

Managing National Assessment Report

**James Hargest
College**

February 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively James Hargest 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, 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
- *James Hargest College Assessment Statement*
- *James Hargest College Policies for NZQF 2018, Staff Manual* (Staff Handbook)
- *James Hargest College Student Handbook for NZQF Assessment Level 1, 2 and 3, 2018* (Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13
- *James Hargest College Quality Management Systems*.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, Deputy Principal (Chair of the Assessment Committee), a member of the Assessment Committee, three students, Head of Department for Social Sciences, Head of Department and Assistant Head of Department for Languages, Co-Head of Department for Mathematics and Teacher in Charge for Media.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Deputy Principal (Chair of the Assessment Committee) 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

The management of national assessment at James Hargest College is shared between the Principal's Nominee who focuses on the review, support and use of data systems, and the Deputy Principal who leads assessment development and quality assurance.

SUMMARY

James Hargest College

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

What the school is doing well

The school effectively demonstrates the capacity to undertake its own review and evaluation of the effectiveness of its NZQA assessment practices and procedures. Review processes are based on student and teacher voice, ensuring shared ownership of the process and outcomes. Self-review has led to improvement in assessment practice to better meet the needs of students, including the development of extra methods to assist in the management of student workload. It has also resulted in enhancements to the monitoring of internal moderation to focus more on the development of department practice and less on compliance.

Assessment processes are managed to meet the qualifications needs of students. The school provides differentiated assessment through multiple course choices in core subject areas, and some individualisation of courses and assessment contexts. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards that the school would otherwise be unable to provide. These contribute to assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes by offering a range of opportunities to meet their needs.

Robust internal and external moderation processes are embedded across the school ensuring that only credible results are reported to NZQA. This is reflected in the school's high level of agreement between teacher and NZQA external moderator judgements.

Data management and use effectively supports student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure results reported to NZQA are timely. Achievement data is analysed to review department practice and courses, set strategic direction, to enable staff and students to monitor progress to complete qualifications, and to identify and intervene with students at risk of not achieving a qualification.

The school has clear and open communications that allow staff, students and caregivers to successfully gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures. The effectiveness of the school's communications is regularly reviewed, and the delivery of further information is targeted to groups and individuals who need it.

Areas for improvement

Processes are in place so that students and staff check the accuracy of results reported to NZQA, but the checks also need to cover withdrawing internal entries. The school must ensure that all internal entries to NZQA have a result reported or are withdrawn if the student has not had an adequate opportunity to be assessed. This would mean that data sent reflects the assessment undertaken and ensures that students have an accurate assessment programme recorded to assist them with tracking their progress.

Agreed action

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

- ensure that all internal entries made to NZQA have a corresponding result attached or are withdrawn if there has not been an adequate opportunity to be assessed.

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Manager
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17 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 28 May 2014 Managing National Assessment Report There were no action items from the previous Managing National Assessment Report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation feedback. Results show a high level of agreement with assessor judgements and that there are no departments with widespread or ongoing concerns.

Departments reflect on each moderation report and are encouraged to use clarifications and/or appeals where appropriate. They summarise the moderation report and any required actions in a feedback form for the Deputy Principal. The completion of any actions is checked by the Deputy Principal in annual departmental reviews. This ensures that Senior Management are fully informed of issues and involved in the review of outcomes where required.

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)

In response to issues they have identified and to explore potential improvements, the school actively questions their assessment practice to evaluate the effectiveness of current systems. A strategic plan of review is implemented through an Assessment Committee, which is open to any staff member, ensuring there is shared ownership and school wide input.

Assessment practice is regularly reviewed This has led to whole school and departmental changes including:

- trialling and then introducing school-wide access to content matching software as another tool for staff and students to use to ensure the work presented for assessment is authentic
- a focus on reducing further assessment opportunities to encourage an improvement in the quality of work initially submitted and reduce assessment workload
- where appropriate, reducing the number of credits assessed in courses to focus on deeper learning to improve student assessment outcomes
- reviewing and updating the policies on extensions and late submission of work to reflect that practice had evolved to a process focused on an individual student's needs, whilst still ensuring assessment is fair and valid
- improving staff practice in response to student voice in processes such as safeguarding student privacy during the sign-off of internal assessment results

- renaming school exams as *Evidence Exams* to emphasise their importance and that they may need to be used for derived grade applications
- developing the use of school-based evidence for special assessment conditions applications to overcome any financial constraints associated with requiring independent assessor reports
- introducing Agri Business and Financial Maths courses to allow students to follow a greater variety of academic pathways and meet their qualifications needs.

