

Managing National Assessment Report

Cheviot Area School

2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Cheviot Area 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 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
- *Cheviot Area School Student Assessment and Achievement Policy*
- *NCEA Timeline for Teachers 2021*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Teachers of:
 - English and Psychology
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Principal's Nominee to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies, next steps and to agree on any action required.

SUMMARY

Cheviot Area School

18 June 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.

What the school is doing well

Cheviot Area School places students at the centre of their teaching and assessment practice. The school's strategic priority is to provide positive achievement outcomes for students through personalised learning and assessment. There was clear evidence during the review of strong relationships between staff and students. Students receive individualised support from teachers who monitor their progress and change programmes and practice to address student need. NCEA staff and senior leaders collaborate effectively to support students.

The school is developing its capacity to effectively review and embed NCEA practices to enable school-wide ownership. Review informs course delivery improvements and utilises the flexibility of the NCEA model. The school offers courses based on student demand, offering a range of academic and vocational opportunities to provide relevant pathways.

Within classes teachers provide differentiated and personalised learning and assessment opportunities, including offering optional standards. NCEA staff use authentic contexts that engage student interest appropriate to their needs and abilities. Assessment practice was consistent across the teachers interviewed for the review and provided students with credible opportunities to achieve.

Senior management can be confident that results reported to NZQA have been quality assured. Teachers consistently apply internal moderation processes. Relationships with external verifiers are integral to support this process. The Principal's Nominee and the teacher discuss external moderation reports and develop action plans when issues are identified. The Principal's Nominee monitors actions for completion and improved outcomes.

Senior staff use data effectively to track individual student progress towards personal goals and qualification attainment. An annual analysis of student achievement informs review and is reported by the Principal to the Board of Trustees. From this analysis school leaders and NCEA teachers make changes to learning and assessment programmes to address changes in student needs.

The Principal's Nominee, with the support of senior leaders, effectively communicates assessment information to students, parents, and staff, promoting a common understanding on NCEA, school expectations, and assessment procedures. Both staff and students acknowledged her direction, approachability, and support.

Areas for improvement

The Principal's Nominee has identified that data management needs to be strengthened to ensure entries and results reported to NZQA are complete, accurate and timely. This will mean that students can access their examination programme prior to sitting external assessments and receive the full record of their results and qualifications awarded when results are released mid-January.

Currently staff and students do not have access to handbooks covering all school and NZQA assessment processes. Providing them with clear and comprehensive assessment information would support understanding and good practice.

Agreed action

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

- ensure accurate and timely data reporting to NZQA
- provide staff and student NCEA handbooks to support understanding and consistent practice.

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Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

17 September 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 14 March 2018 Managing National Assessment Report Two of the three items from the previous review have been actioned.

The Principal's Nominee monitors internal moderation for a sample of standards from each assessed subject. She checks the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* for completion of each moderation step, the storage of student work and the quality of verifier judgement statements. Where gaps in practice are identified, the Principal's Nominee follows up with the teacher.

She follows a similar process to monitor and record completion of external moderation action plans.

The staff and student handbooks are a work in progress, as detailed in the Internal Review and Communications section of this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has sound levels of consistency of assessor judgements between teachers and NZQA moderators for subjects currently being assessed. This indicates that internal moderation processes are effective in supporting teacher's decisions about grade judgments.

Each external moderation report is reviewed by the Principal's Nominee and a copy is shared with the teacher. Where required, planned actions are discussed by the teacher and Principal's Nominee, and an action plan is collaboratively developed to remedy any issues identified. The Principal's Nominee monitors the actions and evaluates the outcomes for expected improvement.

The school provides support to improve practice, including reviewing the external verifier used. Some subjects are no longer assessed where insufficient support for internal moderation processes is available, including to verify grade 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)

Cheviot Area School's self-review focusses on providing programmes that optimise student learning and assessment pathways and maintaining staff consistency in school practice and quality assurance processes, to deliver credible results.

The school identified that Covid-19 and the challenges some staff experienced caused some disruption to the continuity of assessment practice. Two areas affected areas were management of data and development of communications. The school is using the findings of this Managing National Assessment review to re-evaluate NCEA

assessment and renew focus on improvements in practice, to support its own self review.

Course design tailored to individual student need As part of internal review, the school offers courses based on student choice. Using student agency in course design maximises engagement in learning and assessment. School leaders believe this approach gives students meaningful and coherent pathways, resulting in the best chance of achievement success.

Early in Term 3 students are asked what NCEA courses they would like to study the following year, and teachers indicate which courses they could offer. As a result of this process, new courses are available, if possible, while others may be discontinued. The school's responsive and flexible course design is made possible through staff collegiality and willingness to teach new subjects or at other levels of the school. Examples of student-driven subjects the school delivers include Hospitality, Psychology and a practically based Outdoor Education/ Physical Education course. Use of external providers and distance learning extend the opportunities available, supporting students to meet literacy, numeracy and qualification requirements.

Teachers design individualised assessment programmes for students with a specific talent or passion, or to access future pathways. This can involve offering different standards or contexts within a course, or the use of distance learning. Recent courses delivered to meet student aspirations include Japanese, Photography and Visual Art. By designing courses based on student need, the school is enabling students to meet their personal attainment goals.

School leaders and NCEA teachers evaluate the effectiveness of learning and assessment within programmes, including using student voice and achievement data. This informs teaching strategies and professional learning, ensuring students are best supported to meet their achievement goals.

