

Managing National Assessment Report

Otago Boys' High School

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Otago 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
- *Otago Boys' High School, Qualifications & Assessment Information 2018, Student Information*
- *Otago Boys' High School, The rules and guidance for getting through NCEA successfully in 2018*
- *Otago Boys' High School, Qualifications & Assessment Policy 2018, Parent/caregiver*
- *Otago Boys' High School, Qualifications & Assessment Policy 2018 (Staff Handbook)*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- three students
- Head of Department for Mathematics
- Head of Department for Social Sciences
- Teacher in Charge of Agricultural and Horticultural Science
- Teacher in Charge of Design and Visual Communication.

There was a report-back session with the Rector 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

Otago Boys' High School

28 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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

What the school is doing well

Otago Boys' High School is responsive to external review and has implemented all the required action items from the 2015 Managing National Assessment report, resolving the significant issues recorded. The school also demonstrates the capacity to undertake its own review and evaluation of the effectiveness of their NZQA assessment practices and procedures. The school encourages staff to reflect on their assessment practice with a focus on ensuring that they are supporting the achievement of their students in the best way possible.

Assessment processes are effectively managed to meet the qualifications needs of students. The school is increasing its provision of differentiated assessment. This includes multiple course choices in certain subject areas, personalisation of entries for identified students, assessing in contexts negotiated with students and collecting evidence in a variety of formats. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards the school does not have the capacity to deliver. Identified students are provided with approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported. These all contribute towards assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes.

Internal moderation processes, responses to external moderation, monitoring by the Heads of Department and Principal's Nominee and reviews by the senior leadership team ensure credible assessment outcomes.

Data management and use effectively support student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Students are encouraged to use their NZQA Learner login and the student management system to monitor their progress. The submission of weekly data files to NZQA ensure students have access to up to date results to help with their tracking. Achievement data is analysed to review school courses and set strategic direction. The school has in place and is continuing to develop an in-depth data driven process to help Deans and senior leadership monitor student achievement, and to identify and initiate support for students.

The school has a range of communications systems that help staff, students and caregivers to gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

The monitoring of the completion of internal moderation can be made more robust by introducing an annual attestation by Heads of Department as part of their end of year

review with the senior leadership team. This will help give senior management assurance that internal moderation has been completed each year for every internal standard assessed.

Agreed action

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

- add an end of year attestation by Heads of Department that internal moderation has been completed as planned.

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7 March 2019

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 27 March 2015 Managing National Assessment Report The review identified four significant issues that were checked by NZQA after 12 months to review the progress made. The school was required to:

- follow-up external review recommendations and findings as outlined further in this report (CAAS Guidelines 3)
- ensure that it only reports results to NZQA for internally assessed standards that have undergone a process of internal moderation (Assessment Rules 5.6)
- ensure that internal moderation is adequately monitored by senior management (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii)
- comply with NZQA requirements to provide work for external moderation (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv).

The school has robust documented processes in place, managed by the Principal's Nominee to ensure that moderation is monitored by senior management and that all results reported to NZQA undergo an internal moderation process. Through setting clear expectations for the storage of student material and checks by the Heads of Department and Principal's Nominee, the school has met the requirement to provide work for external moderation. The processes are outlined in the moderation section of this report, with an agreed action to further strengthen the quality assurance process. These actions have resolved the significant issues.

The 2015 review also had one agreed action which was to review flexibility of assessment to provide more individualised practices to meet student needs. Flexibility of assessment has been reviewed resulting in greater individualisation for students and this is detailed in the assessment practice section of this report. The school acknowledges some departments have changed practice more than others and review will need to be ongoing to build on the progress made so far.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. These ensure Senior Management are fully informed of issues and involved in the review of outcomes where required. Recorded actions by the school and feedback from external moderation show that the school has resolved issues in learning areas which had widespread or ongoing concerns.

Staff reflect on each moderation report and are encouraged to seek clarification and/or appeals and request professional development where appropriate. Their response to the report and any required actions are discussed and noted with senior management in the mid-year Head of Department and Teacher in Charge reviews. If needed further follow up occurs in the end of year reviews.

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)

Senior management encourage staff to reflect on their practice with a focus on how to best meet student need. Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge of a Subject meet with the senior leadership team three times a year. The first meeting is to feedback on their analysis of results and share next steps. The mid-year meeting focusses on reviewing progress with the end of year discussion summing up the effect of the changes made. This has led to greater change in the assessment programmes available in terms of the standards offered, their context, the order of the programme and flexibility of student entries. One example is the change in focus of the Agricultural and Horticultural course to move to standards that will broaden potential career pathways. This has resulted in greater engagement and an increase in the number of students opting for the subject.

Senior management also initiate review and evaluate changes made. To improve communications with parents the school has replaced the annual assessment plans on their website with a weekly email to parents about upcoming assessment deadlines. Feedback has indicated this timelier information has improved parental engagement and assisted students with managing their workload. The school has also introduced other strategies to help students manage their workload and mental health such as outside speakers and an evening for Year 13 students to discuss how to handle any issues.

