

Managing National Assessment Report

Samuel Marsden Collegiate School - Whitby

4 May 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Samuel Marsden Collegiate School - Whitby:

- 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 Policy and Procedures Staff Handbook 2017 Samuel Marsden Collegiate School - Whitby*
- *Assessment Policy and Procedures Student Handbook 2017 Samuel Marsden Collegiate School - Whitby*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The Two School Relationship Managers met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and teachers for Digital Information Technology, Economics, English, History, Mathematics and Physical Education.

There was a report-back session with the Director 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

Samuel Marsden Collegiate School – Whitby (Whitby) is an independent co-educational Anglican school from Years 7 to 13. The school is governed by the Board of Trustees for Samuel Marsden Collegiate School - Karori (Karori). While the Principal of Karori leads both schools, the two schools are regarded as separate providers under the legislation covering consent to assess against standards. Heads of Department are based at Karori and are responsible for curriculum leadership at Whitby. They monitor response to external moderation and assist with some internal moderation verification.

As a co-educational school, Whitby is developing its own unique identity. Whitby teachers conduct their own self-review of assessment quality assurance. They use data about their students to inform assessment practices and they are responsible for the monitoring of their internal moderation. The relationship between the schools allows Whitby autonomy to develop courses and assessments to meet the specific needs of their students. The Director of Whitby is responsible for curriculum, staffing and the day-to-day running of the school and the Principal's Nominee for the quality assurance of assessment for qualifications.

SUMMARY

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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

Samuel Marsden Whitby has developed adequate and appropriate systems of assessment and moderation to ensure credible results are reported. Their response to external review is timely and thorough. The items identified in the previous Managing National Assessment review were accordingly actioned.

Assessment opportunities effectively meet the needs, aspirations and interests of a range of students. Assessment programmes are increasingly student centred and tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

Data is effectively managed by the school and used by teachers to inform their course design. Data is used to track student progress and to identify those students at risk of not achieving their goals. Accurate data is regularly reported to NZQA.

Communication practices are a strength at Whitby. The school keeps staff, students and whānau well informed through many effective modes of communication. Whitby's staff and student handbooks were reviewed and updated following the previous Managing National Assessment review and ensure consistent assessment information.

The Principal's Nominee is very effective in her role providing strong leadership in assessment practice for staff and students. Her friendly and flexible nature gives staff and students confidence when approaching her about NCEA assessment issues.

Areas for improvement

Whitby offers Level 1 standards to its Year 10 students. To meet NZQA rules about reporting, the school will need to review its current reporting practice by ensuring all results are reported where students have an adequate assessment opportunity.

To strengthen their external moderation response, clarifying the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines between the two campuses will enable the completion of the actions plans to be monitored.

Agreed action

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

- monitor the completion of the action plans developed in response to external moderation by clarifying the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines between the two campuses
- reporting a grade of Not Achieved for all students who have presented work or evidence for assessment or have had an adequate opportunity to achieve the standard (*Assessment Rules for schools with Consent to Assess 2017, 5.6.a*).

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

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

Response to external moderation outcomes

Whitby demonstrates good practice by teachers and Heads of Department reviewing external moderation reports together. Teachers create action plans in response to the moderation reports and then report them to the Head of Department and Principal's Nominee. A high trust model operates in that the action plans will be implemented by the teacher.

However, under the current management model, NZQA cannot be assured that action plans in response to external moderation are being followed through. It is unclear whether this responsibility lies with the Heads of Department at Karori or the Principal's Nominee at Whitby. The school agrees that the roles need to be clarified.

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)

Whitby is developing its own culture of self-review to identify areas for improvement in assessment practice and achievement outcomes. Areas that were identified for improvement through its self-review process include:

- reducing credits offered in each course to focus on quality assessment and reduce student and staff workloads
- staff understanding of NCEA to ensure consistent assessment practice
- managing digital assessment and digital materials to ensure the validity and authenticity of the assessment.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review. Senior management undertakes to:

- monitor the completion of the action plans developed in response to external moderation are completed by clarifying the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines between the two campuses.