School leadership is strengthening programme pathways and assessment practice where improvements are needed. The school is encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness of self-review changes to NCEA practices, and consider next steps, to ensure opportunities maximise student success.

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)

Cheviot Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using formative assessments to help students present their best evidence of achievement, including milestone checks, feedback, and feedforward
- broadening the ways student learning is assessed, including gathering naturally occurring evidence of student achievement, and standard-specific evidence from portfolios, oral, presentation formats and digital, to reflect student strengths
- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes, as appropriate
- collecting school-based evidence to support applications for students identified as eligible for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

Cheviot Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late assessment, extensions, appeals, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- assisting students to present authentic work by helping them to understand plagiarism and the need to reference sources of information
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- ensuring derived grades are based on standard-specific authentic evidence from practice examinations that have been subject to a quality assurance process
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through individual acknowledgement of success
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* in the issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

Personalised student support Teachers provide individualised support for their students. They have a thorough knowledge of each student's educational needs, interests and future career goals. The Principal's Nominee regularly checks in with individual students to discuss achievement progress. Senior staff use student voice, learning needs and assessment data to closely monitor student achievement progress. Students at risk of not meeting their achievement outcomes are identified and programmes are modified, as appropriate. This school-wide support assists students to realise their personal achievement aspirations.

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)

Cheviot Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring assessment tasks reflect the standard by having amended or new tasks critiqued prior to use
- using clarification documents and past student work for benchmarking to support assessment judgements
- documenting internal moderation processes for each standard before results are reported
- monitoring internal moderation processes through:
 - requiring teachers to file the completed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, assessment materials and student work with the Principal's Nominee
 - checks and resolution of issues recorded by the Principal's Nominee, when identified through the moderation process.

Cheviot Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being centrally stored
- using a random selection method that meets NZQA requirements for selection of marked student work for external moderation, when the sample size requires this
- encouraging teachers to recommend standards to be included for external moderation
- digitally submitting all student work
- reflecting on external moderation feedback to inform changes to assessment tasks and grade decisions.

Networking and external verifier support valued Teachers rely on subject specialists from other schools to verify grade judgements on a sample of student work. Single subject teachers value this collegial feedback to assist with the understanding of the standard and to make assessment judgements consistent with the standard.

In consultation with teachers, the Principal's Nominee identifies appropriate verifiers, usually from the Area Schools Cluster group. The school supports teachers to meet with subject colleagues. Senior leadership may investigate reconvening a time slot at Kahui Ako Days, which NCEA teachers considered promoted professional learning on moderation and best practice. The Principal's Nominee will also highlight to teachers the online NZQA assessor support resources and workshops available on Pūtake, accessed through Education Sector Logons.

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)

Cheviot Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student achievement progress to identify students at risk of not achieving their chosen assessment pathway and qualification goals
- the Principal annually reporting an analysis of NCEA achievement at school-wide level to the Board of Trustees to inform strategic goals and actions.

Cheviot Area School reports accurate achievement data by:

- encouraging students and their families to use the student management system portal and NZQA Learner login to track progress towards qualifications
- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data issues
- digitally storing Memoranda of Understanding with external providers to facilitate annual monitoring that correct provider codes are used for results reported to NZQA.

Reinstate accurate and timely data management practices Prior to the review, the Principal's Nominee identified that over the past two years the management of entries and results did not meet the school or NZQA's expected levels of accuracy and timeliness. To avoid students being disadvantaged, the Principal's Nominee managed entries and results for staff after the deadlines in 2020. Covid-19 disruptions, staff changes and delays in verifying student work all played a role.

Re-establishing data process timelines for internal results and external entries is needed. The Principal's Nominee has provided a timeline with required actions to support NCEA staff to meet data management deadlines. This will help to avoid sizeable numbers of late external entries being made and ensure internal entries are reported with a result, or are withdrawn as appropriate, by the final data file submission. She indicated the next step is to ensure Unexpected Event Grades are held on the student management system and reported to NZQA.

The Principal's Nominee intends to further support students to register and use their Learner-login to access the functions available on the NZQA website.

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 accurate and timely data reporting to 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))

Cheviot Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- reporting achievement outcomes and holding three-way parent student teacher conferences to discuss student goals and progress towards NCEA achievement
- providing students with course outlines.

Cheviot Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking with teachers that they are following expected assessment processes and providing support, where needed
- meeting with students individually and as class groups, and holding parent evenings, to provide NCEA information
- supporting professional learning opportunities, including collaborating with external subject specialists from other schools
- encouraging teachers to use their Education Sector Logon to access material on the school's NZQA homepage.

Providing handbooks to support understanding, consistency, and ownership of assessment practice It is agreed that the school produce handbooks for staff and students covering key NCEA information and outlining school assessment processes and expectations. The school's intention to update or develop new handbooks has not been actioned. The Principal's Nominee currently informs NCEA teachers of assessment updates and expectations informally, and at sectional meetings. Similarly, the Principal's Nominee and teachers regularly discuss NCEA practice with students.

While students interviewed had a good understanding of qualification requirements and school assessment processes, and staff described consistent assessment practice, handbooks provide useful, independent references. They lessen the reliance on the Principal's Nominee and key senior staff to provide assessment information and advice. A staff handbook, also accessible digitally, would further support the induction of new staff in the school's NCEA policies and procedures.

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:

- provide staff and student NCEA handbooks to support understanding and consistent practice.