

Managing National Assessment Report

2014

**Broadwood Area School
- Manganuiowae**

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4 September 2014

Introduction

The purpose of the Managing National Assessment (MNA) external review 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 2014* (Assessment Rules); and
- in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, to ensure that schools are meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess.

This process is a partnership between schools and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to ensure that assessment systems remain effective and internal assessment decisions are valid.

The MNA review has two components:

1. The annual external moderation of assessment materials for an NZQA-selected sample of internally assessed standards across the curriculum and teacher grade judgements on the student work identified by the school's random-selection process.
2. An external review of each school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

This report summarises NZQA's evaluation of how effectively:

- senior management has addressed issues identified during the previous MNA review on 7 July 2011
- the school manages assessment for national qualifications
- the school manages internal and external moderation
- the school manages and makes use of assessment-related data
- the school 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 (PN) and the teachers in charge of English, Information Technology, Physical Education and Science and Mathematics. Pre-review information was provided by the school and the four teachers interviewed prior to the visit as requested, along with the staff and student assessment procedure guides.

There was a report-back session with the Deputy Principal (DP) and PN at the end of the visit to highlight strengths and weaknesses, with suggested strategies for good practice and to agree on recommended actions.

2011 Managing National Assessment Report (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

Evidence was sought that action items in the previous MNA report have been effectively addressed.

All items from the previous report have been actioned.

Assessment Practice (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6, 3v)

How does the school's assessment practice allow for the effective management of assessment for national qualifications?

Assessment procedures Teachers continue to develop their understanding of assessment practice and this is assisted by a culture of cooperation and information sharing in the school. They feel supported in their professional development and are encouraged to engage with subject groups and individuals outside the school and to attend Best Practice Workshops.

The school has worked to ensure this ongoing assessment in improvement practice and fundamental to this are the regular Senior Syndicate meetings, which are a key forum where items are raised and discussed. NZQA found no inconsistencies in the way the school's procedures are being applied. Each teacher is involved in a peer appraisal 'buddy system', which includes an evaluation of, and feedback on, their assessment practice.

Gathering evidence of achievement Senior students are provided with a variety of courses and contexts within which to learn and demonstrate achievement. These include evidence from formal testing and through the use of digital tools. All senior students are equipped with an iPad, so that in most subjects they are able to work entirely in a digital environment for learning and assessment, and teachers can provide real-time feedback to students, individually or as a group. Strategies to ensure authenticity of online submission include tracking document changes from the digital footprint, making milestone copies, password protection, and conferencing with students about their work. Teachers reported that this digital environment facilitates regular feedback and feed-forward. This, and a close knowledge of their students, allows for them to better consider readiness for assessment and to provide further options for presenting and viewing evidence such as through emails, a Facebook page and Google Drive.

Web information is now readily accessible to students and they are able to interact with learning environments beyond the classroom, such as participating in Mathematics online challenges. The school considers that working in this digital environment has led to an improvement in student engagement and attendance.

Subject days have been introduced in rotation to allow for a subject-based in-school programme or an educational trip for a full day. Outside providers or tutors are engaged for specialised learning and assessment in areas such as First Aid, Hospitality, Mau Rakau and Music. Other than for Level 1 Mathematics and English, classes are multilevel so that a wider range of courses are available. Level 2 Mathematics is currently provided through video-conferencing.

Student progress is closely tracked and courses are flexible to accommodate the learning and assessment needs of individuals. NZQA raised the availability of Vocational Pathways and the school's approach to maximising the opportunities for

students to gain these awards is being developed.

The school was reinstated as an examination centre in 2013. While the majority of students were unable to gain credits from this form of assessment, the school is encouraging and mentoring students entered into externals in 2014 for improved outcomes for individual students and for school-wide results to more closely align with those gained through internal assessment. Before finalising external examination entries for 2014 examinations, the PN met with individual students for their agreement.

Literacy and numeracy The numeracy Work and Study Skills unit standards are assessed in Mathematics for an identified group of students. The school is considering the assessment of students against the equivalent literacy standards. NZQA noted that student work being available digitally facilitates evidence gathering across subjects for the assessment of these literacy standards, and that 10 NCEA credits are available from these to contribute toward a qualification.

Self-review The school intends to continue to be progressive in the way it uses digital technology for learning and assessment and anecdotal evidence about this is positive. Discussions were held as to the value of gathering formal evidence about its impact on student achievement from staff, students and their parents. For more informed self-review, it was agreed that targeted and formal feedback needs to be sought from the school community about the use of digital technology so that management can make informed decisions about its future use.

Identified actions

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

- inform self-review by seeking feedback from the school's community to evaluate the extent to which conducting assessment in a predominantly digital environment, is meeting the assessment needs of its students.

Moderation (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 3v)

How effectively does school internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Internal moderation processes Since taking on the role during 2013, the PN has developed his understanding of the process and continued to refine effective procedures for internal moderation. Teachers follow these using an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, appropriately completed examples of which were sighted during the visit. Once verification is complete for each internally assessed standard, an assessment folder is lodged with the PN. This contains a copy of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, student work and assessment material and is stored in a central location. This facilitates monitoring by the PN so grades can be deemed as final, entered by teachers and reported to NZQA. The PN reconciles entries made for standards with the corresponding *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, and follows up individually with staff to discuss any issues or to check the robustness of the internal moderation process they have undertaken.

