

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Southern Health School**

**March 2018**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Southern Health 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
- *Southern Health School Assessment Information for Students*
- *Southern Health School Assessment Policy 2018*
- *Southern Health School Assessment Procedure 2018*
- *Southern Health School Unit Standards Procedure 2018* (Staff information)
- *Southern Health School Students entering NZQA Qualifications Procedure 2018* (Staff information)
- *Rolls, results and exams* PowerPoint.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, one student, the Data Entry Co-ordinator and Check Moderator, the Curriculum Leader Years 11 – 13, and a teacher.

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.

## Background

Southern Health School is based in Christchurch and has community classrooms in three Health-funded facilities, and regional centres in Blenheim, Nelson, Greymouth, Timaru, Oamaru, Cromwell, Dunedin, Queenstown and Invercargill. Students are taught in their homes, or hospitals, or one of the school's community classrooms. Selected unit standards are assessed by teachers at all of the community classrooms.

Enrolment in the health school reduces the barriers to accessing education in a mainstream school.

Most students under the care of the Southern Health School remain on the roll of their School of Enrolment (SOE). The majority of assessment occurs under the protocols of Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (Te Kura) or the SOE, as outlined in the service level agreement or memorandum of understanding between the organisations. Southern Health School made entries to NZQA for national qualifications for 21 NCEA students in 2017.

The total roll of Southern Health School for 2017 was 695 with a peak of 298 students being enrolled at one time. Students may be enrolled from as little as 6 weeks, while others may stay on the roll for a number of years. The average enrolment period for a student is 15 weeks.

# SUMMARY

## Southern Health School

**28 March 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.

This review was rescheduled from 2017 with the school's agreement.

### **What the school is doing well**

Southern Health School's central focus is to support students with health and well-being concerns, to continue with educational attainment. Engaging students in quality assessment experiences, utilising the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model, and supporting a positive transition to the school of enrolment, or other vocational options, underpins this commitment. Self-review appraises the effectiveness of assessment processes and practices. School-wide collaborative ownership of effective NCEA assessment practice helps ensure the credibility of assessment and the robustness of quality assurance.

Students are supported in the home, a health facility, or attend a community classroom with periodic face-to-face contact with their teacher. Assessment programmes are personalised and documented in Individual Learning Programmes (ILPs) which respond to the changing needs of the student. Students are assessed when ready through flexible timeframes with a select choice of Southern Health School delivered unit standards. Learning continues independently using digital platforms, including using distance learning programmes.

Robust internal moderation processes are consistently applied and ensure only credible results reported to NZQA. A response form is used to document staff feedback and monitor the completion of actions undertaken to address issues in external moderation reports.

Student progress is continually re-evaluated against achievable goals, outlined in ILPs, with support and interventions to assist students towards transitioning to their school of enrolment. Parents, and educational and medical professionals participate in the review of programmes. Students were successful in all unit standards results reported by the school in 2017. Assessment data is managed effectively to ensure results reported to NZQA, directly or through the school of enrolment, are complete, accurate and timely.

Staff have developed shared ownership of assessment practice through regular discussion of school assessment policies and procedures and NCEA best practice. Opportunities are provided to clarify expectations and changes to assessment procedures.

The Principal's Nominee and the Data Entry Co-ordinator and Check Moderator, with the support of senior management, collaboratively and effectively lead assessment practice to support student success. This leadership provides assistance to students and staff, promotes good understanding of school practice and has the capacity to respond effectively to resolving issues.

### **Areas for improvement**

To be confident that NCEA information is current, documentation needs to be updated as indicated in the report. Revised information is required for:

- the appeals process
- management of assessing when ready
- the random selection of student work for external moderation
- strategies to support students to produce authentic work when using digital tools, and
- the terms of the Privacy Act.

### **Agreed action**

The school agreed that this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- update staff and student information as outlined in this report.

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Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

7 May 2018

**NZQA**

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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 30 October 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

The Principal's Nominee, working collaboratively with the Data Entry Co-ordinator and Check Moderator and staff, has addressed items requiring action from the last review.

