

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Saint Kentigern College

May 2017

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Saint Kentigern 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
- *Saint Kentigern Learning Management System, NCEA, Staff, 2017*
- *National Certificate of Educational Achievement, Staff Handbook, Saint Kentigern College, 2017*
- *NCEA Handbook for students and parents, Saint Kentigern College, 2017*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.
- Saint Kentigern College Internal Moderation report 2016
- Copies of annual subject NCEA data analysis reports and the summary report to the Board of Trustees.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Department for Dance, English, Languages, Mathematics, Media Studies and Science.

There was a report-back session with the Chairman of the Saint Kentigern Trust Board, Principal, Head of Studies 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

## Saint Kentigern College

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

### What the school is doing well

Saint Kentigern College demonstrates an effective culture of collaborative self-review to ensure the credibility of assessment and utilise the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model to meet student needs.

To allow students to present their best evidence for achievement opportunities, differentiation of assessment programmes between classes and within classes, is practiced school-wide. To engage students in the assessment process, the context of assessment tasks are changed to reflect their interests. Scaffolding of assessment tasks is used to support students to complete project and portfolio based assessment tasks.

Effective communication has enabled Senior Management, Heads of Department and teachers to take ownership of the assessment system in the school. In-depth discussion on assessment issues at all levels of the school's organisation ensures the resolution of issues and school-wide understanding and consistency of practice.

Robust moderation processes are reflected in the college's high moderation agreement rate between teachers and external moderators. External moderation outcomes are documented and action plans developed and monitored when issues are identified.

Data analysis informs self-review, requiring teachers to reflect on course design and senior management to improve assessment processes. Student entries and the reporting of results is complete, timely and accurate. Student progress is monitored and tracked effectively to ensure students are meeting personal goals and expectations.

Assessment practices in the senior school are effectively managed by the Principal's Nominee who sets and maintains high expectations. She fosters discussion on assessment practice and, with the Head of Studies, manages a thorough assessment review process. The Principal's Nominee is supported in her work by the Principal and Senior Management team who work collaboratively to ensure students achieve.

### Areas for improvement

To ensure the reporting of credible results, senior management audit the moderation practices of each department on a three-year review cycle and target more regular

reviews for departments where issues are identified. To ensure timely feedback, an annual reconciliation of documentation of completed moderation with actual practice will strengthen the audit process and the school can be confident that all reported results are credible.

### **Agreed action**

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. Senior Management undertakes to:

- ensuring documentation of completed internal moderation is reconciled annually with actual practice.

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30 June 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 31 October 2013 Managing National Assessment Report

The last review had no items to be actioned.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The college has a high external moderation agreement rate between teachers and moderators. Responses to external moderation outcomes are documented and actively monitored by the Principal's Nominee.

### 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 college has an effective culture of internal self-review to ensure credible assessment practices and fully utilise the flexibility of the NCEA assessment model to meet students' needs. Led by the Principal's Nominee, they have adopted a collaborative approach to identify assessment issues and seek solutions. Robust discussions are held at senior management, heads of department and staff meetings to ensure consistency and refine assessment practice.

As a consequence, a number of assessment strategies have been introduced to improve current practice and ensure student achievement, including:

- gathering information on a particular assessment issue as part of the department review cycle, to inform future practice such as digital assessment
- reviewing moderation practices in all departments following guidelines provided in the 2016 Principal's Nominee seminar
- providing more resources to improve the management of students identified as requiring special assessment conditions.
- introducing a compulsory workshop for all new teachers to the college following a survey by the Principal's Nominee that identified gaps in knowledge and understanding of NCEA processes and practice in this group
- development of the Online Learning Management System to improve the accessibility of NCEA information to all stakeholders and ensure consistency of practice
- annual review of assessment practices that have recently included the strengthening of the extension application requirements in the late and missed assessment policy and clarifying resubmissions and further assessment opportunities practices

- identifying the use of literacy strategies school-wide to raise achievement of boys and contribute to an improvement in course and certificate endorsement.

Senior Management indicated that self-review is supported by a school-wide collaborative ownership of effective NCEA assessment practice. This has contributed to the school enjoying consistently high levels of student achievement and effectively meeting student needs.

**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)*

### **Saint Kentigern College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:**

- differentiation of assessment opportunities within and between classes in the same subject
- reviewing course design and changing the context of assessment activities to meet student abilities and interests
- making portfolio and research-based assessments more manageable for students by using scaffolding techniques in task design
- increasing the number of options available to students by using external providers
- providing extra tuition for students “at risk of not achieving” and for preparing scholarship candidates
- supporting students to meet literacy and numeracy requirements by offering literacy and numeracy unit standards when appropriate.

