

MANAGING NATIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

**St Patrick's College
(Silverstream)**

May 2016

Managing National Assessment Review

The purpose of reviewing the management of national assessment is:

- 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 2016* (Assessment Rules); and
- 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.

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of assessment materials and of teacher grade judgements for student work selected by the school's random-selection process.
- A random sampling of aspects of assessment systems and data for review or audit on an annual basis.
- A visit to review each school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

Managing National Assessment Report

This report summarises NZQA's evaluation of how effectively the school:

- has addressed issues identified through the three components of 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
- manages and makes use of assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

In preparing this report, the School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee and Heads of Department for English, Science, Technology and Visual Arts

The school also provided pre-review information and the following documents:

- *St Patrick's College, Silverstream Curriculum Delivery and Student Achievement Policy*
- *St Patrick's College, Silverstream Policy and Procedures for Assessment for National Qualifications 2016* (Staff Handbook)
- *St Patrick's College, Silverstream Assessment for National Qualifications: Procedures for Assessment 2016* (Student Handbook)
- *St Patrick's College, Silverstream NCEA Quality Assurance Procedures, Information and Forms for 2016*
- sample course outlines and assessment statements.

There was a report-back session with the Acting Rector and Principal's Nominee after the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies and next steps, and to agree on any action required.

OVERVIEW

St Patrick's College (Silverstream)

12-13 May 2016

St Patrick's College has effective systems to ensure credible assessment for national qualifications.

The school has embedded review processes that assist management to keep their assessment and moderation processes effective, and involve staff so that their understanding of school requirements is maintained. Data-driven review has changed professional learning within the school and helped staff focus on improving student achievement.

Special assessment conditions processes are very effectively managed within the school. Appropriate and timely applications are made for students based upon the school's screening processes. Staff are well informed about their students, and their entitlements and how assessment support for them should be managed.

All teachers, including senior management, are involved with mentoring students. Students are assisted to set academic goals early in the year, and tracked towards meeting them. Where assistance may be needed to help students meet these goals, the school has processes in place to provide this.

Assessment data is effectively managed and used by the school. Annual targets are based around student achievement data, and these provide a focus for many of the learning inquiries undertaken by staff.

Internal moderation is an embedded process with staff, and is effectively monitored by management. An effective monitored response process ensures that significant issues identified by moderators are addressed. This process could, however, be improved by requiring staff to respond to any non-agreement signalled by external moderators. This will ensure staff reflect on all of the feedback on their judgements, and further improve their understanding of the requirements of the standard.

Both staff and management see the advantages of submitting material digitally for external moderation. However, a lack of understanding of how to manage the process is holding staff back from attempting it. Management have agreed to encourage and support staff to engage with digital submission.

The school uses a range of communication methods to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed on school assessment policies and procedures. These have become increasingly digital, and targeted for specific audience.

Access to achievement data has been expanded for students and parents through the use of a portal to the school's student management system. This, together with the St Patrick's mobile app that has improved the delivery of key dates and other assessment information, provide students and parents with the opportunity to be well informed.

Next Steps

No significant issues This review did not identify any significant issues that would prevent the school from meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

Agreed action However, NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to further refine assessment practices. Senior management undertakes to:

- require staff to respond to any non-agreement signalled by external moderators
- encourage and provide support for staff to engage with online moderation.

Next Managing National Assessment review Based on the outcome of this assessment systems check, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

Kay Wilson
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21 June 2016

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Response to External and Internal Reviews

Previous external reviews

Evidence was sought that external review recommendations and findings have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

Managing National Assessment review June 2013 The school introduced a process to monitor action plans developed in response to external moderation feedback immediately following the 2013 review. This effectively addressed the one agreed action from the review.

External moderation The school has an effective response process to ensure that significant issues identified by moderators are addressed. Management now monitor these responses and provide appropriate support where available.

Internal review

Evidence was sought that the school was 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)

Review has changed how school academic goals are set Academic goals for the school's annual plan are now co-constructed with staff. School self-review procedures have been used to extensively change the opportunities it offers staff for professional learning. This has been, and continues to be, a data driven process that management reports is bringing about pedagogical shifts and helping staff focus on student achievement. Teachers form their individual learning inquiries around one of the annual plan goals, all of which are achievement based.

Course assessment programmes modified to enable endorsement Review of student achievement has led to a focus on courses being endorseable. As a result, students must be offered the opportunity to be assessed against external and internal standards within a course. Course assessment programmes have also been limited to a maximum of 20 credits to help focus on the quality of results being achieved rather than the quantity.

Reviews of assessment practice focus on improving school processes Since the 2013 Managing National Assessment review, the Principal' Nominee has lead staff to review their practices around authenticity and internal moderation. Staff share a common understanding of these aspects of quality assurance and how they ensure the validity of the results they report. Management monitoring procedures have also been reviewed and a system to monitor departmental assessment, moderation and material storage processes has been introduced to ensure they meet school and NZQA requirements. This "mini MNA" is based upon the NZQA external review process. The results of these reviews are shared with Heads of Departments to help improve departmental systems, where needed.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

Assessment Practice

How does the school's assessment practice allow for the effective management of assessment for national qualifications? (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6, 3)

St Patrick's College (Silverstream) has effective processes and procedures for:

- meeting the academic and vocational assessment needs of its students
- managing missed and late assessment
- assisting students to present authentic work for assessments
- investigating breaches of the assessment rules and managing student appeals against assessment-related decisions
- ensuring applications for derived grades are based on valid standard-specific evidence
- assisting with the smooth running of the Examination Centre.