Responses to agreed actions from the 2014 review have resulted in:

- the school now having procedures for the negotiation with SOE and Te Kura teachers for extensions to assessment deadlines for standards these providers offer, and for breaches of the rules. However, these need to be fully documented for both staff and students
- strategies having been developed to ensure the authenticity of student work is maintained in all locations where assessment opportunities occur. The internal review section of this report details the effective processes now operating
- an appropriate method being used to select samples of student work for external moderation
- NZQA data reports being effectively used to check the accuracy of entries and results
- aspects of the documentation have been updated to reflect current best practice. Further updating of staff and student information is required, as outlined in the Communications section of this report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has had consistently high agreement rates for standards externally moderated. Comprehensive internal moderation processes are reflected in these positive outcomes. A response sheet has been developed to follow up issues identified by external moderation. Actions to address concerns, such as provision of appropriate support, are documented and their effectiveness evaluated and completion signed off by the Principal's Nominee.

### 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)*

Southern Health School is committed to providing the best outcomes for students. Assessment practices are being continuously evaluated to ensure assessment opportunities best support students. As a response to this self-review, a number of learning and assessment strategies have been introduced or strengthened to support students and improve current practice. These include:

- ILPS being revised to become the means to report to parents, providing a dynamic, current and timely account of student progress and Key Competencies
- a Transition Passport under consideration, to better support the needs of students when transitioning back to the SOE. The passport would succinctly inform the SOE of the student's needs and the best supporting strategies. Student voice is being used to inform what the passport would include.
- the recent appointment of a Level C assessor whose expertise is used support a student's transition to the SOE and to provide school-based evidence for special assessment conditions, as applicable
- basing ILPs on documented evidence from SOEs, including information on prior learning and course outlines, together with the student's current circumstances
- improving the management and accessibility of the school's canon of unit standards, using the Unit Standard Check List Guidelines of up-to-date assessment materials and inclusion of expiry dates, to assist teachers to deliver a consistent assessment experience
- strategies being discussed to avoid teacher over-guidance of students when completing assessment tasks and managing the credibility of digital evidence. To further ensure authentic work, all unit standard assessments are supervised
- the introduction of an authenticity form to be used for all "in-house" unit standard assessments. This is because an authenticity statement is not always included in learner assessment tasks for the selected unit standards, and students work independently off-site.
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the SOE with dual-enrolled students as these have not always been clearly defined or well understood. These arrangements have been strengthened and clarified through a review and update of the memorandum of understanding.
- the school successfully trialling the digital submission of student work for external moderation in 2017. The Principal's Nominee is confident of submitting all external moderation digitally this year.

These initiatives indicate the school's capacity to constructively review, improve and embed effective assessment practices to positively impact on student well-being and attainment, while maintaining effective quality assurance and ensuring the credibility of the qualification. Sound leadership, regular discussion of best assessment practice and close monitoring of individual student progress has contributed to effectively addressing student needs.

### **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 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)*

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

- providing 'in house' foundation and life skills unit standards with a focus on literacy and numeracy, to enable students to experience assessment success
- offering a choice of standards, including externally assessed standards, from Te Kura and the SOE, and from tertiary providers, through STAR funding and Gateway
- scaffolding assessment tasks to assess against more than one standard, as appropriate
- supporting the special assessment conditions of students, and making applications to NZQA, as applicable
- effectively managing examinations for students who elect to sit at the school due to for health circumstances, rather than the SOE.

### **Southern Health School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- using a range of strategies to ensure that student work is authentic
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of assessment rules, as applicable
- providing suitable opportunities for resubmission and further assessment
- ensuring justified evidence for derived grades, as applicable
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Assessment practice to support student engagement and success** A teacher is assigned to collaboratively co-construct the ILP with the student, parents, and specialised support team. This approach ensures that the learning and assessment programmes is best tailored to manage the student's assessment workload to reflect student health needs, current capability and long-term projections. Teachers actively seek opportunities for the student to present their best evidence of achievement, particularly through naturally occurring evidence in informal settings, including spoken interactions, and workbooks or evidence noted through observation checklists, or photographs. Milestone checks, and feedback and feedforward are used to help determine student readiness for assessment, and then assessment occurs when the student is ready. To reinforce student success and engagement there is a short turnaround in reporting results to students.

**Digital tools support learning and assessment practice** Distance learning opportunities, such as enrolment in Te Kura courses, and digital tools are pivotal to support student learning. Digital tools enable the student to continue their learning independently and to present the evidence of this learning in various formats. Independent e-learning allows contact time with the teachers to be used to the best advantage. Teachers continually communicate online with their students, monitor engagement on digital sites using the activity logs available, and provide assessment feedback. Teachers provide guidance to students to present authentic work when



using digital platforms. Google calendars are used to negotiate assessment timeframes.