The school has used the Principal's Nominee's expertise and outside agencies to develop analysis of data to improve student outcomes. Every two weeks information is collected on 25 indicators for each senior student. This not only allows the school to identify and initiate support for students at risk of not achieving but also target Dean led conversations with other groups of students or individuals. The model is also used to predict students' achievement for the rest of the year to help make informed decisions when discussing a student withdrawing from a course or individual standards. As well as reviewing the accuracy of the predictions, the school is using past indicators and performance data to develop the accuracy of the model.

Other assessment related initiatives that have been introduced to improve current practice and enhance student achievement include:

- no internal assessments in the run up to school examinations to mirror the NCEA external examinations, so as to better prepare students and to allow them to focus on the school examinations so that they achieve representative results for derived grades
- changing the application for an assessment extension from the Principal's Nominee signing it off to a teacher/student conversation based on student need, with it being referred to the Principal's Nominee only if required
- using incidents such as an occurrence of plagiarism as case studies to consider what each department can learn from them
- detailed review of course selections for students moving from Year 10 to Year 11 to ensure their choices will engage them, provide opportunities for success and support future career aspirations
- deciding this year to move course confirmation meetings from the start of the year to just after the NCEA external examinations so that students reflect more immediately on their performance and the impact on appropriate courses for the following year.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews 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)

Otago Boys' 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
- gathering assessment evidence in different formats including podcasts, videos and pair or group work
- providing a homework club for Māori and Pasifika students
- supporting targeted students to gain NCEA Level 2 over a two-year programme
- 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.

Otago Boys' 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
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Focus on achievement in external assessments The school has introduced greater flexibility for students to individualise their external assessment entry. This is negotiated with their teachers with a focus on the students making best use of the time available in an external examination session to attain their highest possible level of achievement.

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 2018 6.4b)

Otago Boys' 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 a sample of student work focused at grade boundaries, to help ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- 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*

Otago Boys' 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
- teachers beginning to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan and negotiating appropriate changes
- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements.

Monitoring of internal moderation Heads of Department monitor the completion of all aspects of internal moderation. They complete a written self-audit of all NCEA assessment processes early in term one. This is submitted to the Principal's Nominee and forms the basis of a discussion with each Head of Department and a physical check of stored materials. The Principal's Nominee records the outcomes of his visit and follows up any issues that may arise. Moderation is part of the department review by the senior leadership team in term four. Adding an attestation that internal moderation has been completed as outlined in the term one audit to the review would further strengthen the monitoring process. This would give greater assurance to senior management that all reported results are credible.

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 an end of year attestation by Heads of Department that internal moderation has been completed as planned.

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)

Otago Boys' High School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - submitting data files weekly to NZQA so students can accurately track their progress
 - encouraging students to track their own progress using their NZQA Learner login and the portal to the school's student management system
 - providing staff with a detailed breakdown of assessment data so they can focus on drawing conclusions to inform course design and set future direction
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reporting Not Achieved results as appropriate
 - having form teachers check with students at key times in the year that external entries and internal results are correct, and recording this in a centralised database
 - closely managing late entries
 - holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers and reconciling them with entries
 - resolving any issues highlighted in the *Key Indicator Checklist*.

Student progress is effectively monitored to improve achievement outcomes

The school effectively uses data to monitor student progress with a focus on improving student achievement. The processes and outcomes that the school are developing are covered in detail in the self-review section of this report.

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.

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))

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

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- widely publicising NZQA fees and financial assistance information and following up with identified families
- inducting new teachers to familiarise them with assessment and moderation processes.

Otago Boys' High 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
- presenting NZQA and school assessment related processes at a parent and student meeting in term one and at Pasifika and Māori *Success Evenings*
- inviting parents to student academic coaching sessions
- the Principal's Nominee reminding staff of NZQA related process through Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge of Subject meetings
- reviewing communications and adapting them to better inform students.

Access to information on NCEA and school assessment procedures The school provides a range of information to students and parents in various formats. There is clear, detailed information on the school website on how NCEA works. Online Curriculum Guides provide information on the assessment of each course and how they contribute to literacy, numeracy, endorsements, University Entrance and Vocational Pathways. A comprehensive document covering NCEA Qualifications and Assessment Policy is available for students and parents/caregivers. This has been distilled down to a four-page student information document giving them easy access to the information they need about school processes. The school has also recently produced a double-sided sheet covering a couple of key processes focusing on how students can best succeed.

The students interviewed showed a good understanding of school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals but were not totally accurate in their understanding of how NCEA works. Including some information on this aspect in the student information document could assist in clarifying their understanding.

Communicating the availability of further assessment opportunities In moving from publishing templated assessment outlines on the school website to sending a weekly email about upcoming assessment deadlines, written information on the opportunity for further assessment opportunities has been lost. The school should review the most appropriate way of ensuring this information is available to students.

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:

- adding information on how NCEA works to the student information document.