

Managing National Assessment Report

Longburn Adventist College

August 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Longburn Adventist 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 report
- *Student Course Information for NCEA Level 1, 2 and 3, Longburn Adventist College, 2017*
- *Longburn Adventist College Senior Student Academic Handbook, 2017*
- *Longburn Adventist College Staff Academic Handbook, 2017*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Department for English, Geography and Tourism, Physical Education and Health, Science, Social Sciences and Technology.

There was a report-back session with the Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal and the 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.

SUMMARY

Longburn Adventist College

10 August 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 most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

What the school is doing well

Longburn Adventist College has the capacity to respond effectively to reviewing, improving and embedding NCEA assessment practices to enable school-wide consistency and ownership. The college's evaluation of its assessment practices and procedures has enabled the flexibility of the NCEA model to be utilised, to meet the needs of students. This had led to the introduction of a wider range of courses and improved management and timing of assessment workloads, to enable students to present their best evidence of achievement.

The Principal's Nominee provides very effective leadership that ensures credible assessment for national qualifications. School documentation of NCEA practices and processes is reviewed and updated annually and provides detailed, clear direction of expectations. The Principal's Nominee is supported in her work by the Principal and senior management team, who work collaboratively to ensure students achieve.

Assessment processes are well managed. To meet individual student need, assessment differentiation is catered for by a range of practices including different courses within the same subject and personalising assessment opportunities. Students' achievement is closely tracked to support their progress towards personal aspirations and educational goals. These all contribute in assisting students to have successful assessment outcomes.

Evidence during the review identified that internal moderation processes are well understood and consistently applied by teachers, providing senior management with confidence that results are quality assured. The annual auditing of internal moderation processes ensures that only credible results are reported to NZQA. External moderation outcomes are documented by the Principal's Nominee and action plans developed and monitored when issues are identified. This strengthens the quality of assessment materials and assessor judgements.

Assessment data is managed efficiently to ensure results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Results data is analysed by Heads of Departments to reflect on the previous year's programme, inform future course design, and report outcomes to senior management. Student progress is monitored and tracked effectively to ensure students are meeting personal goals and expectations.

Clear communication of assessment practice and NCEA information is evident among staff and students. Regular sharing of best assessment practice at scheduled meetings ensures effective implementation of changes to teacher practice. This discussion, together with ongoing informal professional dialogue, and conversations with students and parents facilitates school-wide understanding and consistency of practice. The school's documentation of NCEA practices and national qualification information has been substantively updated and is current and fit for purpose.

Areas for improvement

The monitoring of the internal moderation processes could be further strengthened by recording the reconciliation of internal moderation with actual practice, to assure senior management that all results reported to NZQA are credible.

Course outlines must contain the school requirements to align documentation with practice, clearly outlined in the staff handbook. Using a common course outline template with the required assessment details would ensure consistent information is provided school-wide to students and their caregivers.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are:

- record the audit of internal moderation processes to assure senior management that all reported results are credible
- provide consistent information in course outlines by ensuring teachers follow the guidelines in the staff handbook.

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22 September 2017

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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 20 June 2014 Managing National Assessment Report All identified items have been actioned.

Response to external moderation outcomes The Principal's Nominee sets high expectations for all departments to respond fully to issues identified by external moderators and to ensure all requested material is submitted. Heads of Departments are required to modify assessment materials as noted by the moderator. Teachers are encouraged to appeal if this avenue is considered appropriate.

The Principal's Nominee meets with the teacher and Head of Department to develop a response to any issue identified in external moderation reports. An action plan is agreed upon and documented. The completion of the action plan is actively monitored and signed off by the Principal's Nominee. Senior management are kept informed of external moderation outcomes.

This robust process facilitates the provision of appropriate support to improve practice.

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 collaboration with the senior management team, the newly appointed Principal's Nominee is systematically reviewing assessment practices and procedures, as part of school-wide self-review. This culture of both responsive and pro-active internal review is focussed on continuous improvement to best meet the needs of students and to ensure credible assessment practices. As a response to this review of processes, a number of learning and assessment strategies have been introduced or strengthened to improve current practice and student achievement. These include:

- developing a timetable driven by student choice to cater for the changing assessment needs of students, including opportunities offered by additional curriculum subjects and vocational courses
- internal assessment 'holiday' in the weeks immediately prior to the school practice examinations, to enhance the quality of student achievement, and the results presented for derived grades, if required
- reviewing departmental assessment practices and processes during the departmental review cycle
- taking a lead in establishing collegial networks with external subject specialists to verify assessor judgements for sole subject teachers

- facilitating access to information on the NZQA website by pro-actively enabling staff access, and supporting students to register on their Learner login to check the accuracy of entries and results and apply for certificates
- developing a standardised *Student Course Information* booklet for Levels 1, 2 and 3 to assist students and their parents to make informed choices about pathways, with the future intention to link courses to Vocational Pathways, where appropriate
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to ensure all eligible students apply. The number of applications has been minimal in previous years.

