

Managing National Assessment Report

Macleans College

April 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Macleans 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
- *Macleans College Information and procedures for the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (Student Handbook)*
- *Macleans College Information and procedures for the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (Staff Handbook)*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13
- information on the Faculty Head Appraisal process
- Faculty/Department Quality Assurance attestation template.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee and the NCEA Administrator, three students, Heads of Faculty for English, Social Sciences and Technology, the Head of Department Chemistry, and Teacher in charge of NCEA Mathematics.

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.

SUMMARY

Macleans College

5 April 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 three years.

What the school is doing well

Macleans College promotes processes which support valid, consistent and reliable assessment outcomes, and which are maintained, prioritised and respected by staff and students alike. Clearly written information for both groups highlights responsibilities and supports them to follow appropriate practices.

The quality assurance process is well understood and executed by the college. Teachers carry out internal moderation to ensure their assessment meets the standard, while Heads of Faculty monitor that the process is applied to all standards assessed. External moderation outcomes provide the school with evidence of the effectiveness of internal moderation. Where issues are identified by moderators, appropriate and timely response is made, including support to help teachers with assessment judgements where needed.

Review processes illustrate the school's capacity to identify and address any risk to the credibility of assessment and the NCEA qualification. The confident experience of staff members helps with the resolution of any risks that occur. The current focus on authenticity of student work is a good example, as is the schools tracking system providing more timely identification of those students who, while currently achieving, may not be reaching their full academic potential.

Management of data processes is highly effective, ensuring entries and results sent to NZQA are complete, accurate and timely. The school has invested in tools and training to assist with data analysis, using data to inform and reflect on student achievement, measurement of strategic goals and the effectiveness of changes made.

Areas for improvement

Providing clearer direction to students about who they can go to for advice and guidance about NCEA qualifications will help to fully equip them with the information needed to make informed decisions. This could include the students having greater visibility of the school's tracking of their achievement progress, and would complement the planned improvements to tracking and enhance the school's academic support processes.

Agreed action

The school agreed the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems:

- providing additional information and support for students undertaking NCEA qualifications.

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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

1 June 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 10 September 2015 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has reviewed the method for random selection of graded student work for external moderation and updated documentation, as specified in the 2015 review. Current evidence shows that the school's processes for management of result and entry data are highly effective, therefore NZQA agrees that actioning the third agreed item, that teachers refer to NZQA data reports to check accuracy, is of no real value.

Response to external moderation outcomes External moderation outcomes are effectively tracked and monitored by the school. Heads of Faculty provide the Principal's Nominee with a written response to all external moderation reports, while the NCEA Administrator summarises annual outcomes. The Principal's Nominee reviews these alongside historical moderation trends to identify issues, then checks that those found are satisfactorily resolved. This Principal also checks to ensure any issues are addressed.

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)

Responsibilities within the Principal's Nominee role are effectively shared. The Principal's Nominee, who is a Deputy Principal, takes responsibility for leadership of NCEA assessment and the NCEA Administrator looks after process and data management. The division of responsibilities helps to promote thorough assessment practice and strengthened the school's ability to future proof the Principal's Nominee role.

The school takes pride in ensuring assessment outcomes are consistent, valid, reliable and meet NZQA requirements. They have effective processes in place to help them identify issues arising from unexpected events, along with those found by regular review of reports, checks, attestations, and achievement data.

During this review visit, the school shared several issues they had found, some of which are detailed further on in this report. Their effective response to these illustrate the school's ability to effectively manage and resolve issues, supported by the confident experience of staff members.

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 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)

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

- providing a suitable resubmission opportunity to those whose work contains minor errors at a grade boundary
- offering courses in numeracy and literacy or that provide industry-based assessment where appropriate
- assessing when ready, thereby removing the need for a further assessment opportunity
- providing special assessment conditions approved by NZQA, using school-based evidence to support a quarter of the applications made
- supporting those entered for New Zealand Scholarship with dedicated programmes.