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, 2.6 I & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Samuel Marsden - Whitby has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:

- using course results and reviews to identify student ability and place students in appropriate courses
- providing differentiated assessments within courses to match student abilities
- identifying students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and making applications appropriately
- assessing when ready, so that students have the best opportunity to achieve a standard
- developing use of digital assessment across learning areas.

Samuel Marsden - Whitby has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is valid, authentic and standard specific
- managing authenticity through an Authenticity module taught in their Digital Citizenship course
- reducing student workloads by limiting the number of credits offered.

Improving Current Digital Assessment Practice

The school has identified the need for improving procedures, as they move to increasing digital assessment and requiring students to 'Bring Your Own Device'. They have identified the need to manage the following issues:

- students saving and sharing their work with teachers, so that teachers can track progress
- authenticity of student work and the associated increased risk of plagiarism
- the validity of assessments where they are held over several dates
- managing the storage of digital assessments, particularly to ensure access to material stored by teachers who leave the school.

Whitby is well placed with its current practice to identify and respond to future digital assessment risks.

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 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)

Samuel Marsden - Whitby has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- documenting the internal moderation process using a standard coversheet
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- monitoring that internal moderation has taken place for all reported results
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions

Samuel Marsden - Whitby 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.

Internal Moderation is effectively monitored

Whitby can assure that all reported grades have been through their internal moderation process with results all being verified before being reported. The school demonstrates good practice by using verifiers from Karori and other schools within the region. The Principal's Nominee checks all internal moderation coversheets to ensure the correct process has taken place and files them with student samples. This is done before results are entered into the school's student management system and reported to NZQA. The Principal's Nominee tracks all standards to ensure the process is followed and completed.

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

Samuel Marsden – Whitby College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - using results to annually review and modify programmes as necessary
 - using data to inform course design
 - monitoring student progress to identify learners at risk of not achieving their goals
 - identifying appropriate entries for external standards
 - teachers annually analysing results and reporting on them to the Director and the Board
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - staff checking entries and results at the end of each term resulting in less changes and errors
 - ensuring standards entered for students in Year 10 and reported the following year are all unassigned to courses
 - students checking the accuracy of reported grades by signing an acceptance form on the return of their work and a result report at the end of the year
 - timely checking of entries in externally assessed standards with students and so limiting late entries
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis.

Reporting Not Achieved grades for Year 10 students

NZQA rules requires grades to be reported where students that have had an adequate assessment opportunity and presented work. Whitby offers Level 1 standards to Year 10 students, so that they may gain experience doing NCEA and gain some early credits. The school's practice of not reporting Not Achieved grades for Year 10 students requires reviewing.

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:

- report a grade of Not Achieved for all students who have presented work or evidence for assessment or have had an adequate opportunity to achieve the standard (*Assessment Rules for schools with Consent to Assess 2017, 5.6.a*).

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, 2.7iib)

Samuel Marsden Whitby has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to ensure consistent understanding by stakeholders
- supporting teachers new to the school to help them embed good assessment practice.

Samuel Marsden Whitby assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding a NCEA information evening early in Term One for Year 10 & 11 students and their parents
- informing teachers about assessment best practice, providing opportunities to discuss changes and attend Best Practice Workshops
- helping students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification by interviewing them and tracking their progress
- having a consistent template for course outlines across subject areas ensuring consistent assessment information, which are reviewed and updated annually
- reminding and informing staff of assessment processes and updates at a staff meeting dedicated to NCEA policies and procedures.

Clear communication in assessment documentation

Staff and student handbooks effectively communicate the school's assessment policies and procedures. The school reviewed the staff handbook following the agreed action from the 2014 MNA. Separate handbooks from across curriculum areas were consolidated into a school staff handbook. This handbook is specific to the Whitby campus and ensures consistency across curriculum areas. A comprehensive student handbook was also written that is consistent with the policies and procedures found in the staff handbook.

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.