

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Botany Downs Secondary College**

**May 2017**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Botany Downs secondary College:

- 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 review
- *Assessment Policies, Botany Downs Board of Trustees, 2017*
- *NQF Levels 1-4 Assessment Procedures, Botany Downs Secondary College, 2017 (Staff Handbook)*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal, Principal's Nominee, Director of Academic Studies, three students and Heads of Learning Areas for Languages, Mathematics, Music, Science, Social Studies and Technology.

There was a report-back session with the Principal's Nominee and Acting Deputy Principals 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

## Botany Downs Secondary College

03 May 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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

### What the school is doing well

Botany Downs Secondary College demonstrates an effective culture of self-review in all aspects of their NCEA assessment practice to ensure the credibility of assessment and meet student needs.

To allow students to present their best evidence for achievement opportunities, differentiation of assessment programmes between and within classes is practised. Where applicable, students are assessed when ready. Recently the college has extended their vocational pathways through the use of external providers in the Trades Academy and Gateway programmes.

Effective communication has enabled senior management and teachers to take ownership of the assessment systems in the college. In-depth discussion through scheduled meetings on assessment issues facilitates the effective review and implementation of changes to improve assessment practices. This discussion also facilitates school-wide understanding and consistency of practice.

Robust internal moderation processes are reflected in the college's high moderation agreement rate between teachers and external moderators. Senior management ensure that only verified results are reported through an annual internal moderation global tracking process. External moderation outcomes are documented longitudinally by the Principal's Nominee and action plans are developed and monitored when issues are identified.

Data analysis and the increasing use of student voice informs self-review, allowing teachers to reflect on course and programme design. Student entries and the reporting of results is complete and accurate. The progress of each NCEA student is monitored and tracked effectively, enabling students to meet personal goals and expectations. From this year, the tracking will also include student led conferences where students will present their goals and progress to their parents and mentor..

Assessment practice in the senior school is effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee. She fosters discussion on assessment practice and, with the Director of Academic Studies, manages robust self-review and change processes. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team are supportive and work collaboratively to help students achieve.

### **Areas for improvement**

As discussed with senior management documentation needs to clarify the use of commercial tasks when collecting evidence to report derived and emergency grades, the location of stored student work when teachers leave and provide information on New Zealand Certificate Qualifications which are replacing National Certificates.

### **Agreed action**

The school agreed that actions to improve the quality of their assessment systems is are to:

- clarify the requirements to keep commercial tasks secure when collecting evidence to report derived and emergency grades
- update assessment practices in the staff handbook as outlined in the report.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

22 June 2017

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://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)*

**Action Items from 6 August 2013 Managing National Assessment Report** All items from this review have been actioned.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The college has a high external moderation agreement rate. Response to any issue identified in external moderation outcomes are documented and actively monitored by the Principal's Nominee. All Heads of Learning Areas are required to share with senior management external moderation outcomes for their subjects and the actions they will take to rectify any issues. Outcomes are then discussed with senior management as part of the annual learning area self-review audit. This provides senior management and teachers with an historical summary of concerns and completed actions which is utilised as an effective framework for ongoing self-review and improvement.

**Response to data issues** The school has responded effectively to outliers identified by NZQA in three subject areas in recent years. A written report from the Head of Learning Areas of each subject to the Principal's Nominee has been completed, explaining why the outlier has occurred and any required actions that may be necessary to rectify the situation.

### 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 college has developed an effective culture of self-review to ensure credible assessment practices and to meet the needs of students. As a response to the school's review of processes, a number of assessment strategies have been introduced to improve current practice and student achievement. These include:

- expanding vocational pathways through the use of external providers in the Trades Academy and Gateway programmes
- identifying the students at risk of not achieving a qualification and providing catch-up credit opportunities and tutorial help, such as the Pasifika Lalanga Homework Centre
- appointing a Literacy Co-ordinator to identify students in Year 9 who need literacy support so they are able to complete this requirement of the Level 1 NCEA qualification in Year 11
- providing professional development for all staff on learning outcomes to make NCEA assessment opportunities more accessible and transparent for a greater range of students
- developing an assessment register which records all assessment issues such as appeals and breaches, to identify patterns to provide information for self-review

- establishing a mentor programme for all NCEA students which uses data to track individual progress and inform realistic personal goals.

