

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Christchurch Adventist School**

**March 2019**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Christchurch Adventist 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
- *NCEA Teacher Information Handbook 2019, Christchurch Adventist School*
- *NCEA Student Information Handbook 2019, Christchurch Adventist School*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Curriculum Leader
- Teacher(s) in Charge of:
  - Biology/Science/Christian Living
  - Chemistry
  - History
  - Music
  - Physical Education, and
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, the Deputy Principal and Head of the Senior School, and the 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

## Christchurch Adventist School

21 March 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

Christchurch Adventist School's shared culture and values encompasses the development of the whole person supported by a commitment to meeting student needs to enhance academic achievement. Important components contributing to engagement in learning and academic success are thorough knowledge of each student's learning dispositions and strong relationships with staff. All staff are active in their support of students. High expectations for academic success are evident in high achievement at all qualification levels over the past three years.

The school has strengthened its capacity to respond appropriately to reviewing, improving and embedding NCEA assessment practices. This evaluation has enabled the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model to be effectively used, underpinned by robust quality assurance and credible assessment. Formative and summative data is used to inform responsive interventions to support student attainment, programme delivery and course design.

School-wide ownership and a consistent approach to the management of assessment practice was found across all teachers who participated in the review. The students interviewed were well-informed about the NCEA and considered teachers positively supported them to achieve.

Teachers described a range of assessment approaches used to differentiate and provide opportunities to gather evidence that allow students to demonstrate best achievement. Christchurch Adventist School offers a range of academic and vocational pathways to cater for individual need.

Robust internal moderation processes are evident. Senior leadership ensure that only verified results are reported through auditing of internal moderation processes. External moderation outcomes are discussed with senior leaders and teachers make changes to resolve identified issues. The senior leadership team evaluates the effectiveness of these interventions.

Data analysis and use is a particular strength. The Principal's Nominee comprehensively tracks student results and provides staff with quality information to monitor individual students' progress towards meeting personal goals and qualification attainment. Timely and appropriate support and interventions are provided, as required.

The management of assessment data is highly effective, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate.

Effective communication of NCEA information informs professional learning and promotes school-wide consistency. The Principal's Nominee provides clear direction of assessment best practice, sets high expectations and effectively manages changes and issues to support student achievement and improve current practice. The school can be confident that any concerns related to assessment practice will be identified and addressed. Staff acknowledged the professionalism of the Principal's Nominee and his approachability and support. The Principal's Nominee is supported in his work by the senior leaders, who alongside the staff, work collaboratively to support students to achieve.

### **Areas for improvement**

Documentation needs to be updated to reflect current practice. Authenticity strategies, the derived grade justification process, and moderation monitoring process by senior leadership need to be included in the staff handbook. Information on Scholarship, fees and financial assistance is needed in the student handbook.

### **Agreed action**

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

- update documentation as outlined in this report.

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9 May 2019

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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 October 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

Items from the 2016 report have been actioned. Responses to agreed action items include:

- providing support for families to access evidence for applications for students identified as eligible for special assessment conditions
- justifying derived grades by comparing actual external examination results with school trial examination outcomes to confirm alignment of teachers' understanding with the external standards
- developing a school-wide format for the analysis of student achievement to provide senior leadership and the Board of Trustees confidence that learning programmes are meeting student need and supporting student achievement
- reviewing moderation reports from Industry Training Organisations as part of the school's response to external moderation.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** School leaders have identified that the agreement rates of assessor judgements between teachers and NZQA moderators remain below expectation in one subject area and are implementing improvements.

The Principal's Nominee reviews each moderation report. A designated senior leader discusses with subject teachers any concerns that have been identified and the actions to be taken as a result. These actions are evaluated for the effectiveness of the changes made.

The school understands the explicit relationship between the outcomes of external moderation and the robustness of internal moderation processes previously undertaken. Strategies being used to support teachers and address issues are:

- strategic selection of student work for verification
- changing verifiers where there is an ongoing poor external moderation agreement rate
- querying or appealing an external moderation report or requesting a clarification if the feedback is not sufficient to inform improvement
- professional development to extend understanding of the standard such as participation in subject cluster groups or Best Practice Workshops, if available.

## 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)*

Self-review focusses on providing students with the best opportunity to achieve through a holistic approach that embraces the special character of the school. Self-review has been a response to the school's strategic direction to use digital tools and data interrogation to support assessment improvement and manage student workloads. Evidence sighted during the review identified the effective use of data analysis and interpretation to continually review student achievement outcomes and to evaluate the effectiveness of assessment programmes.

