

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Kelston Deaf Education Centre**

**March 2019**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Kelston Deaf Education Centre:

- 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 2019* (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
- *Operational Guidelines, Kelston Deaf Education Centre, 2019*
- *Assessment Procedures, Kelston Deaf Education Centre, 2019*
- *Shifts in Practice to Accelerate Learning, Report by Kelston Deaf Education Centre, 2019*
- *Analysis of Variance Reporting, Kelston Deaf Education Centre, 2019*
- a sample of course booklets

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Acting Head of School
- the Senior Teacher of the School Provision at Ormiston Senior College
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, the Acting Deputy Head of School 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.

## Background

Kelston Deaf Education Centre enrolls, teaches, assesses and supports secondary school students who are working towards an NCEA qualification and who attend one of the School Provisions at Ormiston Senior College, Kelston Girls' College or Kelston Boys' High School.

The school assesses students in New Zealand Sign Language, English/English Language and Mathematics. Students are supported as needed in mainstream classes which make up the balance of their NEA programmes. The school manages the data for all their enrolled students.

# SUMMARY

## Kelston Deaf Education Centre

28 March 2019

### 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. However, there will be a return visit in one year to check on the progress made to introduce a system to monitor the completion of internal moderation procedures

By agreement between the school and NZQA, this review was rescheduled from 2018. This was as a result of uncertainty about the timing of a possible merger with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre. However, decisions about this merger are still pending at the time of the writing of this report.

### What the school is doing well

Kelston Deaf Education Centre continues to provide a supportive learning environment for students at the School Provisions in the three partner schools.

The school has been through a significant period of change and stress as a result of leadership changes and the planning requirements for a possible merger with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre. The staff who have assumed additional leadership roles over this period are to be commended. The school has actioned all the items identified as needing attention in the previous Managing National Assessment report.

Self review processes have focussed on the impending merger and the need to align practices. This alignment is now evident in the provision of Special Assessment Conditions and Individual Education Plans. The teaching, assessment and moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards is also now closely aligned with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre.

Although focussed on the merger, the school continues to ensure that students are supported in their learning at the School Provisions with the Individual Education Plans being the cornerstone of this process. Many students have multiple learning needs. Students take courses taught both by the school's teachers and in classes offered by the partner schools. If the latter, students receive support in class as appropriate.

Internal moderation processes are thorough with outcomes recorded and submitted to the Principal's Nominee. Any issues identified in external moderation reports are followed up to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Data management processes are sound with data files submitted to NZQA on time and any concerns readily addressed.

### **Areas for improvement**

A system to monitor and record that internal moderation procedures have been satisfactorily completed must be established. This will add to the confidence levels of senior leaders that these procedures are being completed appropriately.

The process by which Memoranda of Understanding are developed must be reviewed to ensure that these are fit for purpose and that results reported to NZQA by the school using another provider code are credible.

The school could consider widening the offering of subjects to students (particularly STEM subjects) and also investigating whether digital assessment options will provide enhanced opportunities for students.

### **Agreed action**

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

- introduce a system to monitor the completion of internal moderation procedures
- review the Memorandum of Understanding process and ensure that existing memoranda are fit for purpose.

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21 May 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 two action items from this report have been addressed by the school. Both related to the school being well prepared for the upcoming merger with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre which is still pending.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has taken a lead role, together with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre, in the moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards with teachers acting as resource developers, verifiers and NZQA moderators.

External moderation outcomes for English/English Language and Mathematics standards have shown consistent agreement. If any issues arise, these are effectively followed up by the Principal's Nominee with the teachers concerned and she ensures that any required actions that may be needed are enacted.

### 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's self review processes in recent years have been focussed on the preparation for the possible merger with Van Ash Deaf Education Centre. Both schools are currently governed by a single Board of Trustees and senior leaders meet regularly to review practice and develop common modes of operation.

This has resulted in, among other things, the alignment of procedures used for developing and managing students' Individual Education Plans, the development of common processes for Special Assessment Conditions applications and implementation, and a shared approach to the teaching, assessment and moderation of the new New Zealand Sign Language standards.

A significant change in senior leadership positions at the school has disrupted the smooth progress of review processes. The certainty that recent senior leadership appointments now bring will add impetus to this progress. Senior staff who have assumed additional responsibilities during this disrupted period are to be commended for their commitment and leadership.

