

Managing National Assessment Report

King's High School

May 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively King's 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
- *NZQF Qualifications Assessment Procedures 2021, King's High School Staff Handbook*
- *NZQF Qualifications Assessment Procedures 2021, King's High School Student Handbook*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal – Curriculum and Technology
- Heads of Department for:
 - Biology and Science
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Social Science

and

- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Senior Leadership Team 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

King's High School

26 May 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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

At the request of NZQA and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 to 2021. The review was postponed due to the disruption to schools from the COVID-19 lockdown.

What the school is doing well

King's High School has a shared vision for optimal academic achievement, through a focus on personal excellence. Effective ongoing review and analysis are embedded throughout every level of the school. Since the last Managing National Assessment review, senior leaders have continued to use the flexibility of the NCEA model to raise achievement and effectively meet student needs. This strategy is evident through extension pathways that effectively accelerate student achievement, courses tailored to meet student needs, and the removal of barriers to student engagement in NCEA.

Students are assessed when ready, using a range of evidence drawn from both class work and formal assessment activities. Learning and assessment programmes are structured to include instructional milestones for monitoring student progress and providing feedback to students.

Assessment practice is consistent across all learning areas that participated in the review and was evident in student responses to interview questions. Line managers meet regularly with all Heads of Department to review department practices to maintain consistency, reflect on outcomes and refine action plans for target groups of students.

A detailed knowledge of students and their aims and abilities underpins assessment programmes. The school's focus on individual learning needs is evident in increasingly equitable achievement outcomes for Māori students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Robust internal and external moderation processes are embedded across the school. Any issues are identified and promptly resolved, and only credible results are reported to NZQA. Sufficient samples of student work are verified to ensure that grade decisions are consistent with the standard, using subject specialists from outside the school where appropriate.

Data is used and managed effectively to support student achievement outcomes. Achievement data is analysed at multiple levels across the school to ensure that any

issues are identified and responded to quickly to meet student needs. Results reported to NZQA are accurate and timely.

The school clearly communicates up-to-date information that allows staff, students and whānau to gain a common understanding of NZQA and school assessment procedures.

Area for improvement

The school could consider clarifying the explanations of evidence gathering used in the Assessment Handbook to ensure that correct terminology is used for each step in the process.

Kay Wilson
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2 July 2021

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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 10 March 2016 Managing National Assessment Report The report identified two action items that have been addressed.

The school has reconciled internal moderation documentation with actual practice, to provide confidence to senior leadership that all results reported to NZQA have been quality assured. The monitoring of internal moderation practice by senior leadership and Heads of Department has been strengthened using the line manager system and digital tools, to include regular formal and informal checks that required processes and documentation are being completed.

Random selection of samples of student work for external moderation is completed using a process separate from the person involved in the marking process, to ensure that the method used does not allow for prediction, by the marker, of the sample likely to be selected. The KAMAR random selection process is now used and documented by Heads of Department.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. The Principal's Nominee reads each report and discusses the feedback with the Head of Department. Staff reflect on the report and are encouraged to seek clarification and/or appeal, and to access professional development where appropriate. Issues identified by moderators are addressed by action plans monitored by Heads of Department and the Principal's Nominee and discussed with line managers. The school has engaged external verifiers and accessed NZQA training to address concerns in subject areas where there have been patterns of Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent feedback. Responses are evaluated for their effectiveness as part of ongoing department review.

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)

There is clear leadership of analysis and review across all levels, linking the school's Strategic Plan to department goals and ongoing adjustments to class programmes. King's High School's strong culture of self-review is embedded and focusses on using data to inform analysis. It involves the Heads of Department leading the review of curriculum and achievement. The Senior Leadership Team are line managers of the Heads of Department, meeting once or twice a term. These meetings are used for ongoing and detailed analysis of NCEA programmes. The Senior Leadership team encourage teachers to respond to results analysis with innovative thinking and by reviewing relevant processes. Achievement concerns are analysed, and action plans put in place by line managers, Heads of Department, Deans, the Principal's Nominee and classroom teachers. Heads of Department and Department meetings

have set agendas that include assessment updates, refinement to processes, and changes in school practice.

The Principal's Nominee has led the school in reviewing how evidence is gathered for NCEA assessment. This approach has been developed through staff professional development, HOD meetings, NCEA handbooks and review meetings. The flexibility of NCEA has been further utilised through gathering evidence over time rather than reliance on single assessment events. Teachers use innovative practice to gather evidence for assessment including conferencing students, filming work, chunking tasks, cross-curricular planning and the selection of relevant contexts.

Teachers are encouraged to supplement evidence of achievement from formal assessment opportunities with standard-specific evidence drawn from authenticated class work, assignments or practical activities. The increased use of templates and instructional milestones has improved student understanding of assessment requirements, self-monitoring, and the use of teacher feedback. It has led to a reduction in resubmissions and the need for further assessment opportunities.

The school has reviewed mentoring for student achievement to ensure that all student needs are met within a 'Circle of Care'. Across the school, House teachers, year level Deans, the Academic Dean, Deans for Māori and for Pasifika students, and senior leaders who are responsible for year levels carry out mentoring of individuals and groups of students. Classroom teachers and Heads of Department are involved in reviewing programmes to meet student needs. Student tracking information has been consolidated in the school's student management system for ready access and consistency. As a result of the review of mentoring systems, the careers counsellor now conducts further targeted interviews with students about their pathways, and thorough and repeated course selection conversations with students.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- recognising student achievement through a range of ceremonies and awards
- mentoring students to achieve academic success through personal commitment and character development, with a particular focus on intervening with students who are at risk of not achieving 14 credits per course or course endorsement as expected
- offering students the opportunity to sit external examinations digitally, where available, to be consistent with digital teaching and learning activities.

