

Managing National Assessment Report

Dannevirke High School

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Dannevirke 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
- *Dannevirke High School 2017 Analysis of Variance*
- *Dannevirke High School Policy and Procedures for Assessment of National Qualifications (Staff Handbook)*
- *Dannevirke High School Senior School Handbook 2018 Information for Parents and Students Year 11,12 and 13.*

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Curriculum Leaders for Arts, English, Mathematics, Physical Education and Health, Science, and Technology.

There was a report-back session with the Principal's Nominee and Deputy 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. Feedback was later provided over the phone to the Principal who was away on the day of the review.

SUMMARY

Dannevirke High School

20 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

Dannevirke High School has effective, well managed, assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school uses its internal review processes to identify where it can improve assessment processes and practice. Student feedback is often used to help inform these reviews.

Student needs are met through a range of academic and vocational assessment pathways. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards the school does not have the capacity to deliver. Identified students are provided with approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported.

Internal moderation is an embedded process within curriculum areas and is effectively monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Staff have been provided with appropriate access to NZQA's External Moderation Application and encouraged to assist with the submission and report review processes.

School processes ensure timely and accurate reporting of assessment data. This data is made available through the school's student management system so that staff, students and parents can track individual academic progress. It enables students at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements to be identified and appropriate support to be planned for them. Annual analysis of NCEA data enables the school and curriculum areas to set strategic academic goals, and informs course and programme design.

The school effectively communicates its assessment processes and NCEA information to staff, students and parents. Staff demonstrate a common understanding of assessment best practice. Development of this is supported by senior management with opportunities to share and discuss new initiatives and an induction process new staff.

Areas for improvement

The school needs to ensure that all actions planned by staff in response to external moderation reports are monitored to ensure they occur in a timely manner, are appropriately evaluated and recorded.

Because external moderation reports from some standard-setting bodies go directly to assessing staff, there is the potential that not all moderation is covered by the school's response process. The school needs to ensure that the same process is used for all issues identified in external moderation reports.

The staff assessment handbook contains information that is out of date. This outdated information needs to be removed and replaced with either current material or links to the appropriate pages on the NZQA website. The latter option will ensure information remains up-to-date.

Agreed action

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

- staff response to external moderation occurs in a timely manner and is appropriately evaluated and recorded
- the same external moderation response process is used regardless of the standard-setting body
- the staff handbook is effectively reviewed to ensure information is up-to-date.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

17 August 2018

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 20-21 May 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

Four of the seven action items from the 2015 review have been fully addressed. As a result:

- Curriculum Leaders annually review assessment processes within their curriculum area against school requirements to identify where improvements could be made
- the special education needs coordinator tests identified students to collect evidence to support applications for special assessment conditions
- staff purposefully select student work for verification
- consistent assessment information is provided in staff and student handbooks.

Further action needs to be taken on three partially addressed items, including Learner login registration, external moderation monitoring processes, and including information in the staff handbook. These actions are discussed in later sections of the report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school agreed in the 2015 Managing National Assessment report to review the system for recording completion of staff responses to external moderation. The school's response now requires Curriculum Leaders, with assistance from the assessing teacher, to comment on what will be done to enhance assessment processes for those standards with identified issues. It also includes a monitoring section to be used by the Principal's Nominee to record that staff actions are completed.

Staff interviewed noted that completion of planned actions was normally checked. However, when this happened or how effective it was, are not always recorded on the response form. Without this final step senior management have no record that these actions have been completed before the standards are assessed again, or that their effectiveness has been evaluated.

While most reports from external moderation are seen by the Principal's Nominee, some reports from industry training organisations are sent directly to the assessing teacher, so may miss being included in the school's external moderation response process. A system needs to be developed to ensure the Principal's Nominee gets copies of every moderation report from all standard-setting bodies to ensure that staff are required to respond to any identified issues.

The school has agreed to ensure that the same response process is used for all moderation, and that staff actions occur in a timely manner and are appropriately evaluated and recorded.

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)

Dannevirke High School is effectively using its internal review processes to identify improvements to processes and practice in assessment and moderation.

Effective Mentoring Classes Student feedback has been used to review how, and what, assessment information and support is provided in Mentoring Classes. Mentor teachers are now expected to:

- educate students about qualification requirements and help them track their progress towards meeting these
- work with the Academic Dean and teachers to arrange appropriate support, where needed
- assist students to register for their NZQA Learner login.

Changing school examination processes Following feedback from a student survey indicating a lack of confidence when facing external examinations, the school has made changes to how it organises its practice examinations. Students are no longer given study leave and are not permitted to leave examinations early.

The school noted that, based on student response to practice examination questions, these changes appear to have encouraged students to attempt more questions and better plan their answers. They have also reduced attendance issues.