Where a subject expert is not currently available in the school, grade verification is undertaken with a suitably qualified professional outside the school. From

discussions it was evident that teachers maintain effective links to be assisted, and to assist others in this regard. They are encouraged and supported to engage in subject-based professional development for internal assessment and readily access and use subject resources and moderation clarifications documents on NZQA's website, although one teacher was made aware of the availability of these documents.

External moderation procedures The PN follows up with teachers to discuss the outcomes of external moderation. While it is expected that any changes required by moderators are implemented in a timely manner, it remains for the PN to sight evidence that the changes have been implemented before future assessment. The value of teachers sharing moderator feedback with their subject verifiers outside the school was discussed and the PN plans to encourage all teachers to engage in this practice. It is suggested that to assist in this, and with the monitoring of internal moderation, the PN maintains a record of the subject experts outside the school who are engaged for grade verification. Similarly, for professional recognition, it can be useful to note those teachers who assist colleagues in other schools with assessment practice.

Random selection Where class size warrants student work to be randomly selected, the school procedure for this meets NZQA's guidelines.

External moderation The most recently completed round of external moderation for the school was April 2014. The assessment materials and student work were submitted as required for all but one of the 14 standards selected. The assessor for the standard not submitted, and the PN, provided assurances that procedures such as the requirement for central storage of material are in place to prevent non-submission. NZQA raised the availability and advantages of online submission for external moderation and the PN is to encourage its use for 2015 moderation.

The majority of the assessment material submitted was approved, while some required modification before future use. NZQA discussed a significant issue raised in the moderation of one standard and sighted evidence that this had been appropriately addressed. Moderators agreed with all or the majority of assessor judgements for 10 of these standards.

Identified 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:

- sight evidence that the changes required by moderators have been implemented before future assessment.

Data (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 2.7)

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Managing assessment-related data The DP enters candidate details and sets up markbooks in the school's student management system, teachers enter final grades and the PN makes monthly file submissions to NZQA. In 2013, the school reported 720 results for internally assessed standards and made an additional 40 entries in externally assessed standards. While at times there has been the need for prompting by NZQA, such as the 2014 fees submission being overdue, the PN works

responsibly to ensure that there is ongoing improvement in the accuracy of data management.

Learner login In 2013, one-third of students registered for Learner login. All student having the ability through their iPads to access their Learner login and there is a link to this on the school's website. The PN reports that the majority of students have registered for this in 2014. The facility is used as part of the school's academic counselling programme to assist students to track their entries and results.

Monitoring student progress The school is focussing on raising the expectations of students and cites increased participation in Science and Mathematics and more students striving for endorsements as examples this being achieved.

Senior students are assigned an Academic Counsellors who monitor student progress and meet regularly with them to review progress and establish the next steps. The attainment of NCEA numeracy and literacy requirements is seen as a priority in this process.

Identified action

No action was identified as needed to improve the management and use of assessment-related data.

Communication (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i,v 2.6, 3v)

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

Communication of policies and procedures to staff, students and their families

The following documents were provided for this visit:

- *Broadwood Area School NZQA Teacher's Handbook 2014*
- *Broadwood Area School Senior Student Handbook 2014*

Course assessment statements are included in the student handbook and other than the standard numbers not being stated for one subject, these contain the essential information about standards to be assessed.

These documents are informative and contain information that is current and appropriate for staff and for students respectively. With there being regular discussion about assessment procedures, staff have the opportunity to be familiar with, and to review these documents. Several items for inclusion or amendment were identified during the visit, including documenting for students information about the availability of Vocational Pathways awards and further guidance about strategies for ensuring authenticity.

The school also communicates with its community through regular newsletters and report days, emails, and its website, and the PN is readily available for consultation with staff and students about procedures, entries or results.

Identified action

No action was identified as needed to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families.

Summary

Broadwood Area School is committed to improving school-wide practice to ensure the credibility of internal assessment for national qualifications. Teachers and students have become immersed using the digital environment for learning and assessment and the impact of this needs to be more formally evaluated so as to effectively inform the school's self-review.

The school's assessment procedures are well understood. Internal moderation is effectively managed so that the school only reports results for internal assessment that have been subject to the school's internal moderation procedure, which is followed by teachers. There are appropriate responses to the outcomes of external moderation and it remains for the school to sight evidence of these.

Teachers have a close knowledge of their students and the school seeks to provide opportunities and programmes that meet their needs. Students are able to provide evidence in a variety of ways for internal assessments so that their best effort can be recognised and the school is working to establish complementary success in external examinations.

Results data is used to identify those students in need of further guidance, and for teachers to review their courses.

The Principal's Nominee, after starting in the role with minimal experience, has gained the confidence of teachers and is committed to ensuring that the school has credible processes in managing assessment for qualifications.

The 2014 Managing National Assessment review identified no significant issues that prevent the school from meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* and its *Guidelines*.

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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