

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Roxburgh Area School**

**October 2018**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Roxburgh Area School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

## Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess; and
- to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment according to the requirements of the *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 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 Procedures 2018, Information for Teachers* (Staff Handbook)
- *Assessment Policy and Procedures 2018, Information for Students and Parents* (Student Handbook)
- *Roxburgh Area School, Pathways to Success for 2019*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Head of Department English and Teacher in Charge of Arts
- Head of Department Mathematics and teacher of Digital Technology
- Head of Department Physical Education and Health, Senior Syndicate Leader, eDean and Senior Dean
- Head of Department Science
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and Senior Syndicate Leader 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

## Roxburgh Area School

18 October 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

Roxburgh Area School demonstrates the capacity to undertake review and evaluation of the effectiveness of their NZQA assessment practices and procedures. The school responds appropriately to assessment issues identified by external review. Individual teachers review external moderation reports and the Principal's Nominee assists with developing action plans to address issues, and provides senior management with progress feedback. Self-review has led to changes in assessment-related practice to better meet the needs of students.

Assessment processes are effectively managed to meet the qualifications needs of students. The school provides differentiated assessment through some personalisation of courses for individual students. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards the school does not have the capacity to deliver. The school has rigorous systems in place to support students studying courses through distance learning. Identified students are provided with approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported. Assessment practices are sound and consistently applied. These all contribute towards assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes.

Embedded internal moderation processes and monitoring by the Principal's Nominee ensure credible assessment outcomes.

Data management and use effectively support student achievement outcomes. Assessment data checks help ensure results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Achievement data is analysed to review individual students' achievement, monitor student progress to complete qualifications, review school courses, and set strategic direction. Students are encouraged to use their NZQA Learner login and their portal into the student management system to track results, and then discuss their progress with mentors.

A range of effective communication is in place to ensure staff, students and caregivers have a common understanding of the NCEA qualification and the school's assessment policy and procedures.

### Areas for improvement

Ensuring all internal moderation cover sheets are submitted to the Principal's Nominee and reconciled with the results reported will give senior management

assurance that internal moderation has been completed each year for every internal standard assessed.

Information to students, parents and staff is comprehensive, but some minor changes and additions are required so that it is current and accurate.

### **Agreed action**

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

- ensure all internal moderation cover sheets are submitted to the Principal's Nominee and reconciled with results reported
- update staff and student information so that it provides current and accurate information.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

28 November 2018

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://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 30 April 2015 Managing National Assessment Report** The review identified two agreed actions related to responding to external moderation. These have been fully resolved.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation that ensure Senior Management are fully informed of issues and involved in the review of outcomes where required. Feedback from external moderation shows no widespread or ongoing assessment concerns.

The Principal's Nominee provides the subject teacher with a copy of the moderation report. He discusses any issues with the teacher and supports staff with changes as necessary, such as arranging professional development, accessing cluster meetings or altering the task or assessment programme. The Principal's Nominee records any actions taken to address the issue. Teachers include a comment on external moderation in their annual class analysis.

Next year the Principal's Nominee plans to complete all follow up in Term 1 to ensure any required changes are timely.

### 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)*

Internal review and change is driven by senior management and the Board of Trustees, evaluating the effectiveness of current systems in response to identified issues, and exploring potential improvements. Several assessment-related initiatives have been introduced to improve current practice and enhance student achievement. These include:

- changing the focus of annual department reviews by including an action plan at the start of year to improve specific areas of department practice, with progress reviews repeated at key points in the year
- reviewing the operation of the Learning Centre to ensure student access to technology and staff supervision is effectively supporting achievement, particularly for students working through the virtual learning network.

The school's self-review includes forward planning as well as responding to issues as they arise. An intended area of future development for the Principal's Nominee is greater involvement of Heads of Department in the response to external moderation and the analysis of NCEA results so they have ownership of the processes.

**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)*

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

- differentiating assessment through offering varied contexts and, where appropriate, tailoring assessment opportunities to individuals within a course
- discussing with each student their course option choices in Term 4, and confirming them at the start of Term 1, to ensure they align with planned future pathways and that students are likely to succeed
- continuing internal assessment opportunities once examination leave starts at the end of year for students whose programmes are less focused on external assessment
- ensuring that students potentially entitled to special assessment conditions are identified and support trialled
- clearly informing staff of students' special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance
- providing a nearby off-site external examination venue to ensure it is the best possible available environment for assessment.

### **Roxburgh Area 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
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Focus on providing assessment to meet student needs** To ensure the school provides suitable pathways for students, they are offered a wide choice of courses. The school endeavours to find ways of accommodating their selections through school-based classes, which could be multi-level and/or mixed subjects, or through a wide range of external providers, including several virtual learning networks, the Otago Secondary Tertiary College, Star and Gateway courses and Te Kura.

**High level of support for students undertaking distance learning** The school provides a high level of support for students studying through distance learning. They start to develop the study skills students require to succeed in distance learning in the middle school and carefully manage the number of subjects a student undertakes. Students study in a dedicated, staffed learning centre. Mentors help them to manage their learning and act as their advocate when needed. The eDean closely monitors each individual's completion of work and progress, contacting offsite teachers if they require additional support. Where possible, the school arranges



specialised support from school staff or members of the local community and for students to attend some lessons at the providing school where required.

