

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton)**

**June 2017**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton):

- 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
- *St Matthew's Collegiate National Qualifications Framework Student Handbook 2017*
- *St Matthew's Collegiate Assessment Policy*
- *St Matthew's Collegiate School National Certificate of Educational Achievement Staff Procedures Handbook*
- samples of course outlines.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Department for Art, English, Mathematics and Science

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

St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) is a state integrated Year 7 to 13 girls' school with boarding facilities. It assesses and reports results towards NCEA Level 1 for some Year 10 and all Year 11 students. It's Year 12 and 13 students are assessed, together with the Year 12 and 13 students of Rathkeale College, as members of the St Matthew's Rathkeale Senior College by teachers from both schools. Year 12 and 13 students remain on the St Matthew's Collegiate roll, and attend assemblies, Chapels and House gatherings before being bussed to the Rathkeale College campus. Rathkeale College reports results for all Senior College students, even where the assessment has taken place on the St Matthew's Collegiate campus. The two schools share an examination centre for Year 12 and 13 candidates, and St Matthew's Collegiate students are transported to Rathkeale College for all NZQA external examinations. Year 10 and 11 candidates undertake NCEA examinations on the St Matthew's Collegiate site.

# SUMMARY

## St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton)

8 June 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 three years.

### What the school is doing well

St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective assessment and moderation processes in place to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications. These processes are well understood and followed by staff.

The school's review processes are effective in ensuring that there is ongoing improvement of assessment practice, identified issues are addressed, and achievement outcomes for students are enhanced.

Assessment processes and procedures are effectively managed and are well understood by staff and students. Assessment opportunities are available for students to ensure they have pathways available for Year 12 courses at the St Matthew's Rathkeale Senior College.

Student progress towards meeting academic requirements and personal goals is well tracked, and where students are identified as at-risk, appropriate support is provided.

Both internal and external moderation are embedded and well documented processes within the school, providing assurance of the quality of assessment. Senior Management effectively monitor these processes to ensure that the school meets NZQA requirements. Increased use of digital assessment is being catered for with the development of a digital storage policy to ensure material can be readily accessed for verification or external moderation.

The school has well managed processes to ensure that accurate and timely assessment data is reported to NZQA. Data is effectively used to support student achievement outcomes and check on the efficiency of school processes. Staff analysis of data has informed enhancements in teaching and assessment programmes and led to improvements in the school's academic achievements at Year 11.

Clear and consistent assessment information is provided to students, parents and staff. The information is available in a variety of formats, and presented in ways that generally meet the needs of the recipients. Information is increasingly available digitally.

There are no actions arising from this review for the school to consider.

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1 August 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 8 May 2013 Managing National Assessment Report** The school addressed the action item from the 2013 review so that by the following year only four internal entries had no result reported. The school has further reviewed its checking processes, and intends to further strengthen these as discussed in the data section of this report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The Principal's Nominee has an effective process to monitor external moderation and to deal with any issues identified by moderators. She reviews all moderation reports, and where an issue has been identified, requires the Head of Department to complete a response form detailing the issue and how it will be addressed. Once actions, and any school support required, are finalised the Principal's Nominee monitors these for completion. The robustness of the school's internal moderation processes is reflected in the school's history of consistently high external moderation agreement rates.

### 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 is responsive to feedback from its community and uses its self-review processes to implement changes in assessment practice to help it meet student needs. Examples of this response to feedback include:

- the introduction of new courses, to enhance assessment pathways, in response to student demand. This confirms the Education Review Office findings that the school reviews its curriculum "to improve suitable pathways for each student", and that this review "is informed by community consultation" (Education Review Office 24/09/2014)
- trialling an extension to the missed assessment policy that allows other supporting evidence, rather than just a medical certificate, after feedback from the school community on the difficulty and cost of doctors' visits
- the use of the student management system to provide course assessment statements with consistent information on the standards to be assessed, after feedback identified that students and parents were not receiving this information from the previous course outlines.

The school's embedded review and evaluation processes have led to other ongoing improvements in assessment practices. Recent changes in practice resulting from these reviews include:

- the Principal's Nominee collecting copies of all *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets*, and by reconciling these against actual practice, being able to confirm

the school is meeting NZQA reporting and monitoring requirements through its quality assurance processes

- the introduction of a formalised induction process for new staff after the Principal's Nominee identified that the old process was not providing new staff with the support they needed to understand the school's assessment procedures
- teachers using longitudinal data to identify students potentially at risk of not achieving so that additional support can be provided to help them meet qualification goals.

The school's review of data has allowed it to effectively identify areas where assessment practice might not be meeting expectations, and to improve outcomes for students. The school considers that all Year 11 students achieving NCEA level 1 in 2016, and higher Excellence certificate endorsement rates were a direct result of improved staff analysis of achievement data and being required to consider 'next steps' for their teaching and assessment programmes.