### 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.

## 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 2019 5.5)*

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- developing Individual Education Plans for each student that design programmes of learning focussed on their interests, needs and abilities
- supporting students to complete NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready
- ensuring students are identified and resourced for special assessment conditions, including in mainstream classes at the partner schools
- ensuring students who are entitled apply for financial assistance.

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed and late assessments, student appeals, breaches of assessment rules, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*
- maintaining a positive working relationship with each of the three partner schools that host the School Provision for NCEA students.

**Many students have multiple assessment needs** Although all students have the challenge of dealing with hearing loss, many students have multiple other assessment needs including gaps in their learning, low reading comprehension and attention deficit concerns.

Teachers are to be commended for their commitment to managing with all these issues and providing students with optimal pathways for achieving NCEA qualifications.

**Digital assessment provides opportunities** The NCEA Online initiative provides opportunities for students to be assessed digitally and digital assessment options are also increasingly available for internal assessments. The school should consider whether this form of assessment has the potential to further support the assessment needs of students.

**Consider widening the offering of subjects** Very few students successfully complete standards in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) subjects beyond those in Mathematics at Level One. This includes courses students are taking at the partner schools. The school should consider strategies to increase the number of students who take STEM subjects.

International research predicts that almost all jobs in the future will require some STEM knowledge with many of these jobs requiring some form of post-secondary education or training.

**For consideration**

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

- investigating digital assessment opportunities
- widening the offering of subjects, particularly STEM subjects.



## 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 2019 6.4b)*

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- teachers verifying student work during regular moderation meetings
- documenting the process on *Internal Moderation Coversheets* and lodging a copy of each coversheet with the Principal's Nominee
- only reporting internal standard results to NZQA once all verification procedures have been completed
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions.

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- participating in the external moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards in partnership with Van Asch Deaf Education Centre.

### **A system to monitor the completion of internal moderation must be introduced**

The Principal's Nominee needs to introduce a system that will allow for the monitoring of internal moderation procedures and to record that this monitoring has been undertaken.

This is not a reflection on the quality of internal moderation currently undertaken by teachers. However, senior leadership needs to be confident that these procedures are occurring in a robust manner to ensure that results submitted to NZQA are credible. A monitoring system will assure this confidence.

### **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:

- introduce a system to monitor the completion of internal moderation procedures.

## 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)*

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- using data to inform the development of Individual Education Plans
- tracking student achievement to identify students at risk of not achieving their chosen assessment pathway
- informing changes to standards and assessment programmes in the School Provision at each partner school
- ensuring students are entered only for those standards intended to be assessed.

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre reports accurate achievement data by:**

- ensuring that datafiles are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
- using Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
- ensuring low levels of late external entries and internal entries with no results.

**Introduction of a student management system enhances data management and analysis** The school has recently introduced a student management system to record students' results and to submit these to NZQA, rather than using the web entry process.

This is a positive development. A student management system provides an enhanced capability to analyse achievement data, track student progress and effectively manage the transfer of data to NZQA.

**Memorandum of Understanding process must be reviewed** The school must review both the process by which Memoranda of Understanding are developed and existing memoranda to ensure that these are fit for purpose.

There is some uncertainty about whether the school holds current memoranda in all relevant situations and whether all the memoranda held are fit for purpose. This is complicated by the fact that students attend three separate provisions.

The school reports a number of results for students using the provider codes of providers other than their own. For this to occur, the school needs to hold a current Memorandum of Understanding with each provider that authorises this process and is fit for purpose. This will provide certainty about who is responsible for each aspect of the assessment process.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- review the Memorandum of Understanding process and ensure that existing memoranda are fit for purpose.

## 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))*

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for:**

- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff and students through handbooks and online
- informing parents about NCEA assessment requirements through the Individual Education Plan meetings
- ensuring Lead Teachers at each School Provision maintain good lines of communication with the staff of the partner schools
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and aligned with those from Van Asch Deaf Education Centre.

### **Kelston Deaf Education Centre assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes at weekly meetings
- ensuring that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

**Weekly teacher meetings reinforce good practice** Teachers from the school and the various School Provisions at the partner schools attend weekly meetings to share good practice, be informed of updates, moderate student work and discuss concerns.

This is good practice as it addresses the inherent problem in offering a service across multiple locations and the possible risk of teachers becoming disconnected.

### **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.