

Managing National Assessment Report

Newlands College

May 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Newlands College:

- 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
- *Staff Handbook, Newlands College 2018*
- *NCEA Student Information, Newlands College 2018* (school website)
- *Newlands College Policy – POL 1.1.3 Curriculum*, (Board of Trustees Policy 2014)
- 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 Faculty for English, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Sciences.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and three Deputy Principals 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

Newlands College

15 May 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

Newlands College has sound assessment practices ensuring that results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible. The school delivers programmes and courses that meet the learning needs of a diverse range of students.

Assessment practice was consistent across faculties participating in the review and was evident in the understanding students displayed about school procedures. Faculties have improved the flexibility of their assessment practice since the previous review. This has been achieved through data review and analysis, and implementing changes as a result. Senior Management has effective processes for self-review, which informs the school's strategic goals and the effectiveness of their NCEA assessment practices. Shared ownership of self-review is developing throughout the school to evaluate courses and meet achievement related strategic goals.

Improving assessment outcomes for boys is a strategic goal of the school. Many faculties have aligned their goals to this and modified or created new courses to meet them. A professional learning leader has been appointed with responsibility for boys' achievement and teachers have been provided with professional development to improve assessment outcomes. Student progress is tracked and monitored to support NCEA qualification achievement. Data analysis is showing that these changes are having a positive impact on boys' achievement.

Internal moderation practice is effectively managed school-wide. Staff interviewed demonstrated a clear understanding of the school's moderation processes and could readily provide documented evidence that internal moderation occurs. External moderation outcomes are addressed by Heads of Faculty who complete an action plan to resolve issues identified by moderators and report this to Senior Management in the Faculty Annual Report.

Faculties reflect on student achievement to inform design and evaluate the effectiveness of their courses. This is also reported in the Faculty Annual Report. The Principal's Nominee has effective data management processes to ensure accurate entries and results are reported to NZQA.

The school uses many methods to inform students and the community about NCEA related matters, including school assemblies, parent information evenings, whānau hui, and access to the school student management system through the parental

portal. Students who participated in the review were knowledgeable about how to achieve an NCEA qualification and school assessment policy and processes.

NCEA assessment practice is effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal-Curriculum and Assessment. They are supported in their work by the Principal and all the senior management team, who work collaboratively to help ensure students achieve.

Areas for improvement

The review of school documentation found some aspects of assessment policy and procedures to be outdated or missing. School documentation should be reviewed and updated annually to reflect current practice. Faculty and student documentation for assessment policy and procedures should align with school documentation.

Agreed action

The school agreed that an action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- review and update documentation to reflect current practice.

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5 July 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 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 13 May 2015 Managing National Assessment Report There were no items requiring action from the 2015 report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a sound external moderation history with very high levels of agreement of assessor judgements between teachers and NZQA moderators. Heads of Faculty create action plans in response to moderation outcomes, with any reports with a low agreement rate immediately followed up with them and the Deputy Principal for Curriculum. All Heads of Faculty are required to report on their responses and actions to external moderation feedback in the Faculty Annual Report, assuring Senior Management that all results have been quality assured and issues addressed.

Internal review

Evidence for the school is 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)

Senior management has effective systems and processes to monitor and review NCEA assessment practices and how they impact on student achievement progress. Shared ownership of self-review is developing throughout the school to inform initiatives which ensure student assessment needs are well met and supported. These include:

- effective data analysis to create schoolwide Strategic Goals to lift assessment outcomes and faculties aligning their goals to meet them. This is discussed more detail further in the report
- limiting the number of credits offered in courses to better manage student stress from assessment workload
- improving the flexibility of assessment practice in courses to better meet the needs of students
- providing teachers with professional development on assessment for boys to improve assessment outcomes for them
- introducing a Social Studies Hub with the aim of increasing student choice and engagement in order to lift assessment outcomes in social sciences
- introducing courses and programmes to meet the diverse background of their students.

Strategic Goal to lift achievement for boys The school has a Strategic Goal to lift the achievement of boys to equal that of girls and many faculties have aligned their goals with this. Boys potentially requiring extra support for NCEA are identified using data gathered during Years 9 and 10. The appointment of a professional learning leader has supported teachers with professional development and learning about

using alternative methods to written assessments, such as using oral evidence or digital assessment, to better meet the needs of boys. An example of this practice is the new Social Studies Hub, which offers several social sciences subjects taught through modular and thematic approaches, incorporating the various assessment methods. The school's analysis of this initiative indicates that this is having a positive impact on student achievement, particularly for low achieving boys.