**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 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)*

**Southern Health School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation** The school has robust, fit for purpose internal moderation systems which provide senior management with the confidence that all reported results are quality assured. A small group of purposefully chosen unit standards are used to establish student success and confidence in assessments.

Assessment materials are commercially sourced and kept secure on the school's intranet. The Check Moderator critiques these materials and makes modifications, as required. Teachers use benchmark exemplars to mark student work which is then given to the Check Moderator for comment and verification. A resubmission, including the use of supplementary templates, can be used to gather further evidence of achievement, if necessary.

The assessor judgements and the Check Moderator's responses are documented on the coversheet. Assessment materials are reviewed and modified as necessary, following teacher feedback to the Check Moderator. The Check Moderator collates verified results on a spreadsheet, and a certificate notifies the student and Principal's Nominee of assessment outcomes. The spreadsheet recording the moderation processes, the certificate letter and the centrally stored work with coversheets were sighted during the review. The Principal's Nominee reports the results to NZQA using web entry.

**Southern Health School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- undertaking a selection process that meets NZQA requirements, on those occasions where the sample size is sufficient to necessitate a random selection of student work for external moderation
- ensuring that all student work is centrally stored and available for external moderation.

### **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 for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)*

### **Southern Health School effectively:**

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - teacher-led regular review of a student's ILP, to monitor student progress and adapt it to address current student needs
  - reporting results through the tertiary pathway when few in number to reduce fees.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - regularly reconciling and reporting results from external providers to SOEs and NZQA
  - circulating a summary of internally assessed grades reported for teachers to check in Term 4
  - using Key Indicators, file submission and data reports to identify and resolve data errors
  - timely reporting of results to NZQA that have been checked for accuracy
  - ensuring a low number of late entries for external examinations
  - submitting fees paid and financial assistance applications on time, as applicable.

**Fit for purpose analysis and information gathering** Student achievement is not analysed using NCEA statistical reports but is based on learner engagement and successful transition to the SOE.

It is not meaningful in the context of the health school to analyse statistics results, given the compromised well-being of enrolled students, and the high turnover of students. The majority of student learning outcomes (eighty-nine percent) are reported by external providers.

After a student has transitioned to their SOE, a follow-up survey is undertaken with students and parents. The survey identifies for senior management the progress of transition and improvements that would be valued. Evaluation of the transition feedback informs change and decisions about future strategic direction in support, and learning and assessment practice, which are reported to the Board of Trustees.

### **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))*

### **Southern Health School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive assessment information and outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting new teachers to understand the school's assessment practice and moderation processes, including accessing their NZQA login.

### **Southern Health School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- ongoing communication with parents and SOE teachers, through the regular review and sharing of ILPs, and SOE site visits, where possible
- using clear language and key information in staff and student information.

### **Professional learning on assessment practice focusses on consistent practice**

Ensuring consistency of assessment practice is challenging given the dispersed location of teaching staff. To upskill and assist practice to remain current, teachers meet online every fortnight, gather together twice a year, and receive needs-based professional learning by the Principal's Nominee on-site visits. NCEA updates and assessment best practice, including discussion of authenticity strategies and the *Myths*, are regularly shared during these forums. This professional learning helps to ensure that school-wide consistency in assessment practice.

The unit standard check list and guidelines have been developed to support teachers to deliver a consistent assessment experience for their students. The Data Entry Co-ordinator and Check Moderator are available to clarify and support teachers in any part of the teaching approach and assessment process. 'Swap Meets' share findings from teacher inquiries, and teacher collaboration supports best outcomes for students.

**Reviewing NCEA documentation** To reflect current practice and requirements, documentation requires some modifications and additions; namely

- updating the school name so that it appears on all documents as appropriate
- students' ability to appeal any assessment decision, and outlining the process to be followed
- the guidelines relating to assess when ready (missed/lates/extensions)
- adding compliance with the Privacy Act 1993 when investigating an appeal or breach
- providing an outline of the random selection process in the staff NZQA Qualification document.

**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:

- update staff and student information as outlined in this report.