

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Chilton St James School**

**August 2017**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Chilton St James 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
- *Chilton St James School NCEA Policy and Procedures December 2016* (Staff Handbook)
- *Chilton St James School NZQA Student Policy 2017* (Student Handbook)
- *Chilton St James Parent Handbook*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Managers met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Department for English, Languages, Science and Social Studies.

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

## Chilton St James School

23 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 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

Chilton St James school demonstrates the capacity to undertake its own review and evaluation of the effectiveness of their NZQA assessment practices and procedures. A newly appointed Principal's Nominee has shown strong leadership of self-review, which has led to greater consistency in the application of assessment processes, improvements to internal moderation practices and a change in approach to extending students to improve their assessment outcomes.

Assessment processes support student achievement. Students are guided towards appropriate pathways within the subjects the school offers. Assessment processes are clear and students feel they are applied consistently. Students who require special assessment conditions are identified, applications made, and the necessary support is available.

Internal moderation processes are in place and teachers indicate completion by recording the process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and submitting it to the Principal's Nominee. The creation and follow up of effective action plans in response to external moderation is embedded practice.

Data management and use support student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Achievement data is analysed to review student achievement, and to identify and intervene where students are at risk of not achieving their assessment goals.

The school has communications that help staff, students and caregivers to gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

### Areas for improvement

The monitoring of internal moderation should be made more robust. A physical check on department processes by the Principal's Nominee and an end-of-year Heads of Department attestation that moderation has been completed for all standards assessed would provide senior management with confidence in the quality assurance of all results.

Processes are in place so that students and staff check the accuracy of results reported to NZQA, but the checks also need to cover withdrawing internal entries. The school needs to ensure that all internal entries to NZQA have a result reported or are withdrawn if the student has not had an adequate opportunity to be assessed.

This would mean that data sent reflects the assessment undertaken and ensures that students have an accurate assessment programme recorded to assist them with tracking their progress.

Some departments re-mark the work being sent for external moderation which means it is not representative of the outcomes of the department's internal verification process. It is important that departments follow the correct process so the outcomes of external moderation are accurate, meet NZQA requirements and can support the school in their review processes.

Although all departments provide course outlines to students, some do not contain the information as required by the school. Some are missing information such as if a standard has a further assessment opportunity or if standards count for literacy and numeracy. Without this clarity, students may potentially miss achievement opportunities.

NCEA provides a flexible assessment system. The school has some differentiation of assessment and use of outside providers, but could consider how aspects such as these could be further used to individualise assessment to meet student need and maximise their achievement outcomes.

### **Agreed action**

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

- strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation
- ensure work selected for external moderation is not re-marked before submission
- ensure that all internal entries made to NZQA have a corresponding result attached or are withdrawn if there has not been an adequate opportunity to be assessed.

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6 December 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 2 August 2013 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no action items from the previous Managing National Assessment Report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation feedback. Reports show there are no departments with widespread or ongoing concerns. There was a drop in overall agreement rates last year, but the school is confident that the improvements made to internal moderation processes will improve this year's external moderation outcomes.

Departments reflect on each moderation report and complete a response to external moderation form if there is an issue to respond to. The Principal's Nominee looks at any patterns of issues for the department and agrees on an action plan. She also checks on the completion of the required actions and informs the Principal of any issues and progress. The outcomes of external moderation are also discussed by the Principal with Heads of Department as part of the annual review process in Term 1.

### 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 appointed a new Principal's Nominee in 2016. She has a background and a vision that means she is well placed to lead internal review. She has reviewed all NCEA related systems and documentation, and considered how to best support student achievement. She found some areas of poor assessment practice and that documentation was no longer fit for purpose. To help ensure credible assessment the Principals Nominee has:

- created a new assessment policy and supporting documentation
- rewritten staff, student and parent handbooks
- ensured staff have clear and consistent processes to follow
- instigated whole school dialogue
- encouraged staff to seek clarification from her as appropriate
- supported departments who had areas of poor practice.

The school has introduced an analysis of results against similar schools to assist in informing themselves about their students' level of achievement. They are encouraging an increased level of reflection by Heads of Department in their annual course review. One outcome has been a decision to extend students by working towards developing a deeper understanding rather than simply undertake assessment at a higher level. This aims to challenge students to gain endorsements

and create more coherent classes so staff can more easily focus on extending all students.

The school's self-review includes forward planning as well as responding to existing concerns and issues as they arise. Planned areas of future development include:

- creating a system to assure senior management that all staff are following school processes
- comparison of internal and external assessment results to inform teaching and assessment
- continuing to improve the level of self-reflection as currently there are varying levels of staff engagement
- investigating reducing the number of credits in a course to improve assessment outcomes for students
- improving the tracking of achievement progress for International students
- reviewing the newly created documentation from staff and student feedback, and external review.