Strong leadership, regular discussion of best assessment practice and close monitoring of individual student progress is contributing to greater utilisation of the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model to meet the changing needs, abilities and expectations of students.

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)

Longburn Adventist College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated assessment opportunities across classes in the same subject, including adjusting assessment tasks and contexts, and multi-levelling, as required
- personalising learning opportunities and assessment plans to meet student's aspirations and educational needs
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA
- supporting teachers to collect a range of evidence of achievement, using portfolios, digitally and orally, to reflect the range of student strengths
- applying for special assessment conditions including the use of school-based evidence to support applications.

Longburn Adventist College has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work by using suitable strategies, including the use of a plagiarism tool and checking Google Docs revision histories
- using Google Docs to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information to support students present their best evidence
- ensuring consistent school-wide practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals, rule breaches, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- reporting Not Achieved, where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity
- ensuring derived grades are based on authentic standard-specific evidence from practice examinations or other appropriate assessment
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Changing practice to address student need The senior management team are developing a number of practices to enable students to demonstrate their achievement potential. The college has extended the pathways offered to students through vocational courses, Gateway, STAR and Te Kura programmes, and the use of external providers. Students are assessed when they are ready, where appropriate. To assist students to manage their assessment workload, assessment programmes offer fewer credits. This allows students to "do less, better" by focussing on the quality of achievement rather than the quantity of credits students can gain. A centralised assessment calendar is now used to assist with planning and monitoring assessment congestion periods for students. This initiative supports students and teachers to manage workloads. These developments highlight the school's strategic direction to support student achievement.

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 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)

Longburn Adventist College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- documenting the internal moderation critiquing and verification processes using an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* before results are reported for each standard
- making assessment judgements consistent with the standard by engaging with suitably-qualified subject specialist within or outside the school to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- keeping benchmark exemplars and verification notes on grade judgements to inform future assessment decisions
- using clarification documents, exemplars and professional learning opportunities to clarify and support assessment judgements.

Longburn Adventist College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- storing assessment materials and student work for all internally assessed standards to ensure samples are available for external moderation
- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to meet NZQA requirements
- following up on issues identified in NZQA external moderation reports.

Recording the audit of internal moderation processes Recording the outcomes of the audit of internal moderation processes of each department will provide the senior management team with a transparent accountability measure of moderation effectiveness and issues, where identified. The Principal's Nominee visits departments bi-annually to check internal moderation processes are being followed and to reconcile internal moderation cover sheets with student work for a random sample of standards for each department, thereby ensuring school-wide consistent practice.

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:

- record the audit of internal moderation processes to assure senior management that all reported results are credible.

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)

Longburn Adventist College effectively:

- uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:
 - analysing results comparatively and longitudinally using a common template, to reflect on outcomes for each standard, to identify next steps and inform future course design
 - annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, including against school and departmental goals
 - celebrating student achievement by awarding academic certificates and pins, issuing reward coupons and writing congratulatory postcards to students and parents.
- reports accurate achievement data by:
 - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
 - ensuring low levels of late external entries for external examinations through a staff and student attestation process, and internal entries with no results.

Enhanced tracking and monitoring of student achievement The systems for tracking and monitoring of student achievement have been strengthened to provide support and interventions, as required, for all NCEA students. Current data is effectively used to closely check student progress towards attaining personal achievement goals and those at risk of not achieving qualifications. Deans chart progress of individual students and focussed support is given at form meetings for targeted groups. Directed support is given at all levels of the school community, including through the class and roll teacher, chaplain, Principal's Nominee, senior management team and Principal.

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)

Longburn Adventist College has effective processes and procedures for:

- annually reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose
- digitalising communication for students and parents on the online learning management system and website to improve access and currency
- supporting new teachers and students to the school to understand school policy and procedures through an induction programme.

Longburn Adventist College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- regularly checking that teachers and students are following the school's NCEA processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through emailing about the progress towards completion of each NCEA assessment and targeted evening meetings
- ensuring a memorandum of understanding is held for all outside providers used to report grades.

Competent management and clear communication of assessment practice

Effective leadership and communication of NCEA assessment procedures and processes has enabled school-wide ownership. Robust discussion and sharing of ideas across the staff supports the development of best assessment practice. Pro-active use of digital, face-to-face and written communication opportunities ensure assessment information is accessible and understood. The students interviewed for the review clearly articulated the school assessment practices and what is needed to gain a qualification.

Consistent assessment information in course outlines As discussed with senior management, all departments should be required to use a common format for course outlines. This would enable students and parents to readily access the necessary course-related information and ensure consistency across all subjects. Course outlines should follow the checklist for all requirements provided in the staff handbook, to align documentation with practice. Some course outlines need to be updated to include literacy, numeracy, University Entrance, and assessment information outlined in the handbook checklist.

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:

- provide consistent information in course outlines by ensuring teachers follow the guidelines in the staff handbook.