

Managing National Assessment Report

**Van Asch
Deaf Education Centre**

October 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively van Asch 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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 2017* (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 and Evaluation and Record Keeping van Acsh Deaf Education Centre, 2017*
- *NZQA Staff Handbook, van Asch Deaf Education Centre, 2017*
- *New Zealand: Me Belong, Welcome to Level 1 NZSL, Course Information, 2017*(Student Handbook)

Two School Relationship Managers met with the Principal's Nominee and a teacher of New Zealand Sign Language standards.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and a teacher of New Zealand Sign Language standards 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

In 2016 van Asch Deaf Education Centre recommenced assessing standards on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, having held consented to assess since 2000. The Centre only assesses the New Zealand Sign Language standards at present, and manages the data and some communications for its sixteen NCEA students who attend mainstream schools, Hagley Community College or Hillmorton High School, for the majority of their NCEA programmes.

SUMMARY

Van Asch deaf Education Centre

20 October 2017

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*:

- for the assessing the limited range of standards, they offer
- by managing their relationships with external providers.

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

Van Asch Deaf Education Centre is the lead school for the assessment and moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards, which were published in 2016. Since the 2015 Managing National Assessment review, appropriate NCEA assessment practices and procedures have been embedded to reflect this new role.

The school's capacity to deliver quality assured NCEA programmes and ensure staff and students have a consistent understanding of NCEA assessment practices is improving.

The collaborative design of Individual Education Plans for each NCEA student is based on the school's local curriculum and programmes offered in mainstream schools. Individual Education Plans are now shared with teachers in the mainstream schools to ensure students are offered appropriate assessment opportunities that meet their needs.

The Centre has a documented internal moderation process that was used to quality assure the 2016 trial introduction of the New Zealand Sign Language standards. Teachers have reflected extensively on task design for these standards and the most appropriate methods for collecting evidence and engaging students in the associated learning and assessment activities.

Data is managed effectively by the Centre with the timely and accurate reporting of results for NCEA students enrolled at van Asch and attending mainstream schools. NCEA data is used to inform the development of Individual Education Plans, where appropriate and to report on student achievement outcomes.

A course outline has been developed for the New Zealand Sign Language programmes. It is intended to convert sections of this outline to sign language "video bites" to make this information more accessible for deaf and hearing-impaired students. This follows the success of the signed video on "*How NCEA Works*" which is used extensively throughout New Zealand schools working with these students.

The Principal's Nominee, sign language teachers and senior management have collaborated effectively to enable the Centre to develop systems to assess and report quality assured results on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

Areas for improvement

The Principal's Nominee has agreed to strengthen the process for monitoring internal moderation by ensuring completed documentation is reconciled with actual practice. This will give senior management confidence that all reported results are credible.

Professional development for tutors and support staff on NCEA assessment practice is provided informally at some staff meetings. An induction programme for the staff working with NCEA students would support consistent understanding of Centre's and mainstream schools NCEA practices, particularly in the area of appropriate guidance.

The Centre's NZQA staff handbook is comprehensive but generic. Credible assessment practices should be written in the context of assessing the New Zealand Sign Language standards, particularly in relation to authentic practices, the provision of further assessment opportunities and collection of evidence.

Agreed action

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

- ensure monitoring of internal moderation by senior management reconciles documentation with actual practice to provide confidence that all reported results are quality assured
- develop further student communication of the Centre's NCEA assessment practice requirements in New Zealand Sign Language

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18 December 2017

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

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

External review

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

Action Items from 29 October 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The Centre has actioned all the items from the previous Managing National Assessment review. As outlined in the report, the action item to provide professional development to tutors and support staff could be strengthened by the development of an induction programme for staff new to NCEA.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Centre has taken a lead role in the moderation of trial New Zealand Sign language standards in 2016, with teachers acting as resource developers, verifiers and NZQA moderators.

Response to ERO Report The 2016 Education Review Office report identified the need for the Centre to improve the use of achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement. The use of NCEA data to inform the design and track the progress of Individual Education Plans that are shared with the mainstream schools indicates progress has been made with this recommendation.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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 Centre has responded effectively to external review and is now developing internal capacity and ownership of NCEA assessment practice which has allowed the self-review of some of its own NCEA practices. These include:

- development of data processes to ensure the timely and accurate reporting of entries and results
- the introduction of an internal moderation process for New Zealand Sign Language standards
- publication of a course outline by students being assessed against New Zealand Sign Language standards
- investigating the introduction of a pre-NCEA sign language programme to ensure students have the appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake a Level 1 NCEA course
- consideration of using the subject expertise of centre staff to assess a greater range of standards as part of the local curriculum.

