

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Christian Renewal School**

**September 2017**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Christian Renewal 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 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
- *Christian Renewal School NQF and NCEA Assessment Procedures* (Student Handbook)
- *Christian Renewal School NQF and NCEA Assessment Procedures* (Staff Handbook)
- *Christian Renewal School Curriculum Delivery Policy*
- *Christian Renewal School Assessment and Procedures for NZQA Standards*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, the Curriculum Leaders for Biblical Studies, Biology and Science, English, and Physical Education, a teacher of History and the Special Needs Coordinator.

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**

### **Christian Renewal School**

**14 September 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*. 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**

Christian Renewal School offers a range of academic and vocational assessment pathways for students. The school's policy states that assessment will be within agreed Biblical guidelines and meet NZQA specifications. Students are supported to achieve their goals by teachers who individualise programmes and provide encouragement and extra assistance.

Internal moderation is embedded in the culture of the school. Curriculum Leaders select work purposefully for internal moderation and plan actions to address any issues raised in external moderation. The Principal's Nominee has developed digital solutions that enables him to effectively monitor that all results have been quality assured before being submitted to NZQA.

The school engages in ongoing self-review. The Principal's Nominee regularly reviews the assessment policies and practice, with the aim of streamlining work processes while maintaining credible assessment for national qualifications. NCEA data analysis is used to inform changes in assessment programmes, improve assessment practice and monitor student outcomes.

The Principal's Nominee is experienced in the role. He works in partnership with the Curriculum Leaders to oversee the school's credible assessment practice and his leadership is appreciated by the teachers.

#### **Areas for improvement**

The school's process for managing missed and late assessments is not being consistently applied. The tension between assessing students when ready and holding up students who have completed the work to the deadline can be managed by negotiating with students, setting the due dates and only granting extensions for circumstances beyond a student's control.

This review identified that students were not receiving information about some key assessment processes and were unaware of the student handbook. To rectify this, the handbook should be written in language suitable for its intended audience and the Principal's Nominee will check that teachers are passing on consistent messages.

The Principal's Nominee had identified that some teachers provide resubmission opportunities that may not meet NZQA's expectations and agreed that resubmission practice will be reviewed to ensure that all assessment outcomes are valid.

To better ensure that data held by NZQA accurately reflects each student's assessment programme, the school agrees that students will be supported to register and use their NZQA Learner login earlier in the year and teachers will be expected to check the data on the school's login page.

### **Agreed action**

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

- reviewing practice for managing missed and late assessments to ensure that all teachers are consistent and all students are treated fairly
- ensure that teachers' management of resubmissions complies with NZQA's expectations
- check that the messages given to students are consistent and cover all the key processes
- review the student handbook to ensure that the language is clear and suitable for its intended audience.

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24 October 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, 3v)*

### Action Items from 24 September 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

After the last Managing National Assessment review, there were a number of agreed actions.

- The school undertook to advise teachers that sufficient samples of student work should be verified so they could be confident of the results. This review confirms that teachers are selecting work purposefully to include samples at grade boundaries and the teacher's handbook now includes this advice.
- The school has improved the checking and tracking of internal moderation as agreed after the last review. The Principal's Nominee has developed a digital solution for recording completion of internal moderation.
- The school now has a random selection process for external moderation samples that meets NZQA's requirements.
- The Principal's Nominee has developed a checking process that means there are now very few entries without results. Students are withdrawn from standards if they have not had an adequate opportunity to be assessed.
- The school agreed to review and amend the documentation for staff and students. While there are now comprehensive handbooks, some further steps will be discussed in the communication section of this report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The Principal's Nominee has developed a form that records Curriculum Leaders' reflections on the outcome of external moderation and how they plan to address any concerns. The Principal's Nominee checks that the planned actions are carried out. This new process for 2017 meets NZQA's expectations.

### 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)*

Some of the outcomes of the school's ongoing review include:

- developing digital systems to record the completion of internal moderation and follow up from external moderation to reduce the workload for teachers while still retaining the integrity of the process. The digital process has made it easier for the Principal's Nominee to check that all teachers are complying with the school's expectations
- reviewing how it identifies and supports students who may be entitled to use special assessment conditions. The management is now more confident that it is making appropriate applications and eligible students receive a fair entitlement

- teachers and Curriculum Leaders all participating in Teaching as Inquiry; some of the inquiries use NCEA data
- Curriculum Leaders reviewing achievement results and making changes to their assessment programme based on their analysis.

The school's actions are evidence that it engages in reflective self-review resulting in improvements. The next step is to plan for systematic school-wide review of NCEA systems and processes.

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

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

- making applications for special assessment conditions and communicating with teachers so that entitled students receive appropriate assistance
- providing differentiated assessment opportunities within classes
- offering a range of vocationally focused assessment programmes through STAR, Gateway and external providers to supplement the academic pathways available
- providing additional tuition to students so that they are encouraged to strive for better achievement outcomes.

