

Managing National Assessment Report

McAuley High School
October 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

McAuley High School

26 October 2022

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2021*.

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.

As a school with highly effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2020.

Actions and considerations

No action required

The school has no action items relating to the quality of their assessment systems.

For consideration

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider within the next year:

- encouraging staff to use their Education Sector Login to access the NZQA provider login and check entries and results in the general security area.



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22 November 2022

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External and internal review

External review

Evidence of external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 4 August 2016 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no action items in this report.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The school has effective processes for following up issues identified by external moderators. Teachers complete an action plan in response to the external moderation feedback they have received, outlining how they plan to address any issues. The Principal's Nominee discusses the planned actions with appropriate Heads of Departments and monitors the progress, completed or ongoing, made towards rectifying any issues and ensuring issues are resolved. This is done at regular intervals before the standard is assessed again.

Teachers value external moderation for the feedback provided and incorporate it into their course evaluations. They see it as a way to improve their knowledge of the standard and to stay up to date with any changes. They also ask for standards to be added to the moderation plan the following year.

Teachers identify any assessment support they may need, such as opportunities for professional development. They are encouraged to use the clarifications and appeal processes available through the moderation tool. The use of NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, is also encouraged, as is contact with subject associations.

External moderation results affirm that the majority of assessor judgements are at the national standard.

Internal review

Evidence of the school 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)

Since the last MNA, the school's review systems continue to provide NZQA with the confidence that assessment for qualifications is robust and poses no risk to the credibility of the results reported to NZQA each year.

The Principal and the senior leadership team have clear oversight of ongoing review of systems and tracking of progress towards meeting school-wide goals. Self-review of assessment processes is effective and embedded at all levels of the school. New ideas and initiatives come from a focus on current processes, asking why they are being done and how they could be better. Discussions centre around analysis of student results and how future initiatives may enhance assessment programmes and further meet student needs.

This collaborative evaluative approach is used to continuously strengthen and support consistent school-wide assessment practice. There is ownership of this within learning areas which has resulted in continuous improvement and assessment best practice.

Using digital tools to support learning and assessment The school has responded to changes in student learning needs by embracing the use of digital tools for learning and the potential they offer for digital assessment. This has enabled students to produce evidence using a variety of presentation methods, allowing on-going feedback and feedforward to be provided and for authenticity to be monitored.

Preparing for NCEA changes The school has welcomed the opportunity to pilot several subject areas in preparation for the changes to NCEA in 2024. They have piloted five subjects this year – Lea Faka-Tonga, Dance, Chemistry and Biology, Geography and History. They will be participating in 11 pilot subjects in 2023. The school values this experience and the opportunity to give feedback throughout this developmental stage, seeing it as a good way to prepare for the changes ahead.

Engaging with digital exams The number of students engaging with digital practice and digital exams is increasing each year, mirroring the way they regularly learn and are assessed. Students are well-supported to register and use their Learner Login in preparation for these exams. This has also been beneficial for their involvement in the pilot subjects this year.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

McAuley High School has highly effective policies and procedures that ensure assessment practices meet the needs of students and provide credible assessment for NCEA qualifications. These are clearly outlined in student and staff handbooks, with teachers regularly reinforcing them with students. The students spoken to during the review had a sound understanding of assessment processes and were confident they knew what to do if they needed to, for example, apply for an extension to an assessment deadline or appeal a grade. Consistent school-wide effective assessment practice was also described by the teachers interviewed.

Teachers use the flexibility of the NCEA model to maximise students' opportunities for success in assessments. Students and teachers share a vision of high academic expectations, with many students aiming for course and certificate endorsements. Individual assessment programmes, as appropriate, differentiated learning and the provision of vocational pathway programmes support students to meet their career aspirations and qualification goals.

Teachers have developed their capability and confidence in using a range of digital technologies to meet the learning styles and needs of students, especially in response to the online learning environment due to COVID. This has helped to support, assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes and collecting evidence of student achievement using a variety of modes for internal assessments, digital submissions and external assessments.

Supporting students to meet their pathway goals The school has a strong focus on ensuring students are given every opportunity to meet their pathway goals. At subject selection time, advice and guidance is given by the careers department and Heads of Departments to link option choices with career pathways. Students and whānau are able to attend option information evenings to discuss these option

choices further and to check that they meet the student's personal goals. These meetings were held virtually over the last three years due to COVID restrictions.

Students are well informed about what is needed to achieve their goals, the courses they should take and the qualifications they require. Students in the junior school complete Careers modules, giving them an insight into possible pathways before they start to make senior school subject choices. The school uses a digital tool for students to explore their pathway goals and track their progress towards these. The Deans and Deputy Principal Curriculum also check that the choices made by students match their goals.

Effectively using achievement data The Deans and Deputy Principal Curriculum effectively use achievement data to track students' progress and identify those at risk of not achieving a qualification. This allows the school to target any students needing extra support, especially those needing literacy and numeracy support to meet this requirement of the qualification. Teachers take ownership of assisting all students to succeed to the best of their ability.

Encouraging teachers to use their Education Sector Login The Principal's Nominee would like to encourage all Heads of Departments to regularly access the wide range of school specific data the NZQA Provider login offers through their Education Sector Login. Making this part of the regular cycle of meetings throughout the year will help embed this into school practices. This will enable Heads of Department to confirm accuracy of student entries, including entries into digital exams, upload digital submissions for external standards and check other key indicators, sharing the responsibility for these processes and further building teacher capability.

Verifying results sent to NZQA for external standards The school has a process to ensure results from practice assessment against external standards have been verified to ensure the school and NZQA can be confident they are valid and reliable if they are needed to be used for derived grades. The Principal's Nominee documents and monitors that quality assurance has occurred before potential derived grades are exported to NZQA.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)

Robust quality assurance processes The school has robust, embedded internal moderation processes and practices. Teachers use this as an opportunity for professional discussion, to improve teaching practices and inform understanding of standards, ensuring consistency of assessor judgements. This is reflected in the positive external moderation feedback for most learning areas.

The teachers spoken to during the review reported deliberately focussing on student work at the grade boundaries for internal moderation and checking on the appropriateness of verifiers used, especially those from other schools. They rigorously record evidence of the discussions around borderline examples of student work so that this can be used to inform their understanding of the standard and referred to in the future.

Digitally storing student work The Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal Curriculum are currently refining the school-wide system used for storing digital work, especially for work that may be required for external moderation purposes. There has been an increase in the number of learning areas submitting their external moderation digitally to NZQA moderators and they want to ensure this continues to be a simple process. The aim is for an easy-to-use system that is accessible by all and supports teachers to use digital assessment for the majority of NCEA assessments.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

McAuley High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

McAuley High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

McAuley High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

McAuley High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

McAuley High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

McAuley High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data

- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their whānau about assessment

McAuley High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

McAuley High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively McAuley High School:

- 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 whānau.

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 effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2021* (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 2022* (Assessment Rules).

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- 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's consideration 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 five 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
- *McAuley High School Assessment Booklet – Staff Information 2022* (Staff Handbook)
- *McAuley High School Student Handbook, 2022*.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Performing Arts
 - Religious Education
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- three students.

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