

MANAGING NATIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Opihi
College**

September 2016

Managing National Assessment Review

The purpose of reviewing the management of national assessment is:

- 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 2016* (Assessment Rules); and
- to confirm 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report.

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of assessment materials and of teacher grade judgements for student work selected by the school's random-selection process.
- A random sampling of aspects of assessment systems and data for review or audit on an annual basis.
- A visit to review each school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

Managing National Assessment Report

This report summarises NZQA's evaluation of how effectively the school:

- has addressed issues identified through the three components of 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
- manages and makes use of assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

In preparing this report, the School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal, and Heads of Department for Mathematics, Social Sciences and Technology.

The school also provided pre-review information and the following documents:

- *Assessment Practice – Staff Handbook*
- *Assessment Practice – Student Handbook*
- *Policy Guidelines and Procedures – Assessment*
- *Policy Guidelines and Procedures – Responsibility and Evaluation*
- a Department Review Report for one subject area
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

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

OVERVIEW

Opihi College

15 September 2016

What the School does well

Opihi College provides a range of assessment programmes to reflect students' interests and aspirations. Outside providers are used to offer Vocational Pathway courses and where student numbers mean the class would not otherwise be offered. Differentiation of assessment programmes and assessing students when ready allow students to engage in a programme that reflects their abilities.

Assessment and quality assurance reviews have been conducted over the past two years. Where areas of potential risk were identified, changes have been made to address these and ensure fair and valid assessment practice school wide.

Internal moderation is an embedded process, documented by teachers and monitored by Senior Management to ensure all standards assessed are subject to the school's quality assurance process. External moderation is effectively followed up, identified required actions are documented and a monitoring process in place to ensure their completion.

The school uses a range of methods to communicate NCEA information to staff, students and parents. Academic Conferences are used to support students achieve set goals. The conferences are also used to assist parents understand NCEA and the use of the parent portal to monitor NCEA and Vocational Pathways progress.

The school uses data analysis to identify students at risk of not achieving a qualification, inform changes to assessment programmes to better meet student needs and provide support as appropriate. Improving student achievement, including increasing Merit and Excellence grades is a strategic goal of the school. Professional learning and curriculum reviews are being used to support the achievement of this goal.

Staff feel well supported by the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal in terms of developing good assessment practice, providing advice and guidance, and affirming their current good practice. Under their leadership, the school has developed procedures to ensure credible results are reported to NZQA.

Areas for School improvement

Students are required to "sign-off" their grades prior to submission to NZQA. The school plans to remind staff that when carrying out the "sign-off" procedure they must ensure that student privacy is protected. The school will also include information on privacy requirements in the student and staff handbooks, when next updated.

To help manage teacher internal assessment workload the school plans to clarify with staff that the student work selected for verification should be purposefully selected and be sufficient to confirm decisions are consistent with the standard.

Next Steps

No significant issues This review did not identify any significant issues that would prevent the school from meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

Agreed action However, NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to further refine assessment practices. Senior management undertakes to:

- clarify student work for verification should be a purposeful selection
- remind staff to ensure student privacy is protected when signing acceptance of grades.
- include privacy of student information in the staff and student handbooks, when next updated.

For consideration The school is encouraged to consider the following as detailed in other sections of this report:

- developing policies and procedures for the collection of digital evidence
- sharing Circular A2015/025 *Clarification of the Derived Grade Process* to manage teacher workload.

Next Managing National Assessment review Based on the outcome of this assessment systems check, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

7 November 2016

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Response to External and Internal Reviews

Previous external reviews

Evidence was sought that external review recommendations and findings have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

There were no action items in the 14 August 2013 Managing National Assessment Report.

Robust external moderation follow-up There is an effective and robust process to follow-up with external moderation. The Principal's Nominee discusses with Heads of Department the feedback, agree on actions and identify any support. The agreed actions are documented and monitored by the Principal's Nominee for completion. This is good practice.

Internal review

Evidence was sought that the school was effectively 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 Deputy Principal and Principal's Nominee, who are new to the school, have carried out a number of assessment and quality assurance reviews over the past two years to ensure credible assessment practice. Where issues or risks have been identified, changes have been made. Two actions arising out of review findings are the withdrawal of reported internal assessment grades for a standard until they were verified, and providing support for teachers to make links outside of the school for verification.