**Consider reviewing the amount of assessment in a student's programme**

Undertaking a large number of assessments can be at the expense of the deeper learning needed for Merit and Excellence results and also impacts on both student and teacher workloads. The school should consider reviewing the number of assessments a student completes in a year.

The Year 12 and 13 students interviewed had gained over 130 Level 1 credits and only 80 are required to gain a Level 1 certificate. On average over the last three years approximately 60 percent of the Year 12 cohort gained 90 or more Level 2 credits and 50 percent of the Year 13 cohort achieved 90 or more Level 3 credits, although only 60 credits are required to gain their NCEA certificate at these levels.

**For consideration**

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider:

- reviewing the amount of assessment in a student's programme.

## 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)*

### **Roxburgh Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- setting a clear expectation of staff to refer to clarifications and previous moderation reports as the first step in the process
- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- using the Southern Area Schools Community of Learning to develop new links with subject specialists
- retaining work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

### **Roxburgh Area 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 suitable changes
- beginning to submit work soon after the internal moderation process is completed to receive timely feedback
- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to meet current NZQA requirements.

**Maintain a centralised record of the completion and monitoring of internal moderation** The school's procedure of a copy of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* being passed on to the Principal's Nominee at the end of the internal moderation process needs to always be followed, and the sheets reconciled with reported results. This will give senior management recorded evidence and assurance that the internal moderation process has been completed for all standards assessed. It will also assist with succession planning and mitigate possible issues arising from any personnel changes.

This recorded evidence would substantiate the monitoring that occurs through informal checks by the Principals' Nominee and during regular senior syndicate meetings attended by all staff who teach classes assessing NZQA standards, including all members of senior management. In these meetings the moderation process and the progress and completion of the internal moderation of individual standards is discussed.

**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:

- ensure all internal moderation cover sheets are submitted to the Principal's Nominee and reconciled with results reported.

## 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)*

### Roxburgh Area School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - analysing results for individual students as well as comparatively and longitudinally to inform course design and set strategic direction
  - comparing results for school based and virtual learning courses
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis and reminding staff of file submission dates so they can ensure markbooks are up to date
  - reporting Not Achieved results as appropriate
  - having teacher and students checks at key times in the year that external entries and internal results are correct
  - 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 Indicator Checklist*.

**Student progress is effectively tracked and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes** The school effectively uses data to track student progress, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. The school submits all entries in their first data entry file to NZQA, thereby ensuring students, parents and staff can see the full year's assessment programme, and can not only track results but also forward plan.

Where possible, mentor groups are based around existing connections between a teacher and student and continue throughout the senior school to build an informed and supportive relationship. Mentors access the summary of assessment results, progress to NZQA qualifications and Attitude to Learning indicators in the student management system. This information is used to help students make informed decisions when discussing their next steps towards their assessment goals. If needed, extra support is put in place including guidance from the Senior Dean/eDean, assistance with managing assessment workload, checkpoints to encourage progress and individualising assessment programmes.

Progress towards, and any necessary support for, students gaining literacy and numeracy requirements for NCEA certificates is effectively managed by the teacher of Level 1 Mathematics and the Head of English.

**Consider how to further support student access to the functions provided through the NZQA Learner login** The school should consider how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner login so they can continue to access the functions it provides. When students do not register their NZQA Learner login,

they cannot apply for reconsiderations and/or reviews for external assessments, order certificates and their New Zealand Record of Achievement or check their personal details and the reporting of results to NZQA.

Over recent years close to 100 percent of students registered their Learner login, but this dropped to below 80 percent in 2017. The introduction of the facility for students to access their data in the student management system appears to have impacted on the number registering their NZQA Learner login.

The school encourages students to register both their NZQA Learner login and use the student portal in the student management system to track their progress and check entries and results.

### **For consideration**

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner login.

## 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))*

### **Roxburgh Area School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive clear and consistent outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff, students and their families using a range of methods
- encouraging the completion of financial assistance applications where appropriate and the payment of NZQA fees

### **Roxburgh Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- using a variety of assemblies at key times in the year to brief students about assessment policy and procedures
- the Principal's Nominee reminding staff of NZQA related process at the start of each year and in senior syndicate meetings
- presenting NZQA and school assessment-related processes to parents as part of the careers/options meeting in Term 3, at a parent and student meeting in Term 1, and through timely reminders in newsletters
- providing access to NZQA related publications in both physical and digital formats.

**Students show a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures** The students interviewed could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently.

**Changes required to staff and student information** School publications require some minor alterations and additions to give accurate information that reflects current practice. This includes:

- clarifying that a Not Achieved result is reported if a student has an assessment opportunity but submits no or insufficient evidence of achievement
- removing references to a further assessment opportunity only being available to a student whose result was Not Achieved
- adding the process for managing any breaches to internal assessment rules
- removing references to compassionate consideration in the derived grades 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:

- update staff and student information so that it provides current and accurate information.