Review of the monitoring of departments moderation practice The school has reviewed how effective and efficient their monitoring of department moderation is. This has included:

- a member of the Assessment Committee conducting the annual review alongside the Deputy Principal, to help share the responsibility of monitoring, encourage self-reflection and disseminate good practice
- trialling this year a self-audit of departmental processes as the first step of the annual review to encourage self-reflection and enable the visit part of the review to focus on more in-depth discussion.

Internal self-review is a continual process The school's self-review includes forward planning as well as responding to issues as they arise. Planned areas of future development include:

- further developing academic mentoring to ensure staff have the skills to use the detailed data available to them to support students in their progress
- a focus on engaging with digital external assessment
- reviewing how departments manage the submission of student work, marking and storage in a digital environment.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews 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)

James Hargest College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated assessment through offering multiple courses within core subjects and where appropriate tailoring assessment opportunities to individuals within a course
- extending assessment opportunities through using a range of external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against standards related to career pathways
- altering existing courses to cater for the strengths and interests of the cohort
- coordinating the timing of assessments within core subjects to help students manage their workload
- providing a weekly study centre session to provide extra tuition
- ensuring that students potentially entitled to special assessment conditions are identified and support trialled
- clearly informing staff of student's special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance.

James Hargest College has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process, including using content matching software for teacher checks
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993
- thoroughly supporting the Exam Centre Manager with running the external examinations.

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)

James Hargest College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- retaining and sharing work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- following identical processes for moderating both Industry Training Organisation and NZQA administered standards
- robust monitoring through members of the assessment committee annually reviewing each department's moderation process.

James Hargest College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring student work is readily available for external moderation by being adequately stored and the Deputy Principal knowing the location of the materials
- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan and negotiating appropriate changes.

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)

James Hargest College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - Heads of Department analysing results with a focus on next steps, which informs the modification of courses and teaching practice
 - analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to set strategic direction
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
 - effectively encouraging students to check entries and results in both the student management system and through their NZQA Learner login
 - closely managing late entries
 - holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers.

Ensure all internal entries are withdrawn if a result is not recorded The school needs to ensure that in all subject areas all internal entries to NZQA have a result reported, or are withdrawn if the student has not had an adequate opportunity to be assessed, so that data sent reflects the assessment undertaken. This will further strengthen the current teacher and student checking of the accuracy of entries and results, and ensure that students have an accurate assessment programme recorded to assist them with tracking their progress. In 2017, 8.9% of Unit Standard and 1.6% of internally assessed Achievement Standard entries were reported to NZQA without a corresponding result attached. This means there is the potential for some student achievement to have been unreported, which could have an impact on the qualifications achievement.

Student progress is effectively tracked and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes Tracking is viewed as a collective responsibility. Students track their own progress; class teachers track individual's progress in a subject, and data is regularly shared with academic mentors to guide their mentoring conversations with their students. Identified members of staff track student progress to literacy and numeracy requirements.

Students who are at risk of not achieving to their potential have interventions implemented as necessary to improve their assessment outcomes. Interventions include Dean involvement, individualising assessment programmes, goal-setting opportunities, catch-up sessions and parental involvement.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that all internal entries made to NZQA have a corresponding result attached or are withdrawn if there has not been an adequate opportunity to be assessed.

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))

James Hargest College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive clear outlines for all courses they undertake
- informing students of changes to results and entries in the Student Management System through an automated email system
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff, students and their families using a range of methods
- aligning qualifications information on the school website, the student handbook and in the Student Management System portal
- staff induction and exit
- annually reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

James Hargest College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing access to assessment policy, procedures, forms and NCEA publications in both physical and digital formats
- using a variety of year level meetings annually to brief students about assessment policy and procedures
- individual course outlines referring students back to school procedures such as authenticity, extensions and appeals to ensure consistency across departments
- presenting NZQA and school assessment related processes in parent meetings and through timely reminders in newsletters
- sharing good practice and information through both the Assessment Committee and Heads of Department meetings
- checking whether teachers, students and parents are following processes.

Students interviewed showed a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures Students could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently.

Communications are followed up with targeted groups and individuals The school responds to the needs of their community by targeting the delivery of further information where required. This includes running NCEA information sessions with recent immigrant families and extra contact with individuals regarding NCEA fees and financial assistance.

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.