

Managing National Assessment Report

ACG
Strathallan

June 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how ACG Strathallan ensures that the relevant aspects of their Quality Management System effectively:

- manages internal and external moderation
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

This report evaluates the school's capacity to ensure the credibility when assessing and reporting a limited range of standards.

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) 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 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 that 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
- *ACG Strathallan Staff Handbook 2018 NZ Qualifications Framework Assessment Information*
- *ACG Strathallan Student Handbook and Course Outline 2018* for one of the courses the school offers that is assessed against standards on the NZQF.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, two students, and the teacher of English.

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

Background

ACG Strathallan caters for students from Years 1 to 13. A small number of students from a non-English speaking background are assessed against standards in English with the aim of meeting university entrance literacy requirements.

SUMMARY

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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* for assessment of the limited range of standards they offer.

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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2017.

What the school is doing well

The school is meeting the needs of the small group of students being assessed against a limited range of standards on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Their systems ensure the grades submitted to NZQA are credible and this is confirmed by external moderation results. Students are well informed about their assessment programme and have access to information about the key processes.

Areas for improvement

It is suggested that teachers assessing student work against standards on the NZQF engage with colleagues outside the school to maintain understanding of the standards.

Teachers are encouraged to build up a set of benchmark samples when internally moderating, by noting the reasons for an assessment decision particularly on work at grade boundaries. These help in making future assessment decisions.

The school is also encouraged to submit work for external moderation digitally where it is produced digitally.

Only about half of the students assessed register for their NZQA learner login. Assisting them to register allows them to check the accuracy of the results and personal and contact details.

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1 August 2018

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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, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 21 May 2014 Managing National Assessment Report There were no actions items identified in the previous report.

Response to external moderation outcomes The outcomes of external moderation provide evidence that the school's internal moderation processes are effective. The external moderators have agreed with all but one assessor judgement over the last five years.

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 school's evaluation confirms that the current course is meeting the students' needs, assessment is credible, and results are quality assured. While no changes are planned, the school is considering whether to extend enrolment in the course to domestic students with a poor mastery of English.

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 found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Needs of students met The school currently has one English course completed over two years. Students are assessed against two reading standards in the first year and two writing standards the following year. Successful completion means they meet the literacy requirements to enrol at a New Zealand university. Flexible deadlines mean that students are assessed when their learning indicates they are well prepared. All students are from non-English speaking backgrounds.

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)

Evidence of effective moderation processes The teacher understands the purpose and requirements for internal moderation. Assessment material is critiqued prior to use and external moderation outcomes confirm that the school has the capacity to effectively verify a sample of student work for the limited range standards offered. They currently use a teacher in the school with recent assessment experience in the relevant standards. It is suggested that the assessing teacher also engages with suitably qualified colleagues in other schools to ensure capability is maintained.

The teacher records the completion of the steps of internal moderation on a cover sheet and samples were sighted for standards the school has assessed this year. It is suggested that to further improve, a brief note of the reasons for an assessment decision, particularly on work at grade boundaries, is added to the cover sheet. This is useful for making future decisions as well as providing evidence of engagement in a robust process.

The school is encouraged to submit work for external moderation digitally as most is completed digitally. This will make the process more efficient as it is faster to process and easier to appeal or query an outcome.

The teacher requests standards for external moderation so that feedback is of most use. This is good practice.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- engaging with colleagues in other schools to maintain the currency of understanding of the standards the school is assessing
- annotating the internal moderation cover sheets with brief reasons for an assessment decision
- submitting work for external moderation digitally.

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)

Results data managed appropriately The school's handling of data is appropriate. The assessment programme takes place over more than one year. Results are reported in the second year.

Encourage students to register with NZQA Only about half of the students registered for their NZQA Learner login in 2017. They should be encouraged to register so that they are able to check that NZQA holds accurate results and personal details.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- assisting students to register for their NZQA Learner login and check the accuracy of the data.

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, 2.7ii(b))

ACG Strathallan demonstrates effective communication by:

- providing students with course and assessment details
- working with the teacher of the course to ensure there is quality information about expectations and processes for credible assessment.

Students well informed The students are very clear about what they want to achieve, and they understand expectations around assessment. They have access to a handbook that outlines key assessment processes.

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.