

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Wellington East Girls' College**

**September 2018**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Wellington East Girls' 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
- *Student Assessment Information Booklet, Wellington East Girls' College 2018*
- *Teacher Assessment Handbook for National Qualifications, Wellington East Girls' College 2018*
- *Curriculum and Assessment Handbook (under review), Wellington East Girls' College 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Heads of Department for:
  - Digital Technologies
  - English
  - Materials Technology
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education and Health
  - Science.

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

## Wellington East Girls' College

19 September 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

Wellington East Girls' 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.

The school has effective self-review processes to identify areas for improvement, which are readily actioned. The Curriculum and Assessment committee helps the Principal's Nominee to ensure that the school's assessment policies and procedures are followed across the school.

Student needs are met through well designed assessment programmes. The programmes are student-centred to ensure engagement and to improve achievement outcomes. The use of external providers extends assessment opportunities and pathways for students. Teachers and students demonstrated a good understanding of school policy and procedures.

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. A continuously high agreement rate between teacher and moderator judgements reflects the robustness of their internal moderation system.

Departments reflect on student achievement to inform design and evaluate the effectiveness of their courses. This is reported on annually to the Principal and Board of Trustees. 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. Students who participated in the review were knowledgeable about how to achieve an NCEA qualification and school assessment policy and processes.

### Areas for improvement

The process for responding to external moderation outcomes can be strengthened. Monitoring that action plans developed in response to external moderation reports have been completed, and then evaluating their effectiveness, will help to ensure ongoing improvement in assessment practice.

School documentation requires updating. The school must have written procedures for breaches of the rules of assessment that include the appeal and investigation process.

### **Agreed action**

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

- monitor the completion of action plans in response to external moderation outcomes
- update school documentation as outlined in this report to meet NZQA requirements.

Kay Wilson  
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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

22 November 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 the 16 October 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The two action items from the previous review have been addressed. These were to develop a digital assessment evidence policy, and to ensure consistent use of the Internal Moderation Coversheet across all departments.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The process for responding to external moderation outcomes can be strengthened. The completion of action plans in response to external moderation should be monitored. Currently, Heads of Department report action plans to the Principal's Nominee. However, these are not monitored to ensure that they have been completed and that the changes are evaluated for effectiveness. Monitoring will strengthen the moderation process by ensuring that ongoing improvement happens and it will help the school to maintain the high agreement rates between teacher and moderator judgements.

### 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)*

The school 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.

### Wellington East Girls' College has effective self-review processes and procedures to identify areas for on-going improvement by having:

- Senior Leadership Team meetings to create school goals and review progress towards meeting them
- subject teachers review courses using NCEA data and student voice, to identify gaps in meeting the needs of students
- Heads of Department reporting an annual department review of achievement outcomes and plans for improvement
- the Curriculum and Assessment committee annually auditing department assessment and moderation practices.

The school's digital assessment policy and practice has been strengthened. The Information Technology Committee reviewed this area following the previous Managing National Assessment report. Digital assessment guidelines for ensuring authenticity have been developed and put into practice, particularly through the school-wide use of Google Classroom. This is timely as the school increases its use of digital tools in assessment practice.

The school identified that a system was required for capturing late entries for internal and external assessments. Using Google Forms has simplified the process for staff and the new process ensures all late entries are accurately reported. Including the use of the Candidate Entries and Results Report to check the accuracy of reported data and reduce potential late entries was also discussed with the Principal's Nominee, who follows up any identified issues.

School self-review has been strengthened through restructuring the Curriculum and Assessment committee. From review, the school identified that the effectiveness of the audits and committee had diminished over time. The committee now comprises volunteers with an interest in quality assurance, who audit assessment and moderation practices and processes annually for every department. They identify issues with assessment practice and ensure new policies have been implemented. A standardised audit template ensures a consistent process is reported to the Principal's Nominee.

The school recognises that the committee has potential to develop beyond audits of department assessment and moderation processes and procedures. Future developments discussed included evaluating the effectiveness of school-wide assessment practice and creating cross-curricula assessments, so that student evidence can be used for more than one standard.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- monitor the completion of action plans in response to external moderation outcomes.

## 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)*

### **Wellington East Girls' College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- providing differentiated assessment programmes within courses and across classes in the same subject and, in some courses, offering optional standards
- using school-based testing to identify students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and making applications appropriately
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not achieving or meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA by providing targeted support, including offering additional assessment opportunities
- supporting teachers to collect a range of evidence of achievement, particularly through the use of digital technology and naturally occurring evidence
- offering supported learning programmes to those students identified as needing support
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver:
  - courses the school is unable to offer
  - assessment against individual standards related to career pathways.

### **Wellington East Girls' College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed and late assessment
- managing resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring derived grades are based on valid, authentic and standard specific evidence
- using a range of strategies to ensure that student work is authentic
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have not submitted work
- efficiently managing NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

**Assessment programmes meet student needs** Student needs are being met through student-centred assessment programme design. These reflect the school's key principles and vision for learning through student-centred, personalised and contextualised programmes. This review found evidence of this in most departments, which includes:

- using student voice to evaluate assessment programmes and to inform future design
- allowing students to use their own cultural contexts in their assessments to make them more authentic experiences



- students and teachers co-designing assessment programmes so that students attempt standards that engage and suit them
- allowing students to choose from a range of methods that best meet their learning needs to present evidence for assessment.

As an example, students in Digital Technologies can choose to complete some internal assessments in their native language. Allowing students to use their own cultural contexts helps to ensure engagement in the assessment and to achieve better assessment outcomes.

**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)*

### **Wellington East Girls' College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- staff reviewing standard clarifications, and using NZQA and school exemplars to improve assessor judgements
- documenting the internal moderation process by using a standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a sample of student work and ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- requiring Heads of Department to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their department prior to reporting results to NZQA.

### **Wellington East Girls' College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are available by being adequately stored
- actively encouraging future digital submission of student work
- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan.

**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. However, many 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.

### **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)*

### Wellington East Girls' 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
  - enabling Ako Teachers and Deans to track, monitor and mentor student in their progress toward NCEA qualification and personal goals
  - 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
  - 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 and the NZQA learner login
  - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
  - ensuring a low number of late entries for external examinations.

**Monitoring entries and results from external providers** Monitoring student entries and results from external providers will improve the accuracy of reported data. The school should consider developing a system to track memoranda of understanding held with external providers and the standards being assessed by them. This will help to ensure that all student entries have a result reported or withdrawn. Results for standards assessed by external providers are reconciled with memoranda of understanding. However, this does not identify standards for which students have been entered but results have not been reported.

### For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- developing a system to track memoranda of understanding held with external providers.

## 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))*

### **Wellington East Girls' College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to teachers, students and parents
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who are eligible
- Heads of Department supporting new teachers to the school to understand school assessment policy and procedures through an induction programme

### **Wellington East Girls' 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
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through Whānau hui, Pasifika fono and evening meetings for new migrants
- providing an information evening to parents and Year 10 students on NZQA and school assessment-related processes before they commence a full NCEA programme
- holding year-level assemblies in term one about assessment policy and procedures

**Updating staff handbook required** The school's procedure in the staff handbook for breaches of the rules and appeals of assessment does not meet NZQA requirements. The school is required to have its own written procedures for investigating breaches and managing appeals. Currently, there is no investigation procedure for breaches while the procedure for managing appeals is deferred to NZQA. This is the school's responsibility. Having written procedures will make the process transparent for teachers and students. They should be based on the principles of natural justice and fairness.

### **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 school documentation as outlined in this report.