

Managing National Assessment Report

Hastings Boys' High School

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Hastings 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 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 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 each 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
- *Hastings Boys' High School NCEA Student Handbook 2018*
- *Hastings Boys' High School Policy on Moderation and Assessment National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and NCEA 2018 (Staff Handbook)*
- 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 of Department for English, Māori, Mathematics, Physical Education and Technology, the Teachers in Charge of Gateway and Food and Nutrition, and the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee, two Deputy Principals 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

Hastings Boys' High School

6 June 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

Hastings Boys' High School's focus is on supporting and enhancing student achievement. It has programmes and courses in place to meet the assessment needs of students on both academic and vocational pathways. School assessment processes are well managed and allow credible assessment for national qualifications.

Internal moderation is an embedded process within departments. Senior management have supported staff to find suitable verifiers, where there is no appropriate person within the school. Staff have effectively engaged with NZQA's new External Moderation Application, actively suggesting appropriate standards for review.

Data is well managed. Submitted results are accurate and reported against the correct provider codes. Achievement data is effectively analysed to allow the setting of strategic goals, review course and programme design and the focussed-tracking of student progress to identify extension, as well as at-risk, students.

Information on assessment processes is communicated to the school community in a range of formats and languages to facilitate the development of a common understanding.

Areas for improvement

The school's external moderation response process requires staff to indicate how they will address issues identified by moderators. However, it lacks the monitoring component to ensure planned actions are completed in a timely manner and outcomes are evaluated. Adding this in a way that is transparent to all users will ensure senior management can be confident identified issues are appropriately addressed.

The students interviewed during this review reported inconsistent use of the resubmission process by staff. Resubmission should not be offered to all, not be student driven, or a planned part of the assessment process. It is important that staff use this process in a manner that is fair to all students and meets the requirements of the Assessment Rules. Senior management have agreed to clarify the requirements for resubmission with staff.

The school is now collecting evidence about students that could be used to make applications for special assessment conditions. While holding appropriate evidence, it has yet to make applications for these students. Not making these applications means that students who may be eligible are unable to use conditions that could reduce barriers to their achievement. Giving the Special Education Needs Coordinator the appropriate online access to make applications would assist the school to ensure these are made in a timely manner.

Staff understanding of the moderation verification process requires strengthening. The selection of student work for verification should be strategic and purposeful around grade boundaries or where a grade needs review. Discussions held during the process assist in the ongoing and collective understanding of the standard and should be documented as a reference for future grade decisions.

Although the staff handbook has been modified to align it with information presented in the student handbook, it contains information and links that are out of date. Updating the handbook will ensure it provides staff with not just appropriate, but current information.

Agreed action

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

- monitor actions planned in response to external moderation to ensure they are completed in a timely manner and their effectiveness is evaluated
- clarify the requirements for resubmission opportunities with all staff
- ensure special assessment conditions applications are timely
- review moderation verification processes with staff including:
 - the strategic selection of student work
 - documenting verification discussions
- update the staff handbook.

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6 August 2018

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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 2vi, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 22-23 April 2015 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed most of the action items from the 2015 report. Staff now:

- record when students are given an extension to an assessment due date and these are monitored by year level deans
- submit copies of all Internal Moderation Cover Sheets to the Principal's Nominee, who checks these against course outlines and then reviews them for completeness
- report results against correct provider codes.

Further action is still required on the items from the 2015 review relating to special assessment conditions and staff documentation. These are discussed in the relevant sections of this report

Response to external moderation outcomes The school's external moderation response process allows staff to provide feedback to the Principal's Nominee on any actions they plan or support they require to address issues identified by moderators. The same process is applied to moderation from all standard setting bodies. Staff responses are recorded on the school's *External Moderation Response Sheet*. What the response process lacks is a monitoring component to ensure that planned actions are completed in a timely manner and the effectiveness of these is evaluated. This was confirmed by staff. Adding a section to the existing response sheet would ensure the entire process is transparent to users.

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)

Developing review processes to evaluate school-wide assessment practice is something the school should consider. There is presently no regular review to identify areas for ongoing improvement, although issues that arise are generally dealt with effectively and lead to improved outcomes for students.

Staff supported to find suitable verifiers Senior management have used contacts within other similar schools to help staff find suitable grade verifiers where there is no appropriate person within the school. This has been particularly useful for single-teacher subjects, although some larger subject areas have also taken advantage of the opportunities offered to confirm their understanding of specific standards. Heads of Departments reported this has been particularly useful where external moderation has highlighted specific issues.

Academic support more focussed The school has reviewed how it supports students to achieve to their potential, with opportunities being offered for both extension and at-risk students. Those aiming for endorsements are offered opportunities to extend the application of their knowledge during morning tutorials, while departments provide subject-specific tutoring during the after-school Catch-Up Programme.

Use of the estimated grade function of the school's student management system has allowed Deans to track student achievement more effectively, allowing them to identify students at risk of not meeting qualification requirements and provide them with this targeted support.

Course credit totals reduced The school has encouraged staff to review the number of credits offered in courses. A minimum of 16 credits is suggested, with entries for external standards being based upon individual student needs and ability.

Agreed action

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

- monitor actions planned in response to external moderation to ensure they are completed in a timely manner and their effectiveness is evaluated.

For consideration

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

- developing review processes to evaluate school-wide assessment practice.