An effective process to monitor that internal moderation occurs for all standards assessed has been put in place. The Principal's Nominee sights the internal moderation cover sheets and carries out "mini MNAs" to confirm the documentation reflects actual practice.

The school's Quality Management System document and the staff and student handbooks have been extensively reviewed to ensure they contain relevant information and are in an audience appropriate language. These documents effectively support credible assessment practice by all teachers.

Achievement data is reviewed annually by the school and Heads of Department and used to develop schoolwide and departmental achievement goals. Assessment programmes are reviewed and standards matched against achievement data. New courses have been created and others dissolved in response to student numbers as well as achievement data analysis. Schoolwide professional learning on methods of gathering evidence and authenticity has been used to support the development of credible teacher assessment practice and support students to provide their best evidence.

Curriculum committee meetings are used to provide a forum where current assessment policies and practices are reviewed and planned changes decided. Examples of changes made include:

- offering NCEA assessment for Year 10 students in some subject areas to provide an opportunity for extension
- the introduction of evidence-gathering using portfolios to assist students to present their best evidence
- reducing the number of credits in a programme so students “do less better” and to support students gain Merit and Excellence grades
- the introduction of multi-subject discipline courses, and assessment tasks providing evidence for multiple standards to manage student assessment workload
- changes to the balance of external and internal assessment in subjects to better meet student needs.

The school’s review processes demonstrate its capacity to undertake its own review to identify areas of potential risk to credible assessment practice and inform changes to programmes offered to better meet student needs.

No action required

No issues with the school’s response to NZQA external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

Assessment Practice

How does the school's assessment practice allow for the effective management of assessment for national qualifications? (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6, 3)

Opihi College has effective processes and procedures for:

- **ensuring credible assessment practice by:**
 - managing further assessment and resubmission opportunities in line with NZQA requirements
 - ensuring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment
 - collecting valid, authentic standard-specific evidence to support derived grade applications
 - reporting “Not Achieved”, where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
 - collecting student evidence digitally and orally and using portfolios
 - using Google Docs to provide feedback and feedforward information to assist students to present their best evidence
 - collecting school-based assessment data to support applications for special assessment conditions.

- **meeting student assessment needs by:**
 - offering Work and Study Skills literacy and numeracy standards for students identified as requiring additional support
 - assessing students when ready, through flexible timeframes
 - negotiating with students the standards to be undertaken in their assessment programme
 - offering a range of vocationally focussed assessment programmes through STAR, Gateway, Vocational Pathways and providers external to the school
 - using the correspondence school and Virtual Learning Communities to offer course where student numbers are insufficient to offer a class.

Further clarification of derived grade justification process required Heads of Department described using appropriate material for assessment that may generate evidence for a derived grade. As a next step it is recommended the justification process described in NZQA circular A2015/025 *Clarification of Derived Grade Processes* be shared with staff to manage assessment workload.

Class profiles support student achievement Class profiles have been introduced to assist teachers to identify the learning needs of the classes they teach. Each subject teacher uses the class profiles to modify the assessment programme to meet the cohort needs and where appropriate support individual student achievement.

Privacy Act (1993) reminder Students are required to “sign-off” their grades at the end of the year to verify their accuracy and rectify any errors. A printed class list from the student management system is generally used. The school agreed to remind all staff of the need to ensure student privacy is protected during this process and to include this information in the staff and student handbooks.

Agreed action

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

- remind staff to ensure student privacy is protected when signing acceptance of grades.

Moderation

How effectively does school internal and external moderation assure assessment quality? (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 3)

Opihi College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal and external moderation:

The Principal's Nominee:

- ensures teachers are provided with clear expectations on internal moderation requirements
- requires teachers to submit the completed internal moderation cover sheets to him prior to reporting results to NZQA
- generates the random selection for external moderation
- proactively monitors external moderation feedback and agreement rates to identify trends and potential issues in a subject area
- follows up on external moderation feedback, including documenting actions, monitoring that actions are completed and arranges teacher support as appropriate
- uses the same external moderation follow-up procedure for ITO and NZQA managed standards.

Teachers:

- use subject-specialists from within and outside of the school to verify assessor judgements
- identify and use benchmark exemplars to support assessor judgements.