### **Saint Kentigern College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities and the use of authenticity strategies
- managing student appeals of assessment decisions and breaches of assessment rules
- reporting derived and emergency grades based on standard-specific evidence
- managing NZQA external examinations
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

**Using digital tools to gather evidence for assessment opportunities** As a “laptop school”, teachers are increasingly collecting a range of evidence of achievement through the use of digital tools. Currently senior management is developing a digital assessment policy for the digital storage of student work and teachers are being encouraged to use the new moderation application tool.

Last year the school trialed and piloted digital examinations at Level 1 and, despite experiencing technical issues during the English examination, have decided to extend their digital examination involvement to Level 2 as most students were positive about the experience.

**Special assessment conditions for students effectively managed** The college has a large number of identified students requiring special assessment conditions. They are well resourced to overcome learning and physical barriers to undertaking fair assessment.

To improve the management of these students the college has recently appointed a Special Assessment Co-ordinator for managing internal assessments and a Special Assessment Administrator for managing external examinations. This initiative will enhance the assessment experience of these students.

**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)*

### **Saint Kentigern College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring moderation assessment activities are set to the national standard by having modified or new assessments critiqued by another teacher
- making assessments judgements consistent with the national standard by having a subject specialist verify purposefully selected samples of marked student work at grade boundaries
- reconciling the completion of moderation processes on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* filed with the Principal's Nominee
- keeping benchmark exemplars to inform future assessment decisions.

### **Saint Kentigern College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work randomly to meet NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are being adequately stored and readily available for submission.

### **Strengthening the monitoring of internal moderation by senior management**

For senior management to have confidence that annually reported results are quality assured, departments' internal moderation processes should be audited each year.

At present the Principal Nominee audits internal moderation processes as part of the three-year department review cycle. Departments are also targeted more regularly if required. In 2016 as a response to the Principal's Nominee seminar the Principal's Nominee reviewed the internal moderation processes of all departments.

Senior Management agreed that an annual audit of each department using a random selection of standards where results are reported would strengthen the internal moderation monitoring process. This would ensure that each year senior management could be confident that documentation of the completed process is reconciled with actual practice and that credible reports have been reported.

### **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:

- ensuring documentation of completed internal moderation is reconciled annually with actual practice.

## 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)*

### **Saint Kentigern College effectively:**

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - using statistical reports from the student management system, Ed Potential and NZQA to analyse results comparatively, to reflect and to inform next steps
  - reporting to the Board of Trustees and Principal an analysis of NCEA achievement, including against school goals
  - actively encouraging students to use their NZQA Learner logins to monitor their progress
  - reconciling memorandum of understanding with the provider codes of externally reported results
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - timely reporting of results to NZQA
  - ensuring all entries submitted to NZQA have a result reported
  - using the NZQA key indicators to identify and resolve data errors
  - using a rigorous checking process by students, teachers, Heads of Department, Academic Co-ordinators and Tutors to ensure entries are correct.

**Tracking student progress to improve achievement outcomes** The school effectively uses data to identify students at risk of not achieving and to track the achievement progress of all NCEA candidates.

NCEA students are assigned to a tutorial group where Tutors use current NCEA tracking reports to discuss student progress in meeting goals and completing qualifications. Caregivers are also involved in this process through regular reporting. Identified “at risk students” are supported with interventions including personalised assessment programmes and the use of supported learning standards, where appropriate.

### **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)*

### **Saint Kentigern College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- communicating assessment policy and procedures for staff, students and their families through written, oral and digital modes
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction process and ensuring teachers who are leaving store work appropriately and report quality assured results
- ensuring all course outlines contain consistent information
- annually reviewing communication to all stakeholders
- managing student workloads through publication of assessment dates for each subject and individual students on the Online Management System.

### **Saint Kentigern College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- reinforcing teacher understanding of assessment processes by discussing these in department and staff meetings
- supporting teacher attendance at Best Practice Workshops, subject association meetings and for them to be contracted as NZQA markers and moderators
- including links in assessment documentation to the NZQA Myth Busters to provide greater clarity of understanding
- publishing a student NCEA assessment handbook that is written in a style and language suitable for the audience
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

**Effective communication creates a culture of shared practice and ownership school-wide** Robust discussion and sharing of ideas on NCEA assessment procedures and processes occurs at all levels of the school's operation. Teachers and students interviewed for the review had a consistent understanding of assessment policies and procedures. Leadership from senior management allows effective responses to resolving issues.

Communication is annually reviewed and is digitalised on the Online Learning Management System. Information in this format can be more easily kept current and tools have been built in the system to support teachers, students and parents with plagiarism issues, online marking, monitoring of student progress and links to the NZQA subject resource pages. This development further enhances consistent assessment practice school-wide.

### **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.