These initiatives reflect a strategic focus on schoolwide improvement evidenced in consistent practice and management structures that encourages all teachers to participate in change processes. The school's process for identifying the strategic goal to lift achievement for boys illustrates its ability for self-review to effect strategic change.

No action required

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

Newlands College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using a range of methods during assessment to gather evidence of achievement
- providing differentiated assessment programmes within courses and across classes in the same subject and, in some subjects, offering optional standards
- scaffolding and contextualising assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage student interest
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against individual standards related to career pathways.

Newlands College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals
- ensuring derived grades are based on valid, authentic and standard specific evidence
- managing student workloads by limiting the number of credits offered per course
- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have not submitted work
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Flexible assessment practices meeting student needs Since the previous review, flexibility in assessment practice has improved and better meets student needs. Faculties have managed this through various methods, such as students and teachers co-constructing courses to determine the contexts for the assessments and the standards to be undertaken, and offering optional standards for extending students. Students in some courses can negotiate timelines for deadlines so that they are assessed when ready. All faculties which participated in the review demonstrated flexible assessment programmes to meet student needs.

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)

Newlands College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- documenting the internal moderation process by using a standard *internal moderation cover sheet*
- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- staff reviewing standard clarifications, and using NZQA and school exemplars to improve assessor judgements
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- requiring Heads of Faculty to monitor that internal moderation is happening in their faculty and ensure it is completed and documented for all standards assessed prior to reporting results to NZQA
- keeping benchmark exemplars and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions
- Senior Management Team reviewing moderation processes for each faculty during their triennial faculty review cycle.

Newlands College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- Heads of Faculty creating and documenting action plans in response to external moderation feedback, discussing these where required with the Deputy Principal i/c Curriculum and Assessment, and monitoring that this is completed.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency Subject Areas assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. Although all areas are doing this, there are some instances where more samples of student work are being verified than what may be necessary to determine consistency between the standard and assessor decisions. Selecting student work for verification should be strategic.

It would be timely for the school to revisit with staff the guidelines for verifying assessor judgements through strategic selection.

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.

No action required

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

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)

Newlands College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - informing assessment programme design so that the standards offered match student strengths and interests
 - identifying Year 9 and 10 students who need additional literacy and numeracy support to access Level 1 when in Year 11
 - identifying students at risk of not achieving a NCEA qualification and providing appropriate support
 - enabling Deans to track, monitor and mentor students in their progress toward NCEA qualifications and personal goals
 - collecting school-based data to support applications for students identified as needing special assessment conditions, and providing appropriate support
 - annually report to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions.

- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reconciling results from external providers with which they hold a current Memorandum of Understanding, to ensure results are reported with the correct provider codes
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
 - ensuring all students attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly
 - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system, the NZQA learner login and NCEA app
 - ensuring a low number of late entries for external examinations.

Strategic goals informed through data analysis Data analysis is informing evidence-based changes to assessment practice to improve achievement outcomes. The Faculty Annual Report, produced for the Principal and Board of Trustees, forms the basis for the school's Strategic and Faculty Goals. Current goals are to lift academic achievement, particularly around Level 1 literacy, achievement for boys, and certificate endorsements. Faculties are creating or modifying programmes to achieve these set goals. For example, in 2016 faculties reviewed the number of credits offered in their courses and the balance of credits between internal and external assessments to determine the optimum number and most appropriate standards to offer to students.

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 for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Newlands College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who are eligible
- supporting new teachers to the school to understand school assessment policy and procedures through an induction programme.

Newlands College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- holding student assemblies to inform them of school assessment policies and procedures and how to gain a NCEA qualification
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through targeted evening meetings, such as Whānau hui.

Documentation should be reviewed annually To reflect current practice, school documentation should be reviewed and updated annually. In the staff handbook, the following assessment practices need updating:

- derived and emergency grade requirements, and replacement of the former terminology "compassionate consideration"
- fee structure for NCEA entries and scholarship
- use of school-based evidence for identifying students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and providing the conditions for internal assessments
- breaches of the rules of assessment process, including the investigation process
- external moderation guidelines for the storage of material.

Assessment policy and procedures in faculty and student documentation should also be reviewed and updated to align with the school's.

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 and update documentation to reflect current practice.