Senior leaders are focussed on continuous improvement to best meet the needs of students while ensuring credible assessment. The Principal's Nominee, working alongside senior leaders, is committed to increasing the school-wide consistency, ownership and improvement in NCEA processes and practice. He regularly shares best assessment practice to encourage self-review and ensure it is robust and current.

Self-review has resulted in a number of new initiatives, including:

- school-wide use of Google Classroom to gather evidence of student achievement and strengthen the effectiveness of assessment processes
- developing a digital platform for the collection and storage of all assessment materials and student evidence
- providing real-time data, allowing teachers to reflect on student progress, to result in timely responses that impact positively on student achievement
- strengthening and evaluating the consistency and effectiveness of quality assurance processes for moderation through an audit undertaken by the Principal's Nominee
- digitally submitting all external moderation material
- weekly review of the current assessment calendar school-wide, to manage student workload, address assessment over-crowding and timeliness of planned assessment
- changing the procedure for missed and late assessments to use teacher professional judgement and to align with the principles of natural justice
- preparing students for future assessment direction through intended involvement in digital examinations
- digitalising, centralising storage and reviewing Memoranda of Understanding to ensure they are fit for purpose and are reconciled with reported results.

These initiatives indicate the school's capacity to strategically plan to ensure assessment programmes continue to meet students' needs. Effective leadership, a collaborative approach to assessment practice and close monitoring of individual student progress reflect an assessment culture that increasingly utilises the flexibility of the NCEA model. This approach maintains robust quality assurance and the credibility of the qualification. The success of this approach is evident in the high levels of student engagement and attainment comparable to that of schools of an equivalent decile.

**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 2019 5.5)*

### **Christchurch Adventist School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities within a class, including offering optional standards
- managing student workloads through reviewing the number of credits offered in each course and providing suggested word limits, to focus on the quality of achievement
- using Google Classroom to provide on-going feedback, and feedforward to support students to present their best evidence of achievement, thereby removing the need for further assessment opportunities
- making portfolio and research-based assessment tasks manageable by “chunking” tasks using milestone checks
- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes, as appropriate, whilst acknowledging the need for students to meet assessment deadlines
- using varied opportunities for the collection of evidence of achievement, including oral and digital presentation formats, to reflect student strengths
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements and providing resources for internal assessment where appropriate
- supporting students to access and achieve in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects
- modifying publicly sourced assessment activities and keeping commercial tasks secure when collecting standard-specific evidence to report derived and emergency grades.

### **Christchurch Adventist School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- monitoring the authenticity of student work through teachers and students using strategies during the assessment and marking process, including reviewing Google Classroom revision changes
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- motivating students to strive for certificate and course endorsement, as appropriate by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- effectively managing NZQA external examinations and reviewing practice to identify improvements

- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* when issuing of student results and using student work as exemplars.

**Personalised approach enhanced to foster student achievement** Learning and assessment opportunities are personalised, based on a thorough knowledge of each student's educational needs, interests and future goals. Teachers meet student's needs by evaluating course design. This has led to adjustments to the range of standards assessed, and changing assessment tasks and contexts, including reflecting the school's special character. Staff have had professional learning in strategies to support second language learners.

Students are provided with opportunities to be accelerated through off-level learning, as appropriate. Offering practical-based courses and engaging with outside providers including Te Kura, and Gateway programmes, extends the school's capacity to provide a range of academic and vocational assessment opportunities.

**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 2019 6.4b)*

### **Christchurch Adventist 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, bench mark exemplars, documented discussions on grade judgements and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment decisions.

### **Christchurch Adventist School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- randomly selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- encouraging teachers to recommend standards to be included for external moderation
- querying external moderator reports if the feedback is not sufficient to inform improvement.

**Focus on reducing workload by using strategic grade verification** Following the grade verification discussion at the 2019 Managing National Assessment seminar, senior leadership has embraced the principles of sufficient verification of assessor judgements through the strategic selection of student work. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. Senior leaders have requested the Principal's Nominee decide the number of pieces of student work to be verified for each teacher to initiate this practice. The sample size has been determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

**Strengthened internal moderation processes** The Principal's Nominee has developed a robust process to monitor the completion of internal moderation to ensure that all reported results are quality assured.

