

Managing National Assessment Report

Shirley Boys' High School

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Shirley Boys' 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 2018 (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
- Assessment Policy and Statement, Shirley Boys' High School 2018
- Staff Manual, Shirley Boys' High School 2018
- New Zealand Qualifications Framework Taumata Mātauranga ā-Motu Katea, Assessment Procedure Handbook for Shirley Boys' High School Staff, NCEA Level 1, 2, 3 and Scholarship 2018
- New Zealand Qualifications Framework Taumata Mātauranga ā-Motu Katea, Assessment Procedure Handbook for Shirley Boys' High School Senior Students, NCEA Level 1, 2, 3 and Scholarship 2018
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Department for English, Food Technology, Languages, Physical Education, Science and Visual Arts.

There was a report-back session with the Headmaster, Associate Headmaster, Assistant Principal - Curriculum 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

Shirley Boys' High School

14 June 2018

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

Shirley Boys' High School's strong culture and clear vision for learning centres on providing authentic and broad teaching and assessment programmes, underpinned by the principles of collective responsibility and ownership. This approach is responsive to student need and focuses on maximising opportunities for success, utilising the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model. Embedded as one of the cornerstones of the 'Shirley Man' ethos is high expectations for student achievement, reflected in the school's high rates of student achievement relative to equivalent schools.

School-wide review is being used to plan the delivery of quality learning and assessment experiences in the new physical space being developed for the school's relocation to its new site in mid-2019.

Since the last Managing National Assessment review, the school has responded to identified areas for improvement, and implemented changes to ensure effective quality assurance and the credibility of assessment.

Assessment processes are well-managed, and practices are consistent across the departments that participated in the review. Teachers described a variety of approaches used to differentiate assessment programmes and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate best achievement. A range of academic and vocational pathways are offered. The school is developing effective ways to use technology for gathering achievement evidence, and students have participated in NZQA digital pilot and trial examinations. The number of credits offered in each course has been reduced with a focus on quality assessment. The students interviewed for the review were well-informed about the NCEA and considered teachers positively supported them to achieve.

Robust internal moderation processes are evident in the consistent practice identified during the review. Senior management ensure that only verified results are reported through the annual internal moderation audit process. External moderation outcomes are documented longitudinally by the Principal's Nominee and action plans are monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness when issues are identified.

The management of assessment data is highly effective, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Entries and results are thoroughly checked at all levels of the school, using information and reports available from the student

management system and the NZQA website. Student results are well tracked to monitor progress towards meeting personal goals and qualification attainment. As appropriate, support and interventions assist students to improve their assessment outcomes. Heads of Department analyse results data to reflect on the previous year's programme, to report achievement outcomes to senior management and to inform future course design and strategic direction.

The Principal's Nominee is committed to increasing the school-wide consistency, understanding and ownership of NCEA processes, supported by senior management and staff. Regular sharing of best assessment practice and NCEA information with staff, students and parents, and digitalised assessment processes and documentation ensure effective implementation of changes to improve assessment practices. Focussed discussions on assessment procedures such as moderation and authenticity facilitate school-wide understanding and consistency of practice.

Areas for improvement

Documenting current discussion on the management of digital evidence for assessment in a school policy would ensure school-wide consistency of practice.

The newly updated handbooks on assessment procedures require some further modifications to ensure information is fit for purpose and reflects current practice. Methods of evidence gathering of achievement, the quality assurance process for derived grades and privacy obligations for use of student work should be included in the documentation.

Agreed action

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

- update documentation as indicated in this report.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

2 August 2018

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 13 October 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The review identified five agreed actions, and these have been fully resolved.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a sound agreement rate between teachers and NZQA moderators which reflects effective internal moderation processes. Heads of Department discuss issues identified in external moderation reports with the Principal's Nominee and are required to develop an action plan to rectify concerns. Appropriate support to improve practice is provided, where required. The Principal's Nominee monitors and documents that follow up actions have been completed. Senior line managers review the external moderation reports of their designated departments, and assist with follow up actions, as necessary. Historical external moderation feedback and agreement rates are also tracked to identify trends and potential issues in a subject area, and to identify if actions are resulting in sustained improvements.

Response to data issues The school has responded effectively to an outlier identified by NZQA in one subject area last year. A valid explanation why the outlier has occurred has been given, and the required actions to rectify the situation undertaken.

Internal review

Evidence for the school is 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)

As the school prepares to teach and assess in the flexible learning environments at the new site, modern learning practices that best respond to the strengths, interests and dispositions of the students are being thoroughly investigated. As a response, innovative learning and assessment approaches will complement traditional practice, to support student achievement.

