

Managing National Assessment Report

Hornby High School

June 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Hornby 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 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
- *Hornby High School NCEA National Certificate of Educational Achievement Level 1-3, Information for Student and Parents* (Student Handbook)
- *Internal Assessment and Moderation Procedures*
- School policies for *Student Assessment and Achievement, Recognising Student Achievement, and Reporting to Parents on Student Progress and Achievement*
- 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:
 - Digital Technologies
 - Health
 - Mathematics
 - Social Science
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Design and Visual Communication
- 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

Hornby High School

16 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.

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

What the school is doing well

Hornby High School supports a diverse community and works in partnership with students and whānau to help them achieve to the best of their ability at an appropriate pace. They maximise student achievement by offering a range of academic and vocational opportunities and support, to meet their needs. They further extend assessment opportunities by using other external providers to offer courses and standards that the school would otherwise be unable to provide. The school is making good use of school-based evidence to support eligible students' access to approved special assessment conditions and provides them with appropriate support.

Assessment practices are sound and consistently applied.

The school responds to issues identified by both internal and external review. Self-review is driven by the senior management team taking account of both staff and student voice, which leads to changes in assessment-related practice that better meet student needs.

Staff understand the importance of and value the internal and external moderation of assessment judgements, ensuring the follow up of any necessary actions. This leads to the reporting of credible results to NZQA. This effective practice is reflected in the good level of consistency between teacher and NZQA external moderator judgements.

Data management and use effectively supports student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure that results reported to NZQA are accurate and timely. Achievement data is analysed to review department practice and course design. Students monitor their own progress towards completing qualifications through their portal into the student management system. Deans, class teachers and learning advisors use data to identify and intervene with students at risk of not achieving to their potential.

The school has a range of clear and effective targeted communications to ensure all students and whānau understand the NCEA qualification and the school's assessment policy and procedures.

Areas for improvement

Monitoring the completion of internal moderation can be made more robust by introducing an annual confirmation of completion process by Heads of Department. This will help give senior management assurance that internal moderation has been completed each year for every internal standard assessed.

The process to randomly select student work for external moderation needs further refinement to ensure it meets NZQA's current requirements.

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

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

Agreed action

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

- add a process for Heads of Department to confirm that internal moderation has been completed annually as documented
- further refine the process to select student work for external moderation to ensure it does not allow the marker to predict the sample likely to be selected
- provide clear and comprehensive assessment information to staff.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

29 July 2021

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 12 April 2017 Managing National Assessment Report The review identified a significant issue. The school was required to:

- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*).

This related to unresolved agreed actions from the 2015 review that required the school to:

- standardise information provided in course outlines
- use a transparent selection method for work selected for external moderation.

The actions taken in response have resolved the significant issue. The Principal's Nominee has created a template for course outlines which most departments now use. One department was not aware of the template, so the school needs to consider how new staff are informed of assessment related expectations and noted further in the Communication section of this report.

Staff demonstrated a clear understanding that the selection of work for external moderation is not to be manipulated or subject to further review, and they follow the prescribed school process. The current selection process could allow for prediction by teachers so requires further refinement as noted in the Moderation section of this report.

The 2017 review also had five agreed actions. Two were connected to the significant issue. One related to the resubmission of student work and has been fully resolved. Progress has been made with strengthening the monitoring of internal moderation and updating information to staff and students, but next steps are outlined in the relevant sections of this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a clear process to respond to external moderation. Including senior management in reviewing the effectiveness of any actions taken would make the process more robust. This step could be included in the process to strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation. The Principal's Nominee reviews each report and follows up issues with departments. Where actions are required staff complete a response form and share it with the Principal's Nominee. Departments evaluate the effectiveness of their actions.

Feedback from external moderation shows overall there is a good level of consistency between assessor and moderator judgements, but some subject areas have ongoing concerns to resolve.

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 school's recent focus has been on review and curriculum change in the junior school. This means they are well positioned to direct their attention to the NCEA changes planned over the next few years, building coherently on the progress already embedded with students as they move into the senior school.

Internal review could be more effectively informed by the development of a school-wide framework for departmental review. Some departments annually review assessment data and consider how to improve outcomes for students. Currently these reviews do not feed through to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees' planning or evaluation. The school should consider creating a clear review framework for departments that encompasses matters such as achievement data, moderation outcomes and department assessment practice. This would give senior management assurance that student assessment need is being met, that practice is consistent, and that the effectiveness of any changes are evaluated.

Staff and student driven initiatives have led to changes with senior assessment. For example, to support students to develop as learners, a Wānanga (holistic learning advisory) structure has progressed from the junior school to the Year 11 teaching programme. The school is considering how this may extend to Years 12 and 13 to support the pastoral and academic care of students. In Year 11 it has led to a timetable line which is not focused on assessment to help reduce student assessment workload, though some may happen where appropriate. Student voice, through a Year 12 Health assignment, highlighted concerns around assessment workload issues. In response, the school instigated an assessment calendar to better manage periods of high assessment load. The effectiveness of this new initiative will be reviewed.

The school is growing the number of subjects and students being assessed for external examinations through NZQA's digital platform. They believe digital assessment supports some students preferred style of assessment but wish to gather feedback more formally from learners of the efficacy of digital examinations to help plan their next steps.