On-line external moderation submission is used The school submitted nearly all material digitally in 2015 and has set a goal of 100% for 2016. The school's planned next step is to develop a central storage system to facilitate submission in 2017. Professional learning for staff has been provided to support the move to digital evidence collection. At the review it was suggested that the school develop a digital assessment policy to support consistent and credible assessment practice when collecting digital evidence.

Effective monitoring of internal moderation by Senior Management Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that internal moderation occurs for all standards assessed in their area. The Principal's Nominee carries out "mini MNAs", whereby he visits departments to monitor the internal moderation process, affirms good practice and identifies where improvements are required.

The "mini MNAs" identified that internal moderation was not occurring in one department and was not sufficiently robust in another. Senior Management has addressed these risks to the credibility of the qualification.

Verification process requires clarification Two Heads of Department interviewed described verifying all samples of student work available when there were less than 10 students in a class. Student work for verification should be purposefully selected, for example at grade boundaries or where they are not confident in the judgement. Selecting purposefully will assist with reducing teacher workload.

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:

- clarify that student work selected for verification should be a purposeful selection.

Data Quality and Use

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 2.7, 3)

Opihi College effectively:

- **manages assessment-related data by:**
 - reporting results and entries to NZQA in a timely manner
 - checking the accuracy of external entries prior to the 1 September data submission to ensure minimal late entries
 - assisting with fees and financial assistance applications
 - using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors.
- **makes use of assessment-related data to:**
 - enable mentors to complete students' Personal Learning Plans, set and review goals, and monitor progress toward NCEA qualification
 - identify priority learners and those at risk of not gaining a qualification and negotiate programme changes as appropriate
 - report to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement data by gender and ethnicity against national statistics
 - set departmental and school achievement goals, and inform changes to standards and programmes offered.

Supporting literacy development The school's analysis of Level 1 literacy achievement has identified that students who enter the school in Year 9 with low literacy skills are those who are at risk of not gaining Level 1 literacy. In response to this the school has focussed on developing literacy skills to support achievement in Year 11. Achievement standards that contribute to Level 1 literacy have been identified to monitor literacy achievement for standards in these assessment programmes. A Work and Study Skills literacy class is offered for those students who require this level of support.

Standards not assigned to a course The review identified that results from outside providers are frequently not assigned to a relevant school course. The school planned to review these results and, where appropriate, attach them to the course of study they were undertaken in. This will provide meaningful assessment programme information for the students on their 2016 Record of Achievement.

Changes to support student achievement Improving student achievement, including increasing the number of Merit and Excellence grades is a focus of the school. Timetable structure changes involving longer periods, timetabling mentoring as part of the school week, and decreasing the number of credits in a programme are changes made to support this focus. The school is tracking student achievement data to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes. The school has identified an increase in excellence grades has already been achieved compared to 2015, and attributes this to the changes made.

No action required

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

Communication

How effectively does the school maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, and students and their families?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6, 2.7ii, 3)

Opihi College has effective processes and procedures for:

- maintaining the currency of assessment policy and procedures
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families, using a range of media
- providing students with consistent assessment programme information digitally and in hard copy, using a common template
- supporting new teachers to the school to understand school policy and procedures through an induction programme
- annually monitoring that a memorandum of understanding is held with all external provider codes used to report grades
- assisting students and parents to use the parent portal and NZQA Learner login to monitor NCEA and Vocational Pathways progress.

Comprehensive and plain English staff and student handbooks The staff and student handbooks have been fully reviewed over the past two years and are relevant plain English documents. Heads of Department described a consistent understanding of good assessment practice and the school's assessment procedures. When next updated the school agreed to document the requirement to ensure student privacy is protected when "signing-off" internal assessment grades.

Monitoring and mentoring supports student achievement A Conference Day involving students, parents and mentor is used to engage parents in learning activities to upskill their knowledge of the NCEA and Vocational Pathways. It is anticipated these conferences will assist students to reach their goals with the assistance of parents. An academic counselling programme is used to guide students through their NCEA achievement and future course selection.

Staff exit procedures have been reviewed A review of the staff exit procedures has occurred to ensure student work is stored appropriately for external moderation, if required, and results reported. This is in response to previous issues. An exit procedure has now been developed and the next step planned is to introduce a checklist for Heads of Department to use in this process.

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:

- include information on ensuring student privacy is protected.