### **Christian Renewal School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- investigating appeals of assessment decisions
- assisting students to present authentic work by helping students to understand plagiarism and the need to reference sources of information
- ensuring valid evidence is available for derived grades
- meeting the requirements of *The Privacy Act 1993*.

**Inconsistency in dealing with late work** Not all teachers are consistently applying the school policy on managing missed and late submissions. Teachers endeavour to assess students when they are ready so that they have a fair chance to achieve. The school's expectation is that extensions will be managed by the Principal's Nominee. However, teachers often extend deadlines without requiring evidence of a valid reason to accommodate late submissions. Students expressed frustration that this sometimes meant a delay in moving on to the next topic. It is suggested that deadlines are set after negotiating with students and late submissions be dealt with according to the school's published process. Senior management has agreed to review school practice and clarify understanding with staff.

**Managing resubmissions** The Principal's Nominee identified some inconsistencies in applying the school resubmission policy and this was confirmed in the visit. Resubmissions can be offered to individual students who can identify and correct a minor error or an omission that is preventing them from achieving a higher grade. The Principal's Nominee will work to clarify understanding with staff and ensure NZQA guidelines are being met. NZQA's Myth Buster regarding resubmissions would be a useful resource.



**Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- review practice for managing missed and late assessments to ensure that all teachers are consistent and all students are treated fairly
- ensure that teachers' management of resubmissions complies with NZQA's expectations.

## 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)*

### **Christian Renewal School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- having all teachers record completion of all the quality assurance processes
- only submitting results to NZQA when the Principal's Nominee has sighted evidence that the quality assurance process is completed.

### **Christian Renewal School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- encouraging teachers to submit work digitally for external moderation. In 2017 work for all but one standard was submitted digitally, providing evidence of the effectiveness of the teachers' willingness to adapt their practice
- developing file name protocols so digital samples of student work are available for external moderation.

**Encourage teachers to note reasons for an assessment decision** It is good practice for teachers to note the reasons for an assessment decision, particularly where there has been discussion or disagreement during the verification process. This assists them the next time they use the standard. It also provides evidence that the process has been robust. The teachers at Christian Renewal School are having professional discussions and record that they have completed the steps of the moderation process, but are not consistently keeping notes of the reasons for a decision. The school agrees that this will be encouraged.

### **For consideration**

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

- expecting all teachers to record the reasons for an assessment decision.

## 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)*

### **Christian Renewal School effectively:**

- uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:
  - encouraging students to check their progress using an online portal into the school's student management system and the NZQA App on their phones
  - monitoring student progress to identify students at risk of not achieving a qualification and providing appropriate support
  - informing changes to standards offered in a course and new programmes to be offered to meet student needs and aspirations.
- reports accurate achievement data by:
  - using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
  - ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner
  - ensuring low levels of late external entries and internal entries with no results.

**Encourage staff usage of the NZQA Provider login** To ensure that the data held by NZQA accurately reflects each student's assessment programme, it is suggested that all teachers involved in assessing students for NCEA be required to check entry and results data held by NZQA. Currently, most of the checking is done through the school's student management system. This means that any misreporting of results to NZQA can go undetected. The school has agreed to require teachers to check entry and results data on the NZQA school's login prior to the key dates.

**Support students to register for their Learner login** The Learner login is the definitive way for students to check that entries and results have been reported accurately, make requests for review and reconsideration of external examinations, and order certificates and a Record of Achievement. To help students to register, NZQA issues them with their national student number in June each year. At the time of this review, the school had not passed that information on to the students. The students access their entry and results data through the login to the school's student management system, however it is suggested that they also be encouraged to check the data held by NZQA

### **For consideration**

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- requiring teachers to check entry and results data on the NZQA school's login prior to the key dates
- reviewing how students are supported to register and use their NZQA Learner login.

## 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)*

### **Christian Renewal School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to teachers by way of a comprehensive staff handbook and in staff meetings
- using a variety of ways to communicate with students and parents such as the handbooks, meetings and passing on messages in form classes
- helping students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

### **Christian Renewal School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- checking whether teachers and students are following processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes.

**Students not aware of some key processes** Students must receive information on assessment practices to know their responsibilities and rights. None of the students knew there was a handbook outlining the expectations and they were all unaware of some key processes. The handbook is written in quite complex language so may be challenging for students to use. Teachers reinforce messages in class but the school agrees that it will check that the messages are consistent and cover all the key processes. The school will review the handbook with the aim of ensuring that it is written in simpler language.

### **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:

- check that the assessment information given to students is consistent with the school's expectations and cover all the key processes
- review the student handbook to ensure that the language is clear and suitable for its intended audience.