Trialling end-of-assessment analysis The school now asks staff to analyse the effectiveness of each assessment as soon as it is completed. It is expected that the immediacy of the new system will allow staff to identify where changes might be needed for each standard assessed, and to plan for these more effectively. Normal practice had been to wait until the end of the year or beginning of the following year. Curriculum Leaders will still be expected to provide the Board of Trustees with an annual report on any variance with expected outcomes. The school is providing professional development in using data to support this change.

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:

- staff response to external moderation occurs in a timely manner and is appropriately evaluated and recorded
- the same external moderation response process is used regardless of the standard-setting body.

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)

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

- extending the range of assessment opportunities available, both academic and vocational, through:
 - the WELCOM Video Learning Network
 - the introduction of new courses, including Employment Skills and History at Levels 1 and 2
 - dual enrolment with Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu for courses the school is unable to provide
 - Star and Gateway programmes, and Trade Academies organised by regional tertiary providers.
- differentiating assessment programmes according to student need
- staff using a range of methods during assessment to collect physical and/or digital evidence of achievement
- engaging with NZQA digital assessment trials
- identifying and applying for special assessment conditions for those potentially eligible
- ensuring that staff are well informed of those with special assessment condition entitlements and providing appropriate support, as required.

Dannevirke 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
- 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
- assisting with the management of the Examination Centre.

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)

Dannevirke High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- having all assessment materials critiqued 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
- requiring staff to document the steps of their moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- the Principal's Nominee collecting and checking copies of all cover sheets to monitor teachers' internal moderation processes.

Dannevirke High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- providing staff with appropriate access to the NZQA External Moderation Application to assist with the submission process, as well as viewing and querying moderation reports
- encouraging staff to submit assessment material digitally
- storing assessment materials securely so they are available, if required, for external moderation.

Develop a school system to securely store digital assessment material Many of the staff interviewed have developed their own storage processes for assessment material collected digitally. While secure, this material cannot be accessed by the school unless shared by the teacher. As a next step the school should develop a storage system, and digital management protocols for its use, to ensure all digitally produced assessment material can be accessed and is available, if required, for external moderation.

Encourage staff to strategically request standards for moderation The NZQA External Moderation process allows the school to annually propose standards for inclusion on the school's moderation plan. To date, the school has put forward very few standards for inclusion. 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
- currently assessed standards are chosen instead of those no longer assessed
- all assessed standards are included in the moderation cycle.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency Teachers assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when having samples of their judgements verified. However most of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than this. The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on sufficient verification by the strategic selection of student work.

Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. 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.

For consideration

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

- developing a storage system to ensure school access to all digitally produced assessment material
- encouraging staff to strategically request standards for moderation.

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)

Dannevirke High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - setting school wide and curriculum area strategic goals based upon comparative analysis of achievement data
 - teachers analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year course or programme design
 - the Academic Dean, mentor teachers, parents and students using the student management system to track academic achievement
 - regular meetings where all staff review student progress to identify students at risk of not meeting qualification requirements and consider support options
 - students colouring a credit "brick wall" to visually track their own progress towards meeting qualification requirements.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - checking for, and where necessary, correcting errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - ensuring all entries either have a result reported for them by the final submission date or are withdrawn, if appropriate
 - having students take ownership of their results by signing-off on the accuracy of their external entries and internal grades
 - Curriculum Leaders checking and providing senior management with an attestation confirming that grades have been entered correctly
 - 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.

External entry process reviewed to ensure appropriate entries made on time

The school changed its student management system in 2016. Staff unfamiliarity with this meant that external entries for some courses were not made by the key date in 2017. Consequently, senior management have instituted checks to ensure that appropriate entries are made for students and late entries will be minimised in future.

Assisting students to use their NZQA Learner login The school is currently reviewing its processes to better assist students to register. When registered, 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. The number of the students registering, and using, their NZQA Learner login has declined recently. Only one of the three students interviewed had registered. The school expects the changes instituted in Mentoring Classes will reverse this trend

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 NZQA 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))

Dannevirke 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.

Dannevirke High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing an "App" for mobile devices that gives students and parents direct access to the school's student management system
- using NZQA external examination rules for the school's practice examinations
- supporting teachers new to the school with an induction process that includes NCEA assessment and moderation procedures
- sharing specific NZQA communications with those staff most concerned
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities during Curriculum Leader and staff meetings to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements.

Staff handbook requires updating Outdated information in the staff handbook needs to be removed and replaced with current material.

The handbook has been updated to include information on moderation processes as agreed during the 2015 Managing National Assessment review. However, other information 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
- information and coversheets for external moderation that are no longer current due to the move to an online process.

One way of ensuring the handbook stays current and provides staff with appropriate up-to-date information is this through links to relevant pages on the NZQA website.

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 ensure:

- the staff handbook is effectively reviewed to ensure information is up-to-date.