King's High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing resubmissions and further assessment opportunities, missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is valid, verifiable and standard-specific
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* by ensuring student results remain private and permission is sought to use or share student work.

Assessment opportunities meet student needs To ensure that assessment opportunities meet the needs of students, teachers focus on understanding their individual requirements for support and extension. They provide advice and guidance to students to help them select appropriate courses suited to their desired pathway and academic goals. This approach allows Deans and the SENCO to provide specific opportunities for students, including university enrolments, literacy support, vocational courses and individual learning programmes. Regular department review includes the analysis of barriers to learning, achievement and performance, and results in all students participating in NCEA assessment at the level appropriate to them.

Support for students to access Special Assessment Conditions The school collects school-based evidence to support applications for a significant number of students to receive special assessment conditions. There is coordinated support for these students in both internal and external assessment opportunities. The school is exploring the use of further assessment tools to establish baseline literacy data in year 9 and to assist with ongoing tracking and development of students' literacy. Teachers are engaging in professional learning in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing to enable continuing student access to the full breadth of the curriculum. All students set course endorsement goals, contributing to close mentoring and high achievement in Certificate endorsement.

Increasingly equitable outcomes for Māori The school's focus on meeting individual learning needs is evident in increasingly equitable achievement for Māori students in STEM subjects, and consistently strong participation and achievement in New Zealand Scholarship and the attainment of NCEA Certificate endorsements for all students. The school is developing teaching and learning strategies to improve the progress and achievement of Māori students.

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)

King's High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to ensure that they are valid and accessible by students
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- documenting the internal moderation process including retaining notes from verification discussions
- retaining samples of work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- Heads of Department and the Principal's Nominee monitoring the completion of internal moderation processes on an ongoing basis
- conducting reviews of internal moderation processes, including a cycle of comprehensive external evaluation.

King's High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements and ensuring material is readily available
- encouraging teachers to submit samples of work digitally
- monitoring feedback from external moderation and ensuring it is used to improve internal moderation practice.

Internal moderation strategies are selected to develop staff capacity Heads of Department set up verification procedures according to staff experience with standards, feedback from external moderation and updated assessment conditions. Strategies to ensure marking consistency include using experts from other schools, participating in subject association clusters, accessing NZQA assessor support workshops and varying procedures depending on the capacity of staff and department professional learning priorities. Regular department reviews are conducted by Heads of Department from other schools or University College of Education staff and include an evaluation of internal moderation procedures and resulting action plans.

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)

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

- using school and NZQA data to identify, analyse and address any issues with assessment processes or student achievement
- collating pastoral and achievement data in the school's student management system
- advertising the use of the Learner Login to students and parents, and assisting students to register

King's High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- timely reporting of results to NZQA
- using Key Indicators and submission reports to identify and correct data errors
- checking the accuracy of entries and results reported to NZQA against department records.

Data is used to monitor the effectiveness of school assessment and meet student needs The school makes thorough use of detailed data to identify, analyse and address any achievement concerns at student, course and group levels. Student data is now centralised in KAMAR for ready access by students, teachers, Deans and the Special Education Needs Coordinator to monitor progress and respond as necessary to referrals.

Data analysis feeds into strategic goal setting at multiple levels throughout the school to inform changes in teaching programmes and practice. Processes for tracking student achievement include pastoral as well as assessment data, and are embedded at every level. Departments undertake extensive analysis of achievement data for reports to the Rector and to the Board of Trustees. The Rector holds data analysis meetings with all Heads of Department in term 1 with agreed actions noted in minutes. Heads of Department use comprehensive data to present information in their analysis reports. All Heads of Department meet the Board of Trustees in term 2 to discuss progress in their subjects and to answer any questions. Line managers monitor department goals and action plans in regular meetings with Heads of Department.

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))

King's High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through:
 - hard copy and digital publication of the staff and student assessment practices
 - providing detailed course selection information and careers guidance
 - using flow charts to explain moderation procedures
 - student assemblies
 - NCEA information evenings
- using Google classroom to ensure that assessment instructions and teacher feedback are readily available to students
- communicating assessment deadlines and instructional milestones on assessment calendars
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

King's High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- training all staff in the key steps of assessment practice, including the school quality assurance system
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes at staff meetings and professional learning sessions

Students and teachers interviewed showed a good understanding of school assessment procedures Students interviewed for this review could clearly articulate how NCEA works at King's High School. They understood school processes such as monitoring authenticity, moderation, appeals and extensions, and felt their teachers applied them consistently. They knew that a range of options were available to support students with learning needs and extension opportunities and where to seek further information if required.

Gathering evidence for assessment Teachers and students shared a common understanding that standard-specific evidence can be collected in various formats, from a range of tasks, to ensure that students are supported to achieve and be assessed when ready. This ensures that students receive feedback on their learning and progress towards assessment and are ready to participate in assessments and meet any scheduled instructional milestones.

Teachers are encouraged to supplement evidence of achievement from formal assessment activities with standard-specific evidence drawn from authenticated class work, assignments or practical activities. The Assessment Procedures handbook includes explanations of how evidence can be gathered over time to minimise the need for further assessment and build close links between the learning process and assessment. Although resubmission and further assessment rules are explained accurately in the staff handbook it is unclear at which point in the evidence-gathering

process each might apply to ensure consistent application of the rules. The school could consider clarifying the terminology related to gathering evidence of achievement in the staff and student assessment handbooks, to retain a common understanding of resubmission and further assessment opportunities in relation to the collection of evidence over time.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing the gathering of evidence for assessment, the school could consider:

- clarifying the use of terminology in handbooks in relation to the submission of evidence, including resubmission and further assessment opportunities.