

Managing National Assessment Report

John Paul II High School

September 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively John Paul II High 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, 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 2019* (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
- *Board of Trustees assessment policies, John Paul II High School*
- *Procedures relating to Senior Assessment, John Paul II High School, 2019 (Staff Handbook)*
- *NZQF/NCEA Information for Students, John Paul II High School, 2019/2020*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of /Department for:
 - English
 - Science
 - Technology
- the Teacher of:
 - Drama
- three students.

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

John Paul II High School

10 September 2019

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

John Paul II High School is providing assessment opportunities and pathways to meet the aspirations of its students. Sound assessment practices are ensuring that students' results reported to NZQA are credible.

The school's self-review is effective in identifying areas for improvement and actioning change. The new Principal has set a school-wide focus to improve the subject specific literacy of students, so that they may achieve higher NCEA grades. Teachers are identifying how literacy strategies can be improved in their subject areas. Teacher professional development has been provided to clarify understanding of assessment processes and procedures.

Subject areas effectively meet student assessment needs. Assessment tasks are contextualised to engage student interests and improve achievement outcomes. The number of credits has been limited in some courses to make student and teacher workloads more manageable. The use of external providers extends the assessment opportunities for students, particularly in vocational pathways.

School expectations for internal and external moderation are being met. The school has very clear procedures for internal moderation and teachers who were interviewed provided evidence that these are being followed. Using external grade verifiers ensures teacher judgements are consistent with the standard where subject specialists are not available from within the school. Action plans are developed to address issues identified in external moderation.

School data is well managed and reported to NZQA in a timely manner. Subject areas are using achievement data to inform course design and evaluate the effectiveness of their assessment programmes. Students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals are identified and provided with appropriate support as required.

The school community is kept informed about NCEA qualifications and the school's assessment policy and procedures using a range of methods and media.

Areas for improvement

Action plans in response to external moderation should be monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken and ensure continuous improvement of teacher judgements.

At times, students have been able to view other students NCEA results when grades were returned. To meet the requirement of the *Privacy Act 1993*, student results must be kept private when they are informed of their grades.

The procedure for selecting samples of student work for external moderation does not meet NZQA guidelines. This should be reviewed and clarified with staff.

Reconciling internal moderation documentation against actual practice will provide further assurance to Senior Leadership that results reported to NZQA are credible. This procedure was previously practised and should be re-instated to become embedded.

The school should have a single document for its assessment policy and procedures for staff. Currently, a number of versions are in existence and these are held in different locations online creating confusion for staff. The current documents should be reviewed, information consolidated and held in a location online of which staff are aware.

Agreed action

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

- monitor the completion of action plans in response to external moderation
- ensure the school meets the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*
- ensure the procedure for selecting samples of student work for external moderation meet NZQA guidelines
- reconcile internal moderation documentation against actual practice
- review the school's documents for assessment policy and procedures to ensure that there is only one version that is held in a single location online.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

4 November 2019

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 2 August 2016 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed the two action items from this report. Professional development has clarified teacher understanding of the justification process for derived grades, and documentation of the process has been updated. However, this review has identified an issue about where to find the updated documentation. This is discussed in detail in the communication section of this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has maintained a good agreement rate between teacher and NZQA moderator judgements. Senior Leadership is aware of current issues raised in external moderation in some standards. Heads of Department meet the school's expectation to analyse moderation outcomes and summarise them in a report, including planned actions. However, these are not monitored by Senior Leadership to ensure that they are completed. To strengthen this process, action plans should be monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of action taken to inform best practice and identify the need for further intervention. This will help to ensure that teacher judgements continue to improve.

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 Principal has set a school-wide goal of raising assessment outcomes through a focus on improving student literacy. This follows a review on literacy that highlighted a weakness with student writing, particularly the style of language they use. By developing student knowledge and use of the literacy strategies specific to subject areas, it is hoped that the students can achieve higher grades within the NCEA qualifications they achieve. Departments are now identifying how they may improve student literacy within their subject areas.

The Principal's Nominee's review of the school's assessment documentation following the 2019 Managing National Assessment seminar resulted in an update of the staff handbook to reflect current practice. It also identified that many staff had a poor understanding of the procedure for resubmissions and the school's missed and late assessment policy. The school provided staff with professional learning and development that has improved their understanding and practice.

The review of the external moderation submission process has improved the storage and availability of student material. At times, the school has been unable to provide material for external moderation due to staff leaving and student work not being stored in an accessible location. Student work is now kept digitally in a shared drive to ensure the Principal's Nominee has access to it.

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.