Teachers are required to upload onto a digital platform all assessment related materials, including internal moderation cover sheets and student work. The Principal's Nominee provides clear expectations of internal moderation requirements and regularly checks to ensure internal moderation processes have been completed for each standard assessed. He also reconciles documented processes with actual practice, including checking stored student work, and follows up any identified issues and required actions.

Teachers have responded positively to the use of the digital platform, which has enabled all external moderation material to be digitally submitted.

These processes have strengthened the consistency of moderation processes across the school. Senior leadership can be confident as a result of ongoing review of quality assurance processes that credible results are reported.

**Use of external verifiers to support best practice** Subject teachers extensively network with other subject specialists from outside the school to verify the grades awarded. These relationships are valued for their professional learning, including support provided to make assessment judgements consistent with the standard.

**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)*

### **Christchurch Adventist School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- reporting achievement outcomes and holding Parent Teacher interviews to discuss student progress towards NCEA achievement
- reviewing the school's annual achievement goals, and developing ongoing strategic direction.

### **Christchurch Adventist School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- supporting students and families to use the student management system portal and NZQA Learner login to monitor NCEA progress and check reported results for accuracy
- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
- using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data issues
- ensuring entries submitted to NZQA have a reported result or are withdrawn as appropriate and low levels of late external entries
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of external providers, which are reconciled with current Memoranda of Understanding.

**Effective monitoring to support student achievement progress** The school has developed very effective processes for tracking the progress of all NCEA students.

The Principal's Nominee uses a traffic light system for identifying students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals. Data from the student management system is reviewed weekly, allowing tracking and monitoring of student progress to provide early identification and appropriate interventions when needed.

Students who need support are assisted through a range of targeted strategies. A mentor teacher is assigned to each at risk student, based on an established positive relationship. They support the student to reach their academic goals through tailored conversations, the development of personalised learning programmes and one to one tutoring.

**Effective use of data to inform change** An analysis of NCEA achievement at individual student, subject and school-wide level is annually reported to the Board of Trustees, to inform strategic goals and actions.

Teachers undertake a reflective analysis of achievement data, evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes, including using student voice, to inform changes to course design.

To foster continual improvement in achievement outcomes, documented conversations on student achievement are held between senior leaders and each subject teacher.

**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 for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))*

### **Christchurch Adventist School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access through the student and parent portal
- distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who may be eligible.

### **Christchurch Adventist School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- presenting NCEA information in tailored student meetings and parent evenings
- providing Parent-Student-Teacher conferences to assist parents to discuss their student's goals and achievement leading to the gaining of an NCEA qualification
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year
- supporting professional learning opportunities, including collaborating with external subject specialists and attendance at NZQA Best Practice Workshops, when available
- supporting teachers new to the school through a comprehensive induction programme on the school's assessment and moderation processes.

**Clear communication of NCEA assessment practice** Strong leadership by the Principal's Nominee, shared expectations and effective communication of assessment procedures and processes has facilitated shared ownership of assessment systems by NCEA teachers, and the development of assessment best practice.

Assessment policy and procedure is regularly communicated to staff, students and parents using digital, face-to-face, and written communication opportunities, ensuring assessment information is accessible and understood.

**Students well supported and informed** The students interviewed had a clear understanding of school assessment practices and NCEA procedures, and what was needed to gain a qualification. They considered staff knew them as individual learners and supported them to demonstrate their best evidence of achievement.

**Amendment to staff and student handbooks to reflect practice** Student and staff NCEA information has been updated and digitalised. The handbooks are user-friendly, concise, plain English documents, covering essential information. When the material is next updated, to ensure information is current and fit for purpose, the following amendments should be made:

#### Staff handbook:

- strategies to support authenticity of student work
- outline the justification process to support teachers verify evidence to report derived and emergency grades

- the role of senior and middle management in monitoring internal moderation and the response to external moderation.

The appropriate assessment practices were evident but have not been documented.

Student handbook:

- information on Scholarship, fees and financial assistance.

**Updating course outlines to provide consistent assessment information** Some subject course outlines need updating to include accurate Level 1 literacy and numeracy, University Entrance literacy and further assessment opportunities information, as applicable. Identifying University Entrance approved subjects and endorseable courses is also recommended. Succinct and consistent information for all courses should be readily accessible to students and their caregivers. The Principal's Nominee's intended next step is to generate course statements from the student management system.

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

### **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:

- providing consistent assessment information in all course outlines.