

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Marlborough Boys' College**

**June 2017**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Marlborough Boys' 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 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:

- *Marlborough Colleges – Managing National Assessment 2017 Guidelines at Marlborough Boys’ College and Marlborough Girls’ College*
- *Marlborough Colleges – National Qualifications Assessment 2017 Information for students at Marlborough Boys’ College*
- *Marlborough Boys’ College Policy Documents for:*
  - *Assessment*
  - *Assessment for National Qualifications*
  - *School-wide assessment*
  - *Internal examinations*
  - *Academic Appeals*
- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- 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 Arts/Digital Technology, English/Languages, Physical Education, Science, Social Science and Technology.

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

## Marlborough Boys' College

20 June 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

Marlborough Boys' College has addressed the significant issues identified in the 2015 Managing National Assessment review. The school has developed a robust and thorough process for monitoring internal moderation to assure Senior Management that the school only reports grades that have been quality assured. External moderation is followed-up with documented actions that are monitored for timely completion.

A range of assessment programmes and pathways are offered to support students' interests and career aspirations. Outside providers are used to extend the range of courses offered. Differentiation of assessment programmes and assessing students when ready is developing in some subject areas.

Priority learners and students at risk of not achieving an NCEA qualification are identified, tracked and changes made to their assessment programmes where appropriate. Literacy support in the junior school and English language support programmes are used to assist students to meet the Level 1 literacy requirements.

The school uses digital technology to engage students and for gathering achievement evidence. The use of technology in assessment programmes supports students with low literacy skills by assisting them to present their best evidence and develop writing skills.

Assessment information is provided through a variety of media and formats. Learning Conferences with parents, students and teachers support students to set achievement goals and to effectively share NCEA and assessment procedure information.

Staff feel well supported by the Principal's Nominee both in terms of developing good assessment practice, providing advice and guidance and including them in assessment decision making.

### Areas for improvement

To ensure consistent assessment statement information is provided to students, the school plans to standardise the information required and remove any assessment policy information provided in the student handbook. They will monitor the information provided more closely.

The review identified that refinements are required to the staff and student handbooks to clarify some assessment procedures. These should be incorporated as part of the school's annual review of documentation to staff and students.

Teachers described an inconsistent understanding and application of resubmission opportunities. The school agreed to clarify these.

### **Agreed action**

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

- clarify the guidelines for providing resubmission opportunities with staff.
- ensure assessment statement information is standardised in course outlines and assessment policy information is removed.

Kay Wilson  
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1 August 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 23 September 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The 2015 review identified three significant issues that meant the school was not meeting the requirements of its consent to assess against standards on the directory of assessment standards.

The school has responded by developing a robust internal moderation monitoring system that requires completed internal moderation cover sheets to be submitted to the Principal's Nominee prior to reporting grades to NZQA. All Heads of Faculty described the system, acknowledging the clarity of expectations and follow-up by the Principal's Nominee to ensure internal moderation was completed and appropriately documented. This action item was outstanding from the 2012 Managing National Assessment review.

An effective and robust process for following-up on external moderation has been established. The Principal's Nominee meets with Heads of Faculty to discuss the feedback, agree on actions and identify support. The agreed actions are documented and then monitored by the Principal's Nominee for completion.

There were four agreed actions in the 2015 review report. These have been addressed as follows:

- the Principal's Nominee holds all memoranda of understanding and these are reconciled against the Key Indicators on the school's NZQA provider login
- the selection of work for internal moderation verification has been clarified and all Heads of Faculty interviewed described selecting student work at grade boundaries or where they were unsure of judgements
- the random selection of student work for external moderation is carried out by the Principal's Nominee using an appropriate method
- the number of internal entries without a result reported has been reduced.

The school's actions demonstrate its improved capacity to make appropriate responses to identified issues or risks.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** An effective process for following-up on external moderation is in place. While the overall moderation agreement rate between the assessor and moderator improved in 2016, two subjects show a low agreement rate over three years. The school, having identified this, has reviewed the verification process including who the verifiers are and provided additional support to assist with improving the accuracy of assessor judgements in these subjects.

## **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)*

Since the 2015 review, the school has made a number of changes to assessment programmes and processes to meet student needs and support qualifications achievement. These include:

- developing English language programmes to support the increased number of students now attending the school for whom English is a second language
- a review of the processes for special assessment conditions that has led to the collection of school-based evidence to support applications, increased resources, and procedures that enable students to have an appropriate entitlement for internal assessment
- requiring teachers to carry out an inquiry that focusses on the school's strategic goals of improving the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students
- responding to their identification that poor literacy levels are a barrier to qualifications achievement by:
  - encouraging the use of digital evidence collection methods to support students to present their best evidence
  - engaging in a Community of Learning with contributing schools that has a focus on literacy development
  - providing essay writing skills for students and professional learning for teachers
  - supporting priority learners to access Level 6 of the curriculum when in Year 11.
- purchasing authenticity software for teachers to monitor authenticity, with plans for it to be available for students to use as a self-monitoring and learning tool.

The Principal's Nominee described a transparent, collective, management process used to review school procedures. When an issue is identified, Heads of Faculty are consulted and asked to bring possible solutions to the next meeting, where solutions are discussed and decisions made.

## **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 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)*

### **Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:**

- extending assessment opportunities using outside providers to offer vocational and trade-based courses
- collecting evidence of student achievement in a variety of ways including portfolios, digital, verbal and photographic evidence in some subjects
- in some subjects, assessing students when ready or offering a menu of standards for students to select an assessment programme
- using the school's *Inclusion Centre* to offer life and personal skills programmes that support students to re-engage in their education or transition to work
- offering an accelerated assessment programme to identified students
- monitoring and supporting Level 1 literacy and numeracy achievement
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements and providing these for internal assessment where appropriate
- using Gateway programmes to support students to transition to work or other qualifications.

