



Managing National Assessment Report

Queen Margaret College

July 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Queen Margaret 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
- *Queen Margaret College NCEA Assessment Procedures 2018* (Staff and Student Handbook)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students, and Heads of Department for English, Materials Technology, Mathematics, Science, and the Acting HOD Science, and Social Sciences.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Head of Senior School and the 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

Queen Margaret College

05 July 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 most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

What the school is doing well

Queen Margaret College is developing its vision of "Future Leaders, Resilient Women and Passionate Learners." The school has high expectations for academic achievement which is reflected in a one hundred percent achievement rate in 2017 for participation the Level 2 and 3 NCEA qualification and University Entrance. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning goals and are supported to achieve these goals.

The school focuses successfully on academic achievement, designing NCEA courses to meet a range of student abilities, interests and aspirations. Within courses students can be offered optional standards for extension or reduced numbers of credits they are assessed against. Assessment opportunities are extended through distance learning to ensure students can complete courses that reflect their individual pathways.

A robust moderation system ensures credible results are reported to NZQA. This is evidenced by the consistently high external moderation agreement rate between teachers and NZQA moderators. The Principal's Nominee and Heads of Department monitor internal moderation to assure senior management that the correct processes are followed to report credible results.

Effective data management ensures the accuracy and timeliness of results reported to NZQA. Heads of Department analyse results and report annually to the Head of Senior School and the Principal on comparative and longitudinal trends. This evidence is used to reflect on standard selection within courses and timing of delivery. Teachers, Heads of Department and the Head of Senior School monitor student progress throughout the year to identify those who may require extra support to complete qualifications.

Areas for improvement

As discussed with Senior Management, outcomes from external moderation action plans need to be documented, monitored for completion and evaluated to ensure issues are addressed and improvements are sustained.

The staff and student handbook need to be updated to reflect strategic selection of student work for verification and the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 for the use of exemplars.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- monitor completion and evaluate outcomes of external moderation
- update the assessment handbook as outlined in this report.

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3 September 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 5 June 2014 Managing National Assessment Report The school actioned the one item from the last Managing National Assessment review. All teachers now access clarifications documents on the NZQA website when preparing assessment materials or marking student work.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has a consistently sound agreement