Assessment strategies that have been introduced to improve current practice and student achievement include:

- further reducing the number of credits offered in each course to between 18 – 20, without compromising the learning programme. This will allow a focus on quality teaching and assessment, including attainment of certificate and course endorsement, and managing student and teacher workloads, rather than the quantity of credits students can potentially gain
- widening the practice of pro-actively negotiating assessment deadlines for those students identified as needing Individual Learning Programmes
- identifying and supporting students who need additional numeracy and literacy support to achieve the Level 1 qualification, through a range of targeted strategies and staff professional development

- providing 'Block Weeks' and double period extended learning times that offer opportunities for practical and performance based learning, and dedicated assessment time. Feedback from students indicates the adapted time frame is valued.
- strategically using digital technologies to collect a range of evidence of achievement, as appropriate and participating in digital pilot and trial examinations, to engage students to prepare for future assessment practice.

Proposed new practices under consideration include:

- having most students complete Level 2 NCEA over a two-year period, in recognition that Level 1 will be also be attained and is not a prerequisite to the higher qualification
- gathering evidence of achievement in co-teaching arrangements within modern learning environments
- development of competencies, including through independent study time with specialist teacher support, and service to the school and wider communities
- extended pastoral time to increase mentoring and greater career education and planning, linked to learning pathways and achievement
- the introduction of a ten-day timetable and balanced allocation of time to all curriculum areas in the junior school.

Shirley Boys' High School's strategic and innovative direction outlines the school's capacity to realise it's vision of "*Better than Before.*" The next steps planned for the school are to continue to build staff capacity and confidence as the agreed teaching and assessment practices are implemented.

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 2018 5.5)

Shirley Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities across classes in the same subject and within courses, including the use of negotiated standards
- increasing the range of academic and vocational assessment opportunities available to students by using external providers and links with local businesses
- using Google Docs and the school's learning management system to provide check points and on-going feedback and feedforward information
- assessing students when they are ready, where appropriate
- providing learning and assessment tasks and contexts that offer authentic experiences.

Shirley Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- assisting students to present authentic work using a range of strategies, including using a plagiarism tool, reviewing Google Doc revision changes, and recording the outcomes of any investigations
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but submitted no work
- effectively managing NZQA external examinations
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is valid, verifiable and standard-specific from practice examinations or other appropriate assessment
- celebrating student achievement, including through special assemblies, academic awards and billboards around the school
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Strengthened special assessment provision As part of its self-review process, the school identified barriers to students accessing special assessment conditions. As a consequence, an extensive school-wide approach has been implemented to identify and assess students to support an application for entitlement to special assessment conditions. As a consequence, there has been an increase in the number of applications made to NZQA. Financial barriers are removed by using school-based evidence to support 54 percent of the applications. Staff are well informed of student entitlements and appropriate assistance is provided for internal assessment. Students now sign off on the assistance they require for external examination sessions.

Broadening of evidence gathering practices Broadening evidence gathering practices promote achievement by allowing students to present work in ways that best meet their needs for the standard being assessed. This helps ensure literacy skills are not a barrier to achievement. School leaders recognise the importance of building teacher and student understanding, so they adjust assessment modes with no compromise to authenticity or the quality of assessment practice.

A number of initiatives are underway to expand teacher confidence in their evidence gathering practices and were described during this review visit. These good assessment practices include portfolios, group activities, performance, practical, naturally occurring, oral, a choice of presentation formats, checklists and the use of digital tools. Using one context to collect evidence across more than one standard is also being explored.

Digital assessment conventions The development of policy and procedures is underway, to effectively manage the school-wide conventions to ensure consistent collection and storage of student evidence using the school-dedicated digital platform. These conventions will ensure that evidence collected is authentic, credible and accessible. The next step will be to ensure that teachers and students understand the conventions.

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:

- publish policy and procedures for the management of evidence collected using a digital platform.

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 2018 6.4b)

Shirley Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- having amended or new assessments critiqued prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, benchmark exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to clarify and support assessment judgements
- making assessment judgements consistent with the standard by engaging with subject specialists within or outside the school to verify strategically selected samples of student work, including at grade boundaries
- ensuring teachers are provided with clear expectations on internal moderation requirements and regularly checking departmental processes.

Shirley Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring samples of student work are available by being adequately stored
- randomly selecting samples of student work to meet NZQA requirements
- reviewing moderation reports from Industry Training Organisations as part of the school's response to external moderation
- upskilling teachers to manage the submission process and actively encouraging digital submission of student work, with 57 percent of evidence digitally submitted in 2017.

