

MANAGING NATIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Hebron Christian
College**

May 2016

Managing National Assessment Review

The purpose of reviewing the management of national assessment is:

- 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 2016* (Assessment Rules); and
- 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.

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of assessment materials and of teacher grade judgements for student work selected by the school's random-selection process.
- A random sampling of aspects of assessment systems and data for review or audit on an annual basis.
- A visit to review each school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

Managing National Assessment Report

This report summarises NZQA's evaluation of how effectively the school:

- has addressed issues identified through the three components of 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
- manages and makes use of assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

In preparing this report, the School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, the Head of the Secondary School, the teachers of Commerce, Mathematics and Science, and five students.

The school also provided pre-review information and the following documents:

- *Assessment Guide for Staff, Hebron Christian College, 2016*
- *Assessment Guide for Students, Hebron Christian College, 2016*
- course booklets for Accounting, Biology, Calculus, Economics, Mathematics and Science.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, the Head of the Secondary School and the Principal's Nominee at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies and next steps and to agree on any action required.

OVERVIEW

Hebron Christian College

26 May 2016

Areas of strength

Hebron Christian College has developed effective practices for ensuring the credibility of assessment results submitted to NZQA. These practices are embedded in the school, well-understood by teachers and consistently applied.

The Principal's Nominee has returned to work at the school following a brief hiatus during which the school struggled to maintain some NZQA procedures. She is knowledgeable about her role and is very effective in it. The Principal's Nominee has developed systems to ensure that all required processes are followed by teachers and she monitors compliance with these procedures. She has a very good working relationship with the Head of the Secondary School. The effectiveness of this team inspires confidence.

The Head of the Secondary School and the Principal's Nominee lead the process of self-review and use the analysis of achievement and other data to support this process. A number of initiatives have been launched as a result of this self-review, including a focus on achievement in Science and English, and professional learning on research.

Assessment practices are sound. Courses are structured to meet students' needs and are reviewed annually. Teachers are open to the possibility of amending courses during the year based on emerging student experiences. The use of digital tools to support assessment is developing in the school. Assessment guides for teachers and students are comprehensive and are reviewed annually.

The school has developed innovative systems to address the fact that most senior teachers are part-time sole subject teachers and that student numbers are low. The grouping of all teachers who teach NCEA subjects into one department rather than separate subject departments is an effective practice. Weekly meetings for these teachers reinforces communication. The collation and analysis of student achievement data is innovative and provides evidence to inform decision-making.

Areas for review

The school emphasises a "family ethos" and teachers know students well. Students who are struggling academically are identified and supported. Regularly updating all students on their NCEA progress, monitoring this progress and providing students with the opportunity to discuss this with staff are recommended enhancements. Students currently use the NZQA website and NCEA student app to inform them about their NCEA achievement.

The school has acknowledged that that the high number of standards for which samples were not submitted for external moderation in the previous year is a cause for concern. Although the system to collect and submit these samples is sound, the application of this system fell short of expectations. The Principal's Nominee has taken steps to resolve this concern in the future.

Next Steps

No significant issues This review did not identify any significant issues that would prevent the school from meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

Agreed action However, NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to further refine assessment practices. Senior management undertakes to:

- update all students on their NCEA progress at various times during the year, monitor this progress and provide the opportunity for students to discuss this with staff
- ensure that all materials required for external moderation are submitted to NZQA (Assessment Rule 6.4b).

Next Managing National Assessment review Based on the outcome of this assessment systems check, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

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5 August 2016

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Response to External and Internal Reviews

Previous external reviews

Evidence was sought that external review recommendations and findings have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

Items from the Managing National Assessment Review of May 2013 have been actioned. The school has:

- refined and documented the monitoring processes to assure the completion of all internal moderation before results are reported to NZQA.
- developed and documented a system to monitor the content of course outlines.
- reviewed staff and student documents for additions and refinements as discussed.

External moderation issues followed up The Principal's Nominee has developed an effective system for following up any issues raised through external moderation. Reports are printed and given to teachers and a response is required of actions taken as a result. These are followed up by the Principal's Nominee to ensure action has occurred.

Internal review

Evidence was sought that the school was 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)

Annual meeting with teachers The Head of the Secondary School meets with each teacher individually at the start of the year. At this meeting, student achievement from the previous year is reviewed and, as needed, changes are made to the composition of courses and assessment practices (for example the timing of assessments). The teachers interviewed during this review value this meeting.

Professional learning on research Teachers identified a common difficulty in the assessment of standards that involve a research component. As a result, senior leadership has initiated a professional learning programme on this topic for teachers delivering courses involving assessment against research-based standards.

Focus placed on student achievement in the Sciences and English Senior leadership has identified that a significant number of students intend to study science-related subjects at university. As a result, a focus on improving achievement in these subjects is planned. In addition, the increased requirement for English for one university has been noted and courses are being reviewed as a result.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

Assessment Practice

How does the school's assessment practice allow for the effective management of assessment for national qualifications? (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6, 3)

Hebron Christian College has effective processes and procedures for:

- submitting valid, authentic and verifiable grades
- providing further opportunities for assessment when appropriate
- granting or denying extensions for students when assessments are either late or missed
- providing suitable opportunities for resubmissions
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993
- investigating any possible breaches of the assessment rules
- dealing with appeals by students of assessment decisions.

