

Managing National Assessment Report

Hamilton Christian School

May 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Hamilton Christian 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
- *2018 Assessment Expectations Y9-13*
- *Hamilton Christian School Policy Assessment – Across the School*
- *Hamilton Christian School Policy NCEA Assessment*
- *Hamilton Christian School HCS Staff Handbook 2018*
- *Hamilton Christian School Student Handbook 2018*
- a variety of other school publications
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, Heads of Department for Art, Mathematics, and Science, and Teachers in Charge for Physical Education, and Physics.

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

Hamilton Christian School

25 May 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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2017.

What the school is doing well

Hamilton Christian School has assessment and moderation processes and procedures that support credible assessment for national qualifications. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of these processes. Regular secondary teacher meetings both ensure consistency and refine assessment practice.

The school has the ability to respond to identified issues as well as review its own processes and adapt as necessary. Individual student needs and interests are met using differentiated assessment practices such as providing optional standards and differing forms of evidence gathering.

Internal moderation processes are understood, consistently applied and embedded practice throughout the school. Teachers interviewed understand the reason for, and demonstrate, sufficient and purposeful selection of student material for verification. External moderation is effectively managed.

Data sent to NZQA is accurate and timely. Results are analysed and used to reflect and inform changes to future courses. Assessment information is shared through a variety of methods such as meetings and emails. There is open communication between staff, students and the wider community.

Areas for improvement Aspects of assessment practice that may improve existing good practice were suggested for review by the school. These include consolidating assessment procedures for staff, and standardising language. Extending the monitoring of internal moderation to include discussion with staff on their process will confirm to senior management the effectiveness of the process and ensure robust application.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

27 July 2018

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 11-12 March 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

The five agreed items identified in the previous report have all been addressed. These included:

- ensuring valid grades are available for derived and emergency grades
- creating courses intended for endorsement
- limiting entries with no reported result
- developing a structured format for reporting to management
- reviewing assessment procedure information.

Response to external moderation outcomes Historically there is a high agreement rate between teachers and external moderators, reflecting strong internal moderation processes. The Principal's Nominee forwards reports to teachers who write a response including noting actions to address issues identified. The Principal's Nominee monitors completion of these.

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 uses self-review to focus on the continuous improvement of its NCEA assessment practice, thus ensuring credible results are reported. The secondary teaching team meet regularly. The Principal's Nominee uses this time to discuss NZQA guidelines, and to reinforce procedures and how these may look in the classroom.

Recent aspects focused on have included:

- discussing credit limits for courses and highlighting this with students, teachers, parents and the community to reinforce quality versus quantity
- using predictive grades, through the student management system, to help track students towards achievement goals
- reviewing the resubmission process, such as timing and extent, to ensure current practice meets NZQA requirements
- using data analysis with focus questions to review results and adapt courses as appropriate.

Ongoing review contributes to the school's NCEA results remaining consistently above the national roll-based statistics at all levels. A collaborative approach is evident throughout the staff. Teachers interviewed acknowledge the experience and

leadership of the Principal's Nominee in maintaining this. The school demonstrates that it has the capacity to identify and respond effectively to assessment related issues. This helps ensure credible NCEA assessment practices are maintained.

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)

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

- encouraging students to present evidence for assessment using a range of methods including portfolios, digital evidence, verbal and performances
- differentiating assessment within courses through optional and prescribed standards, selected in consultation with the teacher
- creating topical contexts for assessments to meet interests of students
- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- where appropriate and manageable, having flexibility with the timing of assessments
- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment by using suitable strategies during the assessment and marking process
- engaging in digital trials and pilots including students using their own devices
- efficiently managing NZQA external examinations.

Hamilton Christian School has effective processes and procedures for:

- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
- ensuring derived grades are based on authentic standard-specific evidence from practice examinations or other appropriate assessment
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Standardise language The term 'resits' is used throughout the school to describe further assessment opportunities. The understanding and application of this process is consistent and meets NZQA requirements. It is suggested, however, that the term further assessment opportunity is used to ensure consistency with NZQA, and lessen instances of confusion with the term resubmission, as was evident in one case, during the review visit.

For consideration

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

- replacing the term 'resit' with 'further assessment opportunity'.

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)

Hamilton Christian School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring new and amended assessments are critiqued before use
- purposefully selecting samples of student work at grade boundaries for verification of assessor judgements
- engaging with suitably-qualified subject specialists from within and outside the school to verify samples of student work for every standard
- staff reviewing standard clarifications, and using exemplars to confirm assessor judgements
- documenting the internal moderation process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

Hamilton Christian School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored either digitally or physically
- successfully submitting the majority of student work for external moderation digitally.

Monitoring of internal moderation Discussion was held on ways to strengthen the monitoring process, to ensure each department is visited each year to review their evidence and confirm their process aligns with the documentation. This would allow for good practice to be recognised and reinforcement of key aspects as necessary. The internal moderation monitoring process currently operating assures senior management that an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* has been completed for every standard where results have been reported to NZQA. The teachers interviewed were all able to present examples of completed internal moderation for standards requested and show where material was stored.

For consideration

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

- strengthening the monitoring of internal moderation monitoring to focus on the effectiveness of the process undertaken.

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)

Hamilton Christian School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - gathering student voice to evaluate courses, inform changes to assessment programmes, contexts and standards
 - identifying students at risk of not achieving qualifications, using grade predictions
 - teachers reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees teachers an analysis of NCEA achievement data, and using this to inform future teaching and assessment
- reports accurate achievement data by:
 - submitting results to NZQA on a regular and timely basis
 - using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
 - undertaking end of year data checks with students and teachers using results from NZQA
 - using the correct provider code to report assessment undertaken by external providers
 - ensuring all internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn as appropriate
 - checking entries in externally assessed standards to limit late entries and ensure accuracy
 - supporting eligible families to apply for financial assistance.

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))

Hamilton Christian School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive information for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment processes to students and parents
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction day
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Hamilton Christian School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- working with students to understand and use their NZQA Learner login and student management system portal
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- ensuring relevant NZQA updates are circulated to NCEA teachers and discussed as necessary.

Consolidate assessment information for staff The school is encouraged to consider developing a single reference such as a staff manual or folder that holds all NCEA related assessment process and procedural information. Currently school procedures are communicated to staff in a variety of ways such as email reminders, informal discussion and staff meetings. There is, however, no one place for assessment information to be available for, and accessible by, staff. Having a single place for reference to school processes and detail on operating procedures for managing national assessment will ensure a consistent message.

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:

- developing a single reference point for staff for school assessment procedures.