Strengthened internal moderation processes Following the planned review of moderation systems agreed in the last Managing National Assessment review, the Principal's Nominee has developed an effective process to monitor the completion of internal moderation and to ensure that all reported results are quality assured.

Heads of Department are required to upload completed internal moderation cover sheets using a digital platform. The Principal's Nominee and Assistant Principal – Curriculum conduct an audit to check internal moderation processes have been completed for each standard reported. Senior line managers annually reconcile documented processes with actual practice, including checking stored student work and following up any identified issues and required actions. Teachers have responded positively to the use of the digital platform and, as practice becomes embedded, are uploading cover sheets following completion of each assessment.

These processes have strengthened the consistency of moderation processes across all departments and provide senior management with confidence of quality assurance by annually reconciling documented moderation process with actual practice.

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)

Shirley Boys' High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - tracking and monitoring student progress towards NCEA achievement including priority learners
 - reporting regularly to House Deans those students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy requirements or a qualification, and providing appropriate support where required
 - supporting teacher inquiries on improving student NCEA achievement
 - reporting a monthly summary of student achievement to the Headmaster and Board of Trustees
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - ensuring that the school has consent for every standard assessed
 - ensuring that results students achieve in Year 10 programmes are stored and appropriately reported the following year
 - submitting fees paid and financial assistance application on time
 - reviewing Memoranda of Understanding with outside providers to check that they are fit for purpose and ensuring the correct codes are used when submitting results to NZQA.

Data management systems are a strength Established data management practices and processes, regularly promoted and monitored by the Principal's Nominee, ensure accurate and timely data is reported to NZQA. Key Indicators, file submission and data reports are effectively used to identify and resolve data issues. Extensive checks undertaken prior to the 1 September data submission have increased discussion of external entries between teachers and students, and parents are informed of the decisions made.

Students are actively encouraged to use the student management system portal, NZQA Learner login and regular results printouts to monitor their progress, and check for accuracy of entries and results. In Term 4 a methodical check of all mark books verifies the accuracy of the internally assessed grades reported. High attendance levels for external examinations are evidence of thorough data management and a match to students' intended assessment programme.

Effective data analysis to inform change Heads of Department are provided with standardised comparative and longitudinal data sets for their annual analysis and reflection of achievement. A meeting with their designated senior manager and the Headmaster follows, to review the prior year's achievement outcomes. Action plans are developed to address unexpected performance and patterns, as needed. The discussion of achievement information also evaluates the effectiveness of learning and assessment programmes to inform course design, teaching strategies and professional learning, as well as school strategic goals and direction.

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))

Shirley Boys' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- reviewing communications to ensure that they are fit for purpose and current
- ensuring students receive relevant assessment information for all courses they undertake
- regularly communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families using a range of methods and media
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who may be eligible.

Shirley Boys' High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- annually briefing students in tailored NCEA assemblies
- presenting to parents of Year 11 students NZQA information and school assessment processes at the start of each year, and responding to feedback
- supporting new teachers to understand school assessment and moderation processes and the student management system through an induction process
- emailing parents to inform them of the completion of their son's Level 1 literacy and numeracy attainment
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the school's student management system and providing fortnightly feedback to parents on student academic progress
- supporting digital trials and pilots through the inclusion of information in the handbooks, emailing parents of those students participating in the digital examinations and holding a dedicated student meeting.

Consistent management and communication of assessment practice The Principal's Nominee ensures consistent communication of assessment practice in the senior school by providing clear direction and efficient systems. Where issues become known, he responds quickly and effectively to address these.

Changes in assessment procedures, such as the use of the digital platform for monitoring internal moderation and the external moderation application, are the subject of targeted professional learning.

The students interviewed for the review clearly articulated the school assessment practices and what is needed to gain a qualification. They also indicated ready access to the Principal's Nominee for advice and guidance on NCEA matters and acknowledged the support given by staff to assist students to demonstrate their best achievement, including through managing assessment timeframes and milestone checks, feedback and feedforward.

Documentation needs updating to reflect practice As discussed with senior management, the following assessment practice needs inclusion in the staff handbook:

- clarifying assessment types and strategies to gather evidence of student achievement
- derived grade justification process
- information on the *Privacy Act 1993* stating that permission is necessary if student work is used as exemplars and privacy obligations must be met during a breach of the rules or appeals investigation.

Discussion with students and staff did, however, indicate privacy requirements were being adhered to.

Course outlines are currently being updated to use a common format across all departments. This will enable students and parents to readily access course-related information in a succinct and consistent layout. Literacy, numeracy and University Entrance requirements are included. It is recommended information on further assessment opportunities is also added.

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 indicated in this report.