Macleans College has effective processes and procedures for:

- Year level Deputy Principals managing requests from students about missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals and possible breaches of assessment rules
- ensuring evidence used for derived grades is authentic, standard-specific and quality assured
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Focus on supporting students to present authentic work The school expects students to present authentic work for assessment. To help identify written evidence that is not original, this year they plan to introduce plagiarism detection software.

Teachers and students have also identified that where a single event assessment takes place over more than one day, it provides the opportunity for students to share the content of an assessment or the answers.

The school noted that managing authenticity for single event assessments held over restricted timeframes are a challenge. The combination of large student numbers, only one NCEA course offered to each year level and all students being assessed in the same standards for that course limits the flexibility other schools have that help them effectively manage authenticity in this context. Having multiple contexts for the assessment task is one strategy teachers could consider to discourage students who sit the assessment from alerting those yet to sit, of the content. Where this is not practicable, teacher checks and keeping assessments secure will ensure students are not easily able to make copies of their answers.

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)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work, including expert's external to the school for single teacher subjects or where another view is sought
- providing support to help teachers with assessment judgements where needed
- requiring all standards to undergo the process, irrespective of the standard setting body
- holding Heads of Faculty responsible for quality assurance of all standards assessed and having them attest annually that school expectations have been met.

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

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples are adequately stored, with two thirds of student evidence digitally submitted in 2017.

Refinement of verification practices encouraged Subject leaders described good internal moderation practices. These include collaborative marking during which checking of work at grade boundaries or where teachers are unsure, takes place. Encouraging teachers to consider ways to easily record the outcome of these decisions will remove the need for additional recording beyond this verification check. The school agrees there is no value in administrative record keeping or extensive checks of judgements where this does not enhance assessment quality.

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)

Macleans College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - providing staff with standardised data sets for their annual analysis of achievement
 - measuring subject achievement against school credit targets set
 - tracking to identify those at risk of not achieving a qualification
- **reports timely and accurate achievement data by:**
 - ensuring that the school has consent for every standard assessed
 - after every assessment, requiring students to sign that the grade recorded is accurate
 - ensuring every internal entry has a result reported against it
 - requiring that all data is entered and checked before the final data file submission to NZQA each year.

Improvements to student tracking planned The school has identified that development of their student tracking processes may assist their goal of further enhancing achievement. Tracking processes currently aggregate the number of credits students achieve later in the year to identify those at risk of not achieving a qualification to allow for appropriate intervention. The school would like to extend the data tracked to include timely identification of those students who, while achieving, are not reaching their full academic potential.

Providing a way that students can easily track their achievement towards their qualification's goal will give them greater ownership and supplement school tracking. Also making it transparent to students that their progress is being monitored will encourage them to focus on their own achievement outcomes and support the school's improvement focus.

New data tool strengthens analysis and evaluation The recently introduced 'EdPotential' application provides teachers with a useful tool to interrogate and reflect on achievement data. It allows for easier identification of patterns and trends in student achievement, helping to inform self-review. It supplements specific data reports provided to faculties for annual review and reporting. The school notes that as skill with using the tool develops, it will lead to better exploration of possible reasons for patterns such as variances between internal and external results within subjects.

For consideration

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

- develop processes to allow timely identification of those students not reaching their achievement potential.

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))

Macleans College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure digitally to all stakeholders
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Macleans College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing clearly documented expectations for teachers and students
- supporting teachers to adopt an inquiry based approach
- providing teachers new to delivery of NCEA qualifications with specific training to develop their understanding of this standards-based assessment system and how it operates
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes.

Enhance support for student understanding of NCEA Students who understand the NCEA qualifications awards and what they need to achieve them, have a strong base on which to reach their academic goals. As evident in the interview with students, while the student handbook records the requirements for each NCEA Certificate and University Entrance, unpacking this further will help students to better set and measure their achievement progress, supporting the school's plans for extending student goal-setting and tracking.

Providing clearer direction to students on who they can go to for advice and guidance on NCEA will also help enhance the school's academic support processes and complement their planned improvements to tracking.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- provide additional information and support for students undertaking NCEA qualifications.