Senior management indicated that self-review is supported by a school-wide collaborative ownership of effective NCEA assessment practice. Robust discussion on assessment issues has informed effective self-review and change, contributing to the school enjoying consistently high levels of NCEA student achievement and meeting 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 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)*

### **Botany Downs Secondary College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:**

- providing differentiated assessment across classes in the same subject and by offering a selection of optional standards within classes
- reviewing course design and changing the context of assessment activities to meet student abilities and interests
- making portfolio and research-based assessment opportunities manageable by “chunking” assessment tasks
- where appropriate, assessing students when they are ready
- providing extra tutoring for students at risk of not achieving a qualification and those preparing for scholarship
- identifying students requiring special assessment conditions and resourcing their support.

### **Botany Downs Secondary College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- managing student appeals of assessment decisions and breaches of assessment rules
- supporting teachers to collect a range of evidence of achievement, particularly through the use of digital technology and naturally occurring evidence
- using a range of strategies to ensure student work submitted is authentic
- efficiently managing NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

**Clarifying the Derived and Emergency Grade process** Clarification is required on the use of commercial tasks when collecting evidence to report derived and emergency grades. Teachers interviewed for the review were not clear that tasks from a commercial source must be kept secure.

### **Agreed action**

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

- clarify the requirements to keep commercial tasks secure when collecting evidence to report derived and emergency grades.

## 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)*

### **Botany Downs Secondary College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring assessment activities are set to the national standard by having modified or new assessments critiqued by another teacher
- making assessment judgements consistent with national standards by having a subject specialist verify purposefully selected samples of marked student work at grade boundaries
- recording the completion of moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions.

### **Botany Downs Secondary College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation as required by NZQA
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- documenting actions undertaken to address issues identified in external moderation reports.

**Robust internal moderation monitoring processes** Following the recommendation from the last Managing National Assessment review, senior management have developed an effective process to monitor the completion of internal moderation and to ensure all reported results are quality assured.

Heads of Learning Areas are required to track the completion of all moderation processes in their learning area by reconciling documented processes with actual practice. Senior management for each learning area conduct an audit which includes checking internal moderation processes have been tracked and completed for each standard reported.

### **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)*

### Botany Downs Secondary College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - using NZQA statistical reports to analyse results comparatively and longitudinally using a common template to reflect on and identify next steps
  - using NCEA data to inform course and programme design to meet the interests, aspirations and abilities of all students
  - reporting to the Board of Trustees and Principal an analysis of NCEA achievement, including against school goals
  - actively encouraging students to use their NZQA logins and student portal on the student management system to monitor their progress
  - reconciling Memorandum of Understanding with the provider codes for externally reported results.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - timely reporting of results to NZQA
  - ensuring entries submitted to NZQA have a reported result
  - using the NZQA Key Indicators to identify and resolve data issues.

**Mentoring student progress to improve achievement outcomes** The college has developed a very effective mentoring system using current NCEA data to inform student goal setting, career pathways and the current progress to complete qualifications.

All NCEA students are assigned a mentor they meet with weekly to discuss their progress and preparedness for upcoming assessment opportunities. Students interviewed for the review acknowledged they appreciated the work teachers did in preparing their progress data to inform discussion.

The mentoring sessions also allow teachers to clarify required assessment practice for students. This contributes to school-wide consistency. The college intends involving parents and guardians in this process this year to further help them to understand the NCEA assessment model.

### 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, 2.7iib)*

### **Botany Downs Secondary College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- using a variety of modes to communicate assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction process involving senior management and Heads of Learning Areas
- managing student workloads through the publication of an assessment calendar
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

### **Botany Downs Secondary College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- facilitating shared ownership of assessment practice through NCEA discussions in meetings, marking panels and the mentor programme
- ensuring consistent school-wide practice, evident in the understanding of best practice by teachers and students interviewed for the review
- actively encouraging teachers to gain assessment experience and understanding by becoming NZQA markers and moderators
- ensuring more effective responses to resolving assessment issues by devolving monitoring and review processes to Heads of Learning Areas.

**Clarification of assessment practice in documentation** As discussed with senior management documentation needs to be updated to reflect current practice by:

- ensuring teachers who leave have stored student work appropriately and have reported all quality assured results
- replacing information on National Certificates with the requirements for New Zealand Certificate qualifications

### **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:

- clarify assessment practices in the documentation as outlined in the report.