Special assessment conditions very effectively managed The school very effectively manages all special assessment conditions processes. Students who may be entitled to use these conditions to remove barriers to achievement are identified early, and appropriate and timely applications are made for them. For 2016, every applicant was granted every entitlement the school had applied for. This indicates that the school's screening process is effectively identifying student needs, and that the school appropriately caters for them. Staff interviewed were well informed of which students have special assessment conditions, what the conditions are, and how the support they are entitled to can be obtained.

Mentoring an integral part of school assessment processes A new, intensive tutor class system was introduced following school review of student achievement. All teachers, including the senior management team, mentor a tutor class of approximately 12 students. The school timetable has been altered to allow two meetings a week. In term one, the emphasis for senior students is on setting academic goals based upon their previous year's achievement data. From term two onwards the emphasis changes to monitoring their progress and providing support where appropriate. One consequence of monitoring and support is that almost all students met their NCEA literacy and numeracy requirements in 2015.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

Moderation

How effectively does school internal and external moderation assure assessment quality? (CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 3)

St Patrick's College (Silverstream) has effective processes and procedures for managing:

- internal moderation
- external moderation, including departments reporting on “what has been learnt from moderation feedback and next steps” as part of their annual report to the Board of Trustees.

Internal moderation processes effectively monitored Internal moderation is an embedded process with staff, and completion is effectively monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Heads of Departments track the internal moderation processes within their departments by recording the completion of an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* for each standard assessed on a quality assurance form. A signed copy of the form must be given to the Principal's Nominee prior to the school's final data submission for the year. This enables the school to ensure it is meeting NZQA's reporting requirement (Assessment Rules 5.6b and 6.4b).

The Principal's Nominee also visits each department during the year to review their assessment practices. *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* for standards randomly selected from the previous year's quality assurance form, are checked as part of the review, together with the department's processes for storing student work. Alongside the Head of Department attestation process for the current year, this review provides senior management with assurance that the school's internal moderation processes are being effectively carried out.

Responses to external moderation Staff reported using feedback from moderators to develop, where required, action plans to further their understanding of the standards they assess. Management now monitors completion of these responses and provide appropriate support where available. A consequence of this improved understanding is that the school's overall agreement rate between external moderator and teacher judgements has steadily improved since the 2013 review.

Improvements to external moderation response process could be considered Requiring staff to respond to any non-agreement signalled by external moderators would make this system more effective. Presently staff are only required to respond when significant issues are identified, or there is a low moderator-teacher agreement rate. Getting teachers to reflect on all identified issues and the moderator responses can only improve their understanding of the requirements of the standard and reduce the likelihood of the same error occurring if the standard is assessed again.

Staff keen to engage with online moderation Most of the staff interviewed see the advantages of, and are keen to engage with, the online submission of material for moderation. What is presently holding them back is a lack of understanding of how to become involved with the process. Senior management also see the advantages of presenting material digitally and will provide support and encouragement for staff to engage with the online moderation process.

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:

- require staff to respond to any non-agreement signalled by external moderators
- encourage and provide support for staff to engage with online moderation.

Data Quality and Use

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.6, 2.7, 3)

St Patrick's College (Silverstream) effectively:

- **manages assessment-related data by:**
 - timely reporting of results to NZQA
 - regularly checking for, and correcting, errors shown up by the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
 - reporting results against the correct provider codes of outside providers with which the school holds current memoranda of understanding
 - ensuring appropriate external examination entries are made and keeping late entries to a minimum
 - having students confirm the accuracy of their results through a sign-off process before the end-of-year data file submission to NZQA
 - taking students through the process of registering for their Learner Login and encouraging students to use this to check the accuracy of their results
 - providing all assessing staff with access to the school's Provider Login and the reports and statistics information available through it.

- **makes use of assessment-related data to:**
 - check that all entries have a result, or are withdrawn if no assessment has occurred
 - track student progress towards meeting qualification requirements
 - evaluate the effectiveness of course assessment programmes to ensure they allow students to meet their achievement goals
 - set charter targets based on student achievement
 - annually set individual teacher and departmental goals linked to the school's annual plan and charter targets
 - report academic achievement to its community.

Staff encouraged to use assessment data to develop Personal Learning Inquiries As part of the school's Professional Learning review launched in 2013, staff are encouraged to have a Personal Learning Inquiry around one of the standards they assess. These inquiries, based around assessment data, allow staff to reflect on whether specific standards provide the best learning opportunities for students. For example, the Head of Department for English noted they have stopped assessing a Level 2 standard because it no longer contributes to University Entrance literacy requirements. The inquiries are also connected with the school's charter target of improving the number of Merit and Excellence endorsements at all levels of NCEA.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

Communication

How effectively does the school maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, and students and their families?
(CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6, 2.7ii, 3)

St Patrick's College (Silverstream) has effective processes and procedures for:

- regularly maintaining the currency of assessment policy and procedures
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their families in language appropriate to the audience
- improving parental understanding of NCEA through an information evening held early in the school year
- briefing students on school and NZQA expectations for external examinations
- ensuring consistent course assessment information is provided to students and their parents using a template on the school's student management system.

Assessment information delivery is increasingly targeted and digital The school has moved to delivering assessment information to stakeholders by way of digital platforms. The Principal's Nominee uses Google Classroom and Google Docs to communicate with staff. He reported this allows him to more effectively share school assessment procedures and information from NZQA with the entire staff, or where appropriate, with individual teachers.

Students and parents can access achievement data held on the school's student management system by way of a parent portal. A recently launched St Patrick's Silverstream mobile app will allow the school to communicate key dates and other appropriate assessment information to the increasing number of connected parents and students.

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.