The school has trialled several different timings and structures to best support students in undertaking practice assessment for external examinations. They are continuing to review how they best balance the needs of subjects and individuals with different styles of assessment. The final solution needs to consider how it will support continuing the progress already made in increasing the number of unexpected event grades reported to NZQA.

The number of students entitled to use special assessment conditions has grown rapidly with the use of school-based evidence to support applications. The school has identified this as an area of future review to consider how best to streamline their processes and increase student use of the support they have access to.

For consideration

To extend good practice in external review and self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- developing a school wide departmental review process.

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)

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

- providing differentiated assessment through offering multiple courses within some core subjects, and when appropriate, tailoring contexts and assessment opportunities to individuals within a course
- extending assessment opportunities by using a range of external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against standards related to career pathways
- offering mixed level classes to ensure courses run
- undertaking assessment in Year 10 where it supports the intentions of the course
- reducing assessment pressure through managing the number of standards assessed
- completing NCEA qualifications over more than one year, where appropriate
- ensuring that students potentially entitled to special assessment conditions are identified and support trialled
- clearly informing staff of student's special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance when students wish to access it
- appropriate use of supported learning standards.

Hornby High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is standard specific and verified
- safeguarding student privacy.

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)

Hornby High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify grades awarded on a sample of student work, strategically selected based on assessor experience and focused on grade boundaries, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- retaining and sharing work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- following identical processes for moderating both Industry Training Organisation and NZQA administered standards.

Hornby High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring student work is readily available for external moderation by being adequately stored and the Principal's Nominee knowing the location of the materials
- supporting teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan and negotiating appropriate changes
- enabling staff to submit work soon after the internal moderation process is completed to receive timely feedback.

Strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation Heads of Department monitor the completion of internal moderation. Adding an end-of-year attestation, or including in discussions as part of an annual review process with Heads of Department, that internal moderation has been completed and that practice matches the information documented for each standard, would further strengthen monitoring. This would emphasise the importance of the Heads of Department's role in the monitoring process and give greater assurance to senior management that all reported results are credible.

Teachers record detailed comments of their discussion of grade decisions on the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and submit completed sheets to the Principal's Nominee. The Principal's Nominee reads each moderation cover sheet and discusses any issues they raise, including concerns linked back to external moderation, with the teacher, ensuring any issues are rectified. He regularly reconciles the submitted sheets against submitted results and follows up missing sheets with the teacher. The completion and sharing of the cover sheets is moving towards a digitised process.

Further refine the method to select student work for external moderation The school needs to refine their current method for selecting student work for external

moderation to ensure it does not allow the marker to predict the sample likely to be selected. This could be through randomly selecting the starting point or using the random selection function within the school's student management system. Currently staff are required to start at student surname 'H' and then pick every third students' work.

Consider developing a policy for the storage of digital assessment material As teachers develop their confidence with digital pedagogies more assessments are being completed digitally. Developing a policy for the storage of digital material will enable the school to ensure it is secure, can continue to be easily accessed, shared with outside verifiers, and be available, if required, for external moderation.

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:

- add a process for Heads of Department to confirm that internal moderation has been completed annually as documented
- further refine the process to select student work for external moderation to ensure it does not allow the marker to predict the sample likely to be selected.

For consideration

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

- developing a policy for the storage of digital assessment material.

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)

Hornby High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- departments reviewing results to inform course design.

Hornby High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- recording Not Achieved results or withdrawing student entries, as appropriate
- closely managing late entries
- only reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct code of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding
- resolving any issues highlighted in the *Key Indicators* or submission error messages.

Student progress is effectively tracked and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes The school effectively uses data to track student progress and make assessment related decisions during the year, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. Senior Deans meet with all students twice a year for an academic interview to discuss their goals and progress one on one. They monitor students throughout the year and manage those at risk of not achieving to their potential, working with teachers and whānau to resolve any issues. Interventions include extra study sessions and changes to assessment programmes.

Student's learning advisors (the teacher attached to their Wānanga group) are also involved in supporting student progress. Students are encouraged to use their portal to the student management system and MyMahi to help them set goals and track their own progress.

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))

Hornby High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to students and their families using a range of methods.

Hornby High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- using senior hui and email to students sparingly to highlight important information, with reinforcement through learning advisors and class teachers
- ensuring information in the student handbook is up to date, concise and in language appropriate to the audience
- annually publishing to staff *the Internal Assessment and Moderation Procedures*.

Students show a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures Students could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understand school processes such as extensions to assessment submission dates, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals. This shows that communication to students about the qualification and assessment practices is effective.

Provide clear and comprehensive assessment information to staff Providing clear and comprehensive information about school and NZQA processes to staff would ensure they all have access to the same information and support consistent practice. The school is planning to make this information available through an online platform. The clear document already provided on internal moderation could provide a useful model for this other information.

Staff refer to the student handbook but as this is targeted to its audience, it does not cover everything teachers need to know. Teachers appreciate the knowledge of the Principal's Nominee and his willingness to answer questions and guide staff. Having comprehensive material they can refer to themselves would help free him up to focus on other aspects of his role.

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 clear and comprehensive assessment information to staff.