### **Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for collecting credible evidence by:**

- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted
- ensuring derived grades are based on standard-specific authentic evidence from practice examinations that have been subject to a quality assurance process
- ensuring consistency in the granting of extensions by the Principal's Nominee being responsible for this
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

**Clarification of resubmission opportunities is required** Teachers described inconsistent application in providing resubmission opportunities, including offering the opportunity to all students or to those who asked. The school agreed to clarify with staff that resubmissions should only be offered to individual students who are on the grade boundary and can identify and readily fix the error or omission themselves.

**Review of assessment programme credits is suggested** Student achievement data shows some Year 11 students achieving 144 credits in their assessment programme. It is suggested that as part of the school's ongoing self-review, the school consider assessment programme design, in particular the number of credits offered and the balance of internal and external standards.

Reducing the amount of assessment undertaken could:

- encourage deeper learning
- increase the number of students achieving endorsements
- potentially reduce the number of absences and standards not attempted in external standards
- help students and teachers manage assessment workload.

**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 guidelines for providing resubmission opportunities with staff.

## 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)*

### **Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation.**

#### **Teachers:**

- are clear in their understanding of the school's internal moderation requirements and expectations
- document the internal moderation process before results are reported to NZQA
- select borderline samples of student work for verification, documenting discussions on grade judgements
- use subject specialists from within and outside of the school to verify assessor judgements.
- file completed internal moderation documentation with the Principal's Nominee.

#### **The Principal's Nominee:**

- requires Heads of Faculty to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their faculty prior to reporting results to NZQA
- monitors the documenting and completion of the internal moderation process to confirm that the evidence reflects practice
- annually monitors that an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* has been completed for all internal assessments, providing evidence that the school has met its quality assurance obligations under the *Consent to Assess*.

### **Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation. The Principal's Nominee:**

- generates the random selection using a method that meets NZQA requirements
- follows-up on external moderation feedback with Heads of Faculty, including documenting actions, including providing professional support and monitoring that agreed actions are completed.

**Storage of digital evidence will enable moderation processes** The school is proactive in engaging with digital tools for teaching and assessment practice in most subjects. Teachers described using a range of digital evidence collection methods to engage students and to support them to present their best evidence including providing feedback and feedforward information.

As a next step the school is encouraged to develop systems for storing digital evidence to enable the school to submit external moderation digitally in 2017. The Principal's Nominee has demonstrated the external moderation application to staff to assist teachers to submit external moderation digitally.

**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 found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)*

### **Marlborough Boys' College effectively:**

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - identifying and tracking priority learners, and those at risk of not achieving an NCEA qualification, including discussing with students, changes to assessment programmes, reducing credits and providing appropriate support to help them attain their goal
  - evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their achievement goals and informing changes to standards offered
  - supporting teacher inquiries which focus on the school's strategic student achievement goals for Māori and Pasifika students.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - using a "sign-off process" with students to confirm the accuracy of the internally assessed grades reported
  - requiring Heads of Faculty to attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly in their faculty
  - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
  - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with which the school holds current memoranda of understanding.

**Analysis of NCEA data supports qualifications achievement** Heads of Faculty annually report to the Principal an analysis of NCEA achievement data against goals, and national and decile statistics. A template with focus questions is provided to facilitate consistent evaluative reports. The analysis must include responses to variations to department goals and identification of resourcing and professional learning needs.

In 2017 the school has introduced Head of Faculty meetings with a Board of Trustees and Senior Management member to support a deeper understanding of how the school is working to support student achievement. The meeting is held in the Faculty area and includes discussion on student achievement, and the faculty's work to achieve the school strategic goals and identify resourcing needs.

**Learner login access should be encouraged** The number of students registering and accessing their learner login has been declining over the past three years. Students interviewed described only using the parent portal to monitor their results and check their qualifications. The school is encouraged to consider promoting awareness of NZQA Learner log-in to students as it helps them to monitor non-reported results, order certificates and apply for reconsiderations.

**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 found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7iib)*

### **Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and whānau using range of media
- assisting students and parents to use the parent portal to monitor NCEA and Vocational Pathways progress.
- supporting students to monitor their achievement through their Form Teacher.

### **Marlborough Boys' College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- ensuring new Heads of Faculty and staff are aware of the school's NCEA policies and procedures through facilitating discussion on assessment good practice
- using Head of Faculty and staff meetings to clarify changes of procedures, expectations and facilitate discussion on good assessment practice
- providing Parent-Student-Teacher conferences to assist parents to discuss their student's achievement, external entries and goals leading to achievement of NCEA and Vocational Pathways.

**Amendments to the staff and student handbooks** The staff and student handbooks are developed in conjunction with Marlborough Girls' College to enable consistent messages to families. These documents are comprehensive and presented in plain English. The school agreed that when the handbooks are next updated the following refinements would be made:

- the term "compassionate consideration" would be removed from the staff handbook and the term "cheating" would be removed and from the staff and student handbooks
- the inclusion in the student handbook that Not Achieved is reported for a proven breach of authenticity.

**Course outline information provided to students is to be reviewed** The assessment information provided to students at the start of the year is presented in different formats potentially making it difficult to follow. Some contained assessment policy information that was inconsistent with school policy. Standardised assessment information should be provided to students to make it easier for them to understand.

Heads of Faculty are required to use the assessment statement information from the student management system in their course outline material. This ensures that consistent achievement information is provided. However, the review identified that some students are not provided with the required assessment template, meaning students did not receive all the information that the school wanted them to have.

It was agreed that assessment policy information would be removed from course outlines and the use of the standardised assessment template would be monitored.

**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 assessment statement information is standardised in course outlines and assessment policy information is removed.