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 2019 5.5)

John Paul II High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using school-based evidence to identify students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and making applications where appropriate
- contextualising assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and engaging to students
- making portfolio and research-based assessments more manageable using milestone checks and templates
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers, such as the Te Tai Poutini Trades Academy to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against individual standards related to vocational pathways
- managing student workloads by limiting the number of credits offered per course
- assessing when ready, where appropriate.

John Paul II High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring derived grades and unexpected event grades are based on valid, authentic and standard specific evidence.
- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, 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.

Ensure student privacy is maintained Schools are required under the *Privacy Act 1993* to ensure student results are kept private. This includes when teachers are returning work to students and informing them of their grades. Students interviewed for this review reported that some teachers did not follow this practice, as there were times when they could view the grades of other students. The school must develop a process that ensures student privacy when informing them of their results.

Equity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) for Māori and Pacific Students in Year 13 The school has a very small number of students participating in STEM subjects. Subject areas are focusing on adapting assessment contexts so that they engage student interest in STEM subjects.

Māori and Pacific students have a good ratio of achievement outcomes when compared to other students within the school.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure the school meets the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

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 2019 6.4b)

John Paul II High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- critiquing all assessment materials 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
- using subject specialists, within and outside the school, to verify the grades awarded on a purposefully selected sample of student work
- requiring Heads of Department check to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their department prior to reporting results to NZQA.

John Paul II High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- valuing external moderation feedback for the clarification of grade boundaries, assistance with understanding of the standard and to confirm the robustness of the school's internal moderation
- actively encouraging digital submission of student work
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Procedure to select student work for external moderation does not meet current requirements The school's process for the selection of samples of student work for external moderation does not meet NZQA guidelines. The process must use a method that does not allow for prediction or manipulation. Some teachers described deliberately selecting samples of work at grade boundaries for inclusion. This practice does not meet current NZQA guidelines.

Check internal moderation documentation against actual practice Reconciling internal moderation coversheets against moderated samples of student work by standard will strengthen the school's moderation system. The school's data manager and Principal's Nominee check that each coversheet is completed correctly. Any errors or issues are followed up with the teacher before reporting the results to NZQA. However, these documents are not checked against actual student work. This procedure was previously practised at the school. Re-instating this procedure will provide further assurance to senior leaders that internal moderation is occurring and results reported are credible.

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:

- ensure the procedure to select samples of student work for external moderation meets NZQA guidelines
- reconcile internal moderation documentation against actual practice to provide Senior Leadership with confidence that all results are credible.

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)

John Paul II High School 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
- the Senior Dean monitoring student progress towards qualifications, identifying students at risk of not achieving their goals and providing the necessary support as required
- Heads of Department annually presenting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions.

John Paul II High School 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 code
- reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system
- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
- ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn, as appropriate.

Check the accuracy of results reported to NZQA Robust data management includes checking the accuracy of entries and results reported to NZQA. Students interviewed for this review reported that they were not required to check their results. They use the school's student management system to monitor their progress but this does not ensure the entries and results held by NZQA are correct. To strengthen the reporting of data the school should consider developing a process for students to check their entries and results and confirm their accuracy.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

For consideration

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

- developing a process for students to check the accuracy of results held by NZQA.

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))

John Paul II High School 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 staff meetings
- communicating NCEA information to the school community through emails and the school website
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system.

John Paul II High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- providing professional development for staff, to inform and remind them about school policies, procedures and updates
- holding student assemblies to inform them of school assessment policies and procedures
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and the school's assessment procedures through an information evening.

Need for a single school assessment policy and procedures document The review highlighted the existence of a number of versions of school assessment policy and procedures documents. These are held digitally in two separate locations; cloud based and on the school's server. This has created confusion for staff about where to find the recently updated staff handbook and creating the possibility that incorrect procedures could be followed. Version control is important. The school should review all documents, consolidate information and ensure that only the current version is published. The document and its location should then be shared with staff.

Strengthen students understanding of the school's assessment policy and procedures Schools are required to promote understanding about assessment requirements and expectations. Students interviewed for this review were knowledgeable about how to gain a NCEA qualification but were unsure about applying for an extension to a submission date or appealing an assessment decision. The students receive a digital copy of the student handbook, but this is not discussed with them to ensure it is understood.

Discussing the contents of the handbook at Whānau time allows Whānau teachers to reinforce the messages provided at the student assembly and ensure that the students have a thorough understanding. Adopting this practice would also reinforce teachers' understanding of NCEA assessment practice and further ensure consistent practice.

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 the school's documents for assessment policy and procedures to ensure that there is only one version that is held in a single location online.

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:

- having the Whānau teacher explain the student handbook during Whānau time.