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)

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

- broadening the range of assessment opportunities available by:
 - extending the range of standards the school has consent to assess
 - reintroducing a Year 11 Media Studies course based upon student request
 - engaging with external providers to support the STAR and Gateway programmes
- developing vocationally focussed Pathways programmes at Year 12 that combine a core of school-based courses in English, Mathematics and Physical Education with Trade Academies at a local tertiary provider
- using a range of physical and digital methods, including portfolios and video recording, to collect evidence of achievement during assessment
- assessing those identified as requiring additional support against Work and Study Skills literacy and numeracy standards
- providing on-going feedback and feedforward information to support students to present their best evidence of achievement.

Hastings Boys' 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 assessment, and student requests for extensions of assessment due dates
- investigating and resolving appeals and potential breaches of assessment rules
- 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
- 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.

Clarify the resubmission process The students interviewed reported inconsistent teacher practice and understanding of the resubmission process. Resubmission may be offered at the teacher's discretion if they judge a student can identify and correct a minor error or omission in their work that would improve their grade. The teacher must not provide information that would assist the student to identify the error. Resubmission should not be offered to all, not be student driven, or a planned part of the assessment process. The school has agreed to clarify the resubmission process with staff. Use of NZQA's resubmission *Mythbuster* may assist with this.

Ensure special assessment conditions applications are timely The school agreed during the 2015 Managing National Assessment review to develop systems to collect appropriate data to support applications for special assessment conditions. While this review identified that the school is collecting appropriate evidence, it is not using this information to make applications. School documentation still requires, and past school practice has relied upon, reports from suitably qualified, independent assessors to support applications. This creates possible inequity of access.

The Special Education Needs Coordinator is responsible for collecting evidence on potentially eligible students but does not have the required access to make online applications. At the time of this review, the school had just rolled-over the application for a student granted special assessment conditions in 2017. It had not started the applications for five other students it has identified and tested. At this stage of the year, these students will have been assessed against a number of standards already.

The school must ensure that special assessment conditions applications are made to NZQA in a timely manner so that students do not miss out on the use of conditions that could reduce barriers to their achievement.

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 requirements for resubmission opportunities with all staff
- ensure special assessment conditions applications are timely.

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)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify selected sample of student work, including experts external to the school for single teacher subjects
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- having the same process for all standards, irrespective of the standard-setting body.

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

- suggesting appropriate standards for inclusion in the moderation plan
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Random Selection process being changed The Principal's Nominee is changing the process he uses to randomly select samples of student work for external moderation. The previous system met NZQA requirements but was cumbersome. Using the random sampling process available through the student management system will save time and lists can be easily printed for monitoring purposes.

Strengthen staff understanding of the verification process Clarifying with teachers purposeful and sufficient selection of student work, along with expectations for documenting the process, will improve the effectiveness of internal moderation. The student work selected for verification should be strategically selected. This means selecting examples at a grade boundary as well as any grades that the assessor wants feedback on. This review identified that some staff are of the belief that a set number of pieces of student work need to be verified, and/or that internal moderation involves verifying a random sample of student work.

Documenting the verification discussion around borderline samples and indicating the final grade awarded should also be reinforced. This serves as a valuable reference for subsequent years as the reasons given for the result assist the ongoing and collective understanding of the national standard.

NZQA recommends that a sufficient sample of student work is selected for verification to ensure the assessor is confident that the grades awarded are consistent with the standard. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. 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. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process.

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:

- review verification processes with staff including:
 - the strategic selection of student work
 - documenting verification discussions.

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)

Hastings Boys' High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting strategic school and department goals for student achievement based upon comparative analysis
 - staff analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme design
 - year-level staff assisting with the identification of at-risk students and provision of appropriate additional support for them
 - Deans and Form Teachers regularly reporting to parents on the progress of at-risk students.

The findings of this Managing National Assessment review support the 2016 Education Review Office report observations that “data is very well analysed and used to support the specific needs of students” and that “sound systems and processes are in place to identify students who require extra support”.

Hastings Boys' High School effectively:

- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - the timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - using the Key Indicators and data submission reports to identify and resolve data submission errors
 - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding.
 - providing an online portal to the school's student management system so that students can check the accuracy of their achievement data and progress towards qualifications
 - ensuring all entries have a result reported for them by the final submission date
 - submitting fees paid and financial assistance applications on time.

Assist students to use their NZQA Learner login The number of students that registered and used their NZQA Learner login has declined over the last three years. The school noted that students tend to use the online portal to the student management system to check their results as the information it contains is more current. This observation was supported by the students interviewed. Only one of the three students interviewed had registered and he had not used his login recently. However, they collectively expressed a desire for more help with using their logins.

Through their Learner login students can check the accuracy of their results reported to NZQA, request reviews or reconsiderations for external examination papers or order copies of their Record of Achievement and/or qualification certificates. None of this is available through the student management system. The school should

consider how it can assist students to register for and use their Learner login effectively.

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 about assessment.
(CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))*

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

- ensuring students receive outlines, with assessment information, for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policies and procedures to the school community.

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

- using a range of physical and digital formats to communicate information to the school community, including a School App for mobile devices
- providing parents and students with information on NCEA qualifications and assessment processes at year level interview evenings, including NZQA's *NCEA Guide* in Te Reo Māori and a variety of Pasifika languages
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes.

Staff handbook requires updating While the information in the staff and student handbooks is now mostly aligned, the staff handbook still contains information that is out of date, including:

- reference to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) rather than the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)
- links to expired NZQA circulars
- External Moderation Coversheets. These are no longer required as all moderation is conducted through the online application.

Removing the outdated information and replacing it with links to the relevant pages on the NZQA website will ensure that the handbook remains current and provides staff with appropriate information.

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.