### **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)*

### **St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:**

- introducing NCEA Level 1 Drama this year in response to student demand and to provide a pathway for students wishing to study it at the Senior College
- providing Year 10 students with specific NCEA assessment opportunities to help them meet Year 12 Senior College course requirements not available in Year 11 programmes
- providing vocational pathways through outside providers organised within Star and Gateway programmes
- tracking and ensuring all students meet NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements by providing appropriate support, including the use of the Work and Study Skills literacy and numeracy standards
- encouraging staff to use a range of methods during assessment to collect physical and/or digital evidence of achievement
- providing increased opportunities for digital assessment by students using their own, or school devices
- ensuring that staff are well informed of students with special assessment condition entitlements and that appropriate support is provided, as required.

### **St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective processes and procedures for:**

- assisting students to present authentic work using a range of suitable strategies during the assessment process
- managing missed and late assessments, further assessment opportunities and resubmissions
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules, and student appeals of assessment decisions
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- reporting Not Achieved where a student has presented evidence that is not at the standard, or has had an adequate assessment opportunity and submitted no work
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

### **Collecting school-based evidence for special assessment conditions applications**

The recent special assessment conditions applications made by the school have used evidence from reports prepared by independent registered professionals. The school has identified changes in the demographics of the school's future Year 11 cohorts, meaning it is more likely school-evidence based applications will be required. The school has therefore started to gather evidence from its junior students to identify those who would benefit by having barriers to achievement



removed through special assessment conditions for NCEA assessments. This will ensure that all students can access these entitlements by removing the possible financial barrier of a professional report.

**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)

### St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify samples of student work purposefully selected from around grade boundaries to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- staff documenting all steps of the process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* and filing a copy with the Principal's Nominee
- the Principal's Nominee only allowing results to be submitted to NZQA once she has confirmed adequate completion of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

### St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirement
- providing teachers with appropriate access to the NZQA External Moderation Application
- ensuring samples of student work are available for external moderation by being adequately stored.

**Storage of digital assessment material** The school has identified that an increasing amount of assessment material is being produced digitally. It is therefore developing a digital storage policy. This is to ensure that staff and students know how and where to store digital material securely, and guarantee that assessment material continues to be readily available for verification or external moderation.

### Developing understanding of verification sufficiency to reduce workload

There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. Interviews with Heads of Departments indicated that in some departments more samples are selected for verification than would be needed for sufficiency. The samples of student work selected should be close to grade boundaries, or work that the assessor is unsure of. Developing staff understanding of this approach to sufficiency will help reduce verifiers' workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process.

### For consideration

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

- developing staff understanding of verification sufficiency to help reduce verifier workload.

## 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)*

### St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - setting department and school academic achievement targets
  - using results from the previous year to inform course and programme design to better meet student assessment needs
  - supporting students to track their NCEA progress
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - frequent and timely reporting of results to NZQA
  - checking for, and correcting, errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
  - having students sign-off on the accuracy of their results
  - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding
  - assisting students to register for their Learner login and encouraging them to use this to check the accuracy of their reported results
  - encouraging students to put their grades into NZQA's NCEA Student App to help them keep track of their progress towards qualifications, and pick up anomalies with results reported elsewhere.

**Withdrawing entries where students have not had an adequate assessment opportunity** At the start of the year the school identified an issue in one subject area where the school's data checking processes were not effective. Most of the students entered for one standard were not assessed, and did not have their entries withdrawn. The Principal's Nominee and data manager will focus on the data entry practices within the department to ensure that it meets the school's requirement that each entry have an appropriate grade reported or be withdrawn if the student has not had an adequate assessment opportunity.

Further actions that will strengthen the schools checking processes include:

- the Principal's Nominee reminding students of their role in maintaining the accuracy of the data by reporting any incorrect entries or results
- using the student management system to identify "orphaned" entries for students who have left the school, or changed courses, and are not being assessed against those entries.

**Tracking student progress to improve achievement outcomes** The school effectively uses data to support students and identify students at-risk of not meeting their academic goals. The Year 11 Dean helps students set appropriate academic goals, tracks their progress and provides, where necessary, identified support.

Where students are at-risk, parents are brought into the discussions. Progress tracking is also supported by the Principal's Nominee and the Deputy 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)*

### **St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) has effective processes and procedures for:**

- communicating appropriate assessment policies and procedures, and information on qualifications to staff, students and parents
- ensuring students receive consistent information in course outlines about the standards they will be assessed against, including whether these contribute towards literacy and/or numeracy requirements
- publishing information on NZQA fees and financial assistance
- annually reviewing communications to ensure they are complete, current and consistent.

### **St Matthew's Collegiate (Masterton) assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- publishing staff and student handbooks in the school's OneDrive cloud storage facility for easy access
- providing parents with assessment information through a variety of physical and digital media, including the school's website, Facebook page and smartphone app
- publishing a yearly *NCEA Internals Timetable* on the school's website
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes in school processes at staff and department meetings
- the Principal's Nominee holding meetings with Year 11 students to brief them about specific assessment processes and procedures
- holding an NCEA and Whanau information afternoon to share information about NCEA and the school's expectations around assessment.

**Student use of their handbook** The student handbook is not formatted nor written in language appropriate to its student audience. Discussions with students indicated that they rarely used the handbook for information on the school's assessment procedures. Most indicated they got this type of information from year level meetings with the Principal's Nominee, subject teachers or from older students. Changing the format of the handbook might make it more useful for students.

### **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:

- reviewing the student handbook to make it more appropriate to its audience.