Weekly meeting for staff who teach senior students The school has a small number of staff who teach senior students. Most of these teachers are part-time. Rather than organising teachers into subject departments, all senior teachers are grouped into one department with a weekly meeting being held. This is an effective way of sharing consistent assessment practice and information about any students of concern. The Principal's Nominee attends these meetings to provide any updates on NZQA requirements.

New policy on submission of work in one subject area The subject teacher has identified that some students who submit work at the deadline date end up being assessed at a grade boundary and could do better. A change that permits a resubmission opportunity is being trialled to address this issue and will be reviewed in a year.

Courses structured to meet students' needs Staff take pride in knowing their students well. This knowledge and the fact that student numbers are small means that courses are structured around the needs and aspirations of students. For example, some students are being offered assessments in standards usually offered to students in another related subject. There is further scope to develop this sort of cooperation between subject areas to the advantage of students.

Use of digital tools developing The school is well-positioned to develop the use of digital tools for assessment. For example, one teacher uploads video clips of his lessons and is developing digital assessment for a standard.

Monitoring of student progress should be extended The monitoring of students whose progress is causing concern is well developed. However, most students check their own achievement through the use of the NZQA website and NCEA student app. The school should consider updating all students on their NCEA progress at various times during the year, monitoring this progress and providing the opportunity for students to discuss this with staff.

Agreed action

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

- update all students on their NCEA progress at various times during the year, monitor this progress and provide the opportunity for students to discuss this with staff.

Moderation

How effectively does school internal and external moderation assure assessment quality? (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 3)

Hebron Christian College has effective processes and procedures for managing moderation Teachers ensure that:

- assessment tasks are critiqued by another subject specialist prior to the teaching of the unit and assessment of the standard to ensure validity
- students' results are verified by another subject specialist who, in most cases, is a teacher from another school.
- internal moderation cover sheets are used consistently to document the moderation procedure with a copy of the cover sheet being lodged with the Principal's Nominee which is used by her to ensure the integrity of the process
- all student work is securely stored.

Monitoring of internal moderation process occurs The Principal's Nominee has a system in place for checking that teachers are complying with internal moderation processes. This system is documented and provides assurance that internal moderation has occurred before results are reported.

Teachers are professionally supported Teachers have developed good relationships with teachers from other schools and through subject associations. As most teachers are part-time and sole subject teachers, the school is aware of the need for staff to maintain the currency of their assessment judgements. As a result, attendance at Best Practice Workshops is encouraged and supported by senior leadership.

Random selection for external moderation can be simplified The Head of the Secondary School randomly selects the names of students whose work must be submitted for external moderation. This process follows NZQA expectations. The use of the Student Management System to generate these lists may be a more straightforward process and is worth considering to reduce workload.

Concern regarding non-submission of moderation materials addressed In 2015, the school had a particularly high number of materials not submitted for external moderation. Although the system to gather and submit student work for external moderation is thorough, the school has acknowledged that the application of the system in 2015 was below expectations. The Principal's Nominee has a process in place to significantly improve this in the future.

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 that all materials required for external moderation are submitted to NZQA (Assessment Rule 6.4b).

Data Quality and Use

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 2.7, 3)

Hebron Christian College effectively manages assessment-related data by:

- reporting students' results to NZQA in a timely manner through the submission of a monthly data file
- ensuring that all students attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly
- withdrawing students from standards in which they have not been offered an adequate assessment opportunity
- using Key Indicators and other reports via the school's Provider Login to monitor the accuracy of submitted data and to resolve issues

Innovative use of data analysis In a small school with only a few students taking each subject, analysis of student achievement can be a challenge. The Head of the Secondary School has introduced an innovative method of gathering and analysing student achievement. By using Grade Point Average scores, students' relative success in subject areas are ranked. This provides a point of discussion with teachers who report the value of this analysis during annual meetings to discuss achievement and to review the structure of courses. This analysis is also used in reports to the Board of Trustees.

Students use NZQA website and NCEA Student App Students report that they regularly access both the NZQA website through their Learner login and the NCEA app to check on their progress towards achieving NCEA goals.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

Communication

How effectively does the school maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, and students and their families?

(CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6, 2.7ii, 3)

Hebron Christian College has effective processes and procedures for:

- annually reviewing assessment policy and procedures to ensure their currency
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families using comprehensive assessment guides.

Students require further reminders Although the assessment guide for students is comprehensive, the Principal's Nominee is aware that she needs to remind students about NZQA processes from time to time. For example, a student missed applying for a derived grade opportunity in 2015 even though the process is clearly listed in the guide.

Course booklets follow a consistent template Course booklets are issued to all students. These booklets follow a consistent template and contain useful and readable content. The detail evident in a set of booklets from one subject area could be trimmed to be more concise even though it follows the template formula.

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.