These initiatives indicate that the Centre now has the capacity to continue self-review of its NCEA practices and fully utilise the flexibility of the NCEA model to meet the needs of students and ensure credible assessment.

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 found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Van Asch Deaf Education Centre has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- developing Individual Education Plans for each NCEA student in which realistic goals are set and monitored
- developing three distinct pathways to reflect the range of student abilities and aspirations: supported learning, vocational and academic
- ensuring students are identified and resourced for special assessment conditions
- supporting students to complete NCEA Level 1 over two years in recognition of literacy and numeracy challenges
- ensuring students who are entitled apply for financial assistance

Van Asch 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
- using digital tools to collect a range of evidence for the assessment of New Zealand Sign Language standards
- meeting the requirements of *the Privacy Act 1993*
- maintaining a working relationship with two mainstream schools who provide NCEA programmes for the Centre's students
- operating a satellite examination centre.

Consistent school-wide understanding of NCEA assessment practices Senior management should consider developing a process to ensure tutors and support staff, employed by the Centre who are new to NCEA assessment practice, understand the importance of credible assessment practice.

Van Asch Deaf Education Centre tutors and support staff working in mainstream schools are informally made aware of the Centre's NCEA assessment practices at staff meetings. A number of these staff are not familiar with the requirements for credible internal assessment practice.

To ensure consistent understanding an NCEA component should be developed as part of the induction process for these staff. This programme would focus on credible assessment practice, particularly authenticity, and appropriate guidance when gathering evidence.

For consideration

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

- developing an induction programme for tutors and support staff new to the Centres NCEA assessment practices

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Lead school in the assessment and moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards As a lead school in the assessment and moderation of New Zealand Sign Language standards since their publication in 2016, the Centre's teachers have been actively involved in:

- writing the standards
- developing tasks and marking schedules
- creating suitable assessment resources
- trailing assessment activities
- the verification of purposefully selected samples of student work in conjunction with Kelston Deaf Education Centre.

Teachers from the Centre have also provided resources and verified samples of student work from two mainstream secondary schools that now offer New Zealand Sign Language standards.

It is recognised by senior management that, as the number of schools offering New Zealand Sign Language standards increases, the Centre's role as a lead school will have to be managed to ensure teachers focus on van Asch Deaf Education centre students, and that workloads for teachers are not excessive.

Strengthening internal moderation processes To ensure that senior management is confident that all results reported have been quality assured it is recommended that all internal moderation documentation is reconciled with actual practice as part of an annual audit.

Completion of internal moderation of the New Zealand Sign Language standards is documented using an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, following the procedures in the Centre's *NZQA Staff Handbook*. This documentation is shared with the Principal's Nominee. To ensure quality assurance the Principal's Nominee should check that this documentation is complete and reflects the actual practice by the teachers as evidenced by samples of stored student work. This audit should be documented to meet the requirements for monitoring internal assessment by senior management under *assessment Rule 6.4b*.

Effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation A teacher from the Centre is employed by NZQA as a moderator for New Zealand Sign Language standards. Verification of student work by the Centre reflects that national standard for these standards, with a very high agreement rate between moderators and teachers.

Storage of student work for external moderation is digital, following the Centre's digital storage procedures.

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 monitoring of internal moderation by senior management reconciles documentation with actual practice to provide confidence that all reported results are quality assured.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Van Asch 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 and track student progress
 - informing changes to standards and assessment programmes for local curriculum and at mainstream schools
 - ensuring students are entered for those standards intended to be assessed
 - ensuring students obtain sufficient credits to gain a qualification, where appropriate
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - using Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
 - ensuring all entries have a reported result
 - supporting students to use their Learner Login to track their NCEA progress and check accuracy of entries and results
 - allocating ESAA secure logins to appropriate staff to manage NZQA data functions
 - using the correct provider code for assessment undertaken by external providers.

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 found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Van Asch Deaf Centre has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff through a handbook and students through the New Zealand Sign Language course outline
- informing parents about NCEA assessment practice requirements through the Individual Education Plan consultation meetings
- ensuring tutors and support staff at mainstream schools are provided with that school's NCEA assessment practices
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Van Asch Deaf Education Centre assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

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

Improving accessibility of NCEA information to deaf and hearing-impaired students As outlined in the previous Managing National Assessment report, NCEA information from mainstream schools is not always fully understood by deaf and hearing-impaired students.

Senior management have agreed to continue investigating making NCEA communication more accessible to these students and their families by publishing more "video bites" in New Zealand Sign Language on assessment practices such as authenticity, breaches of the rules, appeals, late and missed work, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities.

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:

- develop further student communication of the Centre's NCEA assessment practice requirements in New Zealand Sign Language.