to provide support for staff and students
- considering extending access to the school's Provider login to all assessing staff so they can view external moderation reports, when it was identified that the Principal's Nominee is unable to print moderation reports from NZQA's new External Moderation Application
- ensuring all learning areas have centralised internal moderation storage sites after it was identified that some Heads of Learning Area faced difficulties monitoring how material was stored where individual subject areas were spread around the school

- renaming the school's practice external examinations as "Derived Grade Examinations" after it was identified that many students did not realise their importance in providing evidence, if required, for derived or emergency grades.

For consideration

To extend good practice in external review and self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing all assessing staff with access to school's Provider login so they can view external moderation reports.

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)

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

- using external providers to broaden vocational assessment opportunities
- offering the opportunity to be assessed against supported learning standards to appropriate students who require specific support with their learning
- 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 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
- tracking students' achievement progress to identify those at risk of not meeting academic requirements, and career and achievement goals
- Form Teachers, Deans, Senior Leader and members of the Future Focus Group mentoring identified students and arranging targeted support, as appropriate
- centrally recording information on at-risk students so that all staff are aware of any support being provided and the need to monitor their progress.

Napier Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic work by 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
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act, 1993*.

Preparation underway for school-evidence based special assessment condition applications

The school is collecting evidence that will enable it to make appropriate special assessment conditions applications for Year 10 students at the end of 2017. Until now all special assessment conditions applications have used evidence from reports prepared by independent registered professionals. The use of school-based evidence will remove the potential financial barrier of the cost of a professional report.

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)

Napier Girls' High School 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 the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

Napier Girls' 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 Heads of Learning Areas with access to the NZQA External Moderation Application to assist with the submission process
- ensuring material is available for all standards requested for external moderation.

Improve understanding of verification requirements There is some inconsistency in staff understanding of how student work should be selected for the verification process. Sufficient samples of student work that is purposefully selected from around grade boundaries, or work that staff are unsure of, should be verified to be sure that grade judgements are consistent with the standard. These samples should not be selected randomly, as happened for some standards in one Learning area.

In some Learning Areas more student work is being verified than may be necessary. 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. There is, therefore, no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. Careful selection may result in fewer samples, which will help reduce verifiers' workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process while clarifying making assessment decision.

Strengthening the moderation monitoring process The school is trialling Senior Leaders checking on the quality assurance processes within Learning Areas, as part of each Learning Area's annual Performance Management Review. These checks may happen before all internal moderation processes have been completed. The process would therefore be strengthened by adding an end-of-year, attestation from the Heads of Learning Areas, who monitor these moderation processes throughout the year, confirming the completion of all internal moderation within their learning area.

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:

- improve staff understanding of verification and sufficiency requirements.

For consideration

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

- developing an end-of year assurance process to confirm the completion of internal moderation processes in Learning Areas.

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)

Napier Girls' High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school wide and learning area strategic goals based upon longitudinal and comparative analysis of achievement data
 - teachers analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme design.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - having a dedicated Data Manager handling data related processes
 - 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 external entries, and internal results at specific times during the year
 - 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
 - getting 98 per cent of students registered for their Learner login and encouraging them to use both this and the online portal to the school's student management system, to check the accuracy of their reported results.

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

Napier Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive course outlines with consistent assessment information
- communicating assessment policies and procedures, and information on qualifications to the various sectors of the school community.

Napier Girls' High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing assessment information to staff, students and parents using a variety of easy to access digital and physical formats
- sharing all NZQA communications with staff, while directing specific information to those most concerned
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements
- the Principal's Nominee holding meetings with Year groups to brief them about specific assessment processes and procedures, such as pre-external examination assemblies to discuss examination rules and the derived grade process
- holding NCEA information evenings for Year 10 students and their parents, and separate meetings for extension classes to discuss their assessment programmes.

Staff and students feel well informed about assessment processes Staff and students interviewed during the review felt confident about, and demonstrated a good understanding of, the school's assessment processes. Both groups acknowledged the part played by the Principal's Nominee in developing this understanding through her regular and clear communication of assessment information.

Staff and student handbooks require review There are aspects of both the staff and student handbooks that require updating to ensure they are still relevant. This includes the information provided on the NCEA qualifications, University Entrance, breaches of the rules, derived grades and the section on frequently asked questions on resubmission and further assessment opportunities. The school could consider providing links to the NZQA website as a way of keeping much of this information up-to-date and accurate.

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:

- review the assessment information it provides staff and students to ensure it is relevant, up-to-date and accurate.