

Managing National Assessment Report

Marlborough Boys' College

October 2021

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, 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 2021* (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
- *Managing National Assessment, Teacher Handbook, Marlborough Boys' College 2021* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student Handbook, National Qualifications, Marlborough 2021* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13
- a sample of Faculty Annual Reports 2021
- a sample of assessment policies 2021

Two School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Heads of Faculty/Department for:
 - Arts
 - English/Languages
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- three students.

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

27 October 2021

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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to Covid-19 disruption.

What the school is doing well

Marlborough Boys' College focuses on supporting students to strive for their personal best in academic achievement by providing a range of pathways and support mechanisms towards qualification objectives. A positive school culture is based on meeting the needs of all students, fostering well-being and establishing clear expectations.

Assessment and quality assurance processes promote credible assessment. Through sound leadership teachers are taking ownership of assessment processes and the capacity of the school to deliver programmes and courses that meet the needs of a range of students is developing.

Students are assessed when ready where appropriate, and a number of courses offer optional standards. Contexts for assessment are reviewed to better cater for student interests and abilities. The school is abolishing streaming, developing vocational pathways, and using external providers to provide learning and assessment beyond what the school is able to deliver.

Assessment practice is consistent across all learning areas that participated in the review and was evident in the student response to interview questions. Heads of Faculty meet regularly with Heads of Departments and teachers to review assessment practice to ensure consistency, reflect on outcomes and establish clear expectations.

The Principal's Nominee effectively manages Internal moderation processes, with a commitment to ensure all results reported are quality assured. Digital tools are used to monitor the completion of processes and outcomes. Moderation reports identify consistent rates of agreement with the standard, which provides assurance that internal moderation processes are effective. Any identified issues are subject to an action plan with interventions designed to improve outcomes.

Data management is timely and accurate and is used effectively to monitor and track cohort and individual student progress. Teachers and mentors identify priority learners and appropriate support provided to ensure they have the best opportunity

to achieve. Heads of Faculty use data to reflect on their practice and inform course design.

The school effectively communicates understanding of assessment practice to teachers, students and their families. Staff and student assessment information has recently been reviewed to ensure it is consistent, current and accessible.

Areas for improvement

The school has recognised that they must ensure that all entries submitted to NZQA have a reported grade. This ensures that results are only reported when a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity allowing more effective tracking of student achievement.

Some other steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that all entries submitted to NZQA have a reported grade.

Kay Wilson
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25 November 2021

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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 20 June 2017 Managing National Assessment Report The 2017 Managing National Assessment report identified two action items that have been fully resolved.

The guidelines for providing resubmission opportunities have been clarified with staff and course outlines are now standardised.

Response to external moderation outcomes Moderation reports indicate that teachers have consistently high levels of agreement with the national standard. Heads of Department are required to develop action plans to address issues identified by external moderation reports. The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion of these plans and supports teachers with professional development if required.

To support teacher judgement, the school intends to encourage the use of the resources provided in the NZQA Learning Management System Pūtake, to inform decisions and seek clarification from external moderators.

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)

Since the last review the school has introduced a number of changes to assessment practice to support all students to engage in assessment opportunities to complete qualifications. These initiatives have been a response to systematic review of student achievement data by senior management. School management is developing teacher capacity to deliver courses and assessment opportunities that meet the needs of their students.

The school has identified that many students struggle to meet NCEA numeracy requirements. Specialist teachers are working with contributing schools to develop consistent intervention strategies to address this issue. More teaching and learning time is provided for numeracy development through specific subjects across the school.

To provide students with the opportunity to follow a variety of pathways, all streaming of subject classes is being abolished and the school is moving to the delivery of courses in a semester timetable. The current option structure and streaming causes students to being constrained to follow either an academic or vocational pathway.

To support improvement in student achievement, whānau time has been extended to allow Whānau Teachers to more effectively monitor and track academic progress alongside their students. Priority learners are identified, and interventions managed

by Deans using a traffic light referral process, to ensure appropriate support is provided.

The school has recognised that student engagement could be enhanced further by facilitating the introduction of digital assessment, including digital examinations. Most internal assessment activities are now completed using digital tools and this year students have been entered in three digital practice and final examinations. Due to rebuilding plans this initiative is hindered by constraints on spending on upgrading the current network.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes as appropriate
- offering optional standards in courses to cater for a range of student interest and ability
- using school-based evidence to support special assessment condition applications on behalf of their students, and providing appropriate support for students
- encouraging teachers to use a variety of evidence gathering strategies to help students present their best evidence
- regular tracking and monitoring of student progress
- contextualising learning and assessment tasks to be more relevant and better engage student interest.

Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, appeals, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- using a range of strategies to assist students to present authentic work
- ensuring derived and unexpected event grades are based on standard-specific authentic evidence
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

Equity and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) The school is focused on improving student achievement in STEM subjects. The school identified a decline in their Level 3 Māori and Pacific student achievement in one or more STEM subjects from 2017 to 2019. Consequently, resources were allocated to mentoring and tracking Māori and Pacific student achievement in these subjects. To reduce barriers to the progress of these students, streaming of subjects was abolished and a semester timetable is gradually being introduced to extend the pathways available.

Consistent Assessment Practice The school ensures consistent assessment practice school wide. Teachers are required to complete the *Marlborough Boys' College NCEA Internal Standard Checklist* when assessing a standard to ensure all the school's assessment practices are followed. This provides the Principal's Nominee and Heads of Faculty with confidence that all teachers are following the school's practices, and a basis for discussion if this is not the case.

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 2021 6.4b)

Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to confirm that they are valid and fit for purpose
- encouraging teachers to use verifiers from other schools
- documenting the completion of each step in the internal moderation process
- senior leadership monitoring the completion of internal moderation before results are reported, by reconciling documentation with practice
- keeping exemplars of student work and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions.

Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- ensuring material is available through samples of student work being adequately stored
- encouraging digital submissions of student work.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on conducting sufficient grade 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 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.

Learning areas currently assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However, most of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than this.

For consideration

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

- reinforcing with teachers that grade verification should focus on a sufficient number of strategically selected samples of student work at grade boundaries.

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)

Marlborough Boys' College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- learning areas analysing student achievement after each unit of work, to inform course design
- improving the recording and reporting of unexpected event grades to NZQA
- supporting teachers in their professional growth enquiries, to improve student achievement outcomes.

Marlborough Boys' College reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring consent is held for all standards assessed
- monitoring assessment by outside providers, including the Principal's Nominee checking and filing all *Memoranda of Understanding*
- submitting data files monthly to meet NZQA timelines
- resolving any issues highlighted in the Key Indicators or submission error messages.
- ensuring the achievement data for newly enrolled and transient students is recorded and reported correctly

Reporting results for all entries The school is reporting a number of entries without a result. All entries submitted to NZQA should have a result reported or be withdrawn if the student does not have an adequate assessment opportunity. This ensures that entry and result data accurately reflect student assessment opportunities and outcomes. This also allows the student and school to more accurately monitor student progress with confidence, knowing that the data being used is providing reliable information of how student achievement is tracking.

Develop standardised Learning Area review Heads of Faculty and Departments review their student achievement outcomes annually to inform future learning and assessment strategies, but this process is not standardised. Teachers interviewed reported that the information provided in Learning Area reports is variable and not always robust in identifying future actions. The development of a standardised report should be considered by senior management which each Learning Area can use to analyse both longitudinal and comparative data, including ethnicity. This analysis would provide a framework to measure outcomes against strategic goals consistently across the school and provide information to make changes to the collection of evidence and course design.

Tracking and monitoring student progress This year Whānau teachers have been provided with extended time to monitor and track student progress. They focus on identifying priority students, using a traffic light system. Amber students on the boundary of gaining sixty to eighty credits are encouraged to set goals and actions to ensure they complete the qualification. Students struggling with completing literacy and numeracy requirements are provided with extra support. The students interviewed commented on the interest Whānau teachers take in their achievement progress.

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 all entries submitted to NZQA have a result reported.

For consideration

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

- standardising the reporting process of learning areas to the Principal and Board of Trustees, to accurately inform strategic outcomes, changes to teaching strategies and course design.

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))

Marlborough Boys' College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and processes through:
 - publication of the Marlborough Boys' College staff and student assessment practices and student course selection information
 - student level assemblies
 - informal discussion in Whānau classes on achievement practices and NCEA assessment rules and procedures
 - Whānau NCEA information and conferencing evenings
- informing staff on updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to parents and students (?) to information held on the school's student management system
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

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

- checking whether teachers, students and parents are following processes through effective quality assurance processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Students well informed of NCEA and school assessment practice Students interviewed for the review clearly articulated the school's assessment practice. They appreciate the support provided by their Whānau teachers, Deans, the Principal's Nominee and senior leaders. Students understood school processes such as resubmission, authenticity requirements, the right to appeal and to privacy, derived grades and Special Assessment Conditions. This shows that communication to students about assessment and support processes is effective.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.