**No action required**

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews 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 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)*

### **Chilton St James School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- guiding students to follow a coherent pathway within the courses the school is able to offer
- providing an online assessment calendar so staff can manage periods of heavy assessment load for students
- ensuring that students who need special assessment conditions are identified, staff are well informed of student entitlements, and appropriate assistance is readily available
- establishing new courses such as Chinese and Psychology to continue developments made in the junior curriculum and to engage students by offering new areas of learning and assessment.

### **Chilton St James School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Ensuring appropriate evidence is available for special assessment conditions applications** The school uses independent assessor reports to substantiate need for special assessment conditions. They alleviate the financial barrier of using independent assessor reports by subsidising the cost of the assessment where required. These independent reports also give the student and school in-depth understanding of issues and ideas for possible effective support.

**Using the flexibility of NCEA to meet student assessment need** Increasing the differentiation of assessment and wider use of outside providers could better meet students' assessment needs.

Increasing the individualisation of students' entries could help maximise their assessment outcomes. There is some flexibility with entries for specific individuals, particularly those who have commitments that lead to absence, such as elite athletes. Some departments modify the standards to be assessed in a course from their knowledge of the cohort.

Using a wider range of outside providers could complement the courses the school offers by expanding the possible pathways available to students. A small number of

students are occasionally assessed through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu/The Correspondence School.

**For consideration**

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider:

- using the flexibility of NCEA to meet student need to maximise assessment outcomes for all.

## 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)*

### **Chilton St James School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard, with some focusing on purposeful selection at grade boundaries
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- supporting staff to find appropriate verifiers.

### **Chilton St James School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate changes to standards in the moderation plan
- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring student work is readily available for external moderation by being adequately stored and the Principal's Nominee knowing the location of the materials.

**Strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation** Senior management needs assurance that every internally assessed standard has been internally moderated. As discussed, a robust and manageable ongoing system could be a physical check by the Principal's Nominee of the moderation process in departments for a sample of standards, and an end of year attestation by Heads of Department. This would reconcile documentation with actual practice and continue to acknowledge strong practice and identify weaknesses. It would also emphasise the responsibility Heads of Department have in monitoring internal moderation. Currently, completed internal moderation cover sheets are submitted to the Principal's Nominee and she follows up any concerns she has. Some Heads of Department already check on the completion of internal moderation within their department.

**Clarify with departments that the work randomly selected for external moderation must not be re-marked before submission** The grades awarded for student work sent for external moderation must be representative of the outcomes of the department's internal verification process. To ensure this, the randomly selected work cannot undergo any extra marking or verification process. Most departments were following a correct process, but the process must be followed school-wide. In addition to complying with NZQA requirements, this change will reduce workload for teachers.

**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:

- strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation
- ensure work selected for external moderation is not re-marked before submission.

## 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)*

### **Chilton St James School effectively:**

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - analysing results longitudinally to improve teaching and learning
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
  - reporting Not Achieved results, as appropriate
  - having multiple student, teacher and Principal's Nominee checks to ensure reported results are accurate
  - using the NZQA key indicators to identify and resolve data errors.

**Student progress is effectively tracked and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes** Students are encouraged to set aspirational goals. Those who are at risk of not achieving these, or achieving to their potential are identified and have interventions put in place as necessary. Deans and tutors identify these learners and interventions such as parental and teacher involvement or use of a peer mentor are put in place to help improve their assessment outcomes.

**Ensure all internal entries are withdrawn if a result is not recorded** The school needs to ensure that all internal entries to NZQA have a result reported, or are withdrawn if the student has not had an adequate opportunity to be assessed, so that data sent reflects the assessment undertaken. This will further strengthen the current checking of the accuracy of entries and results and ensure that students have an accurate assessment programme recorded to assist them with tracking their progress. In 2016, four percent of internally assessed Achievement Standard entries were reported to NZQA without a corresponding result attached. The majority of those entries were from two subject areas. This means there is the potential for some student achievement to have gone unreported, which could have an impact on the qualifications achievement.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that all internal entries made to NZQA have a corresponding result attached or are withdrawn if there has not been an adequate opportunity to be assessed.

## 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)*

### **Chilton St James School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive course outlines
- communicating annually to both students and parents about NZQA fees and financial assistance
- actively encouraging use of the NZQA Learner login for students to monitor achievement and progress towards qualifications
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

### **Chilton St James School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- discussing all aspects of NCEA with Year 10 students in Health classes before most encounter assessment for NCEA
- providing staff, student and parents with comprehensive NCEA assessment handbooks
- annually briefing students in tailored year level meetings about assessment policy and procedures.

**Students interviewed showed a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures** Students could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently.

**Information included in course outlines is inconsistent** Communication with students could be improved with consistent information in course outlines, as required by school policy and noted in the staff handbook. Some course outlines did not include information on further assessment opportunities, if standards counted for numeracy or literacy, and the standard's version. Consistent information would help ensure that students are treated equitably and do not miss opportunities to gain a qualification.

### **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:

- developing a process to ensure course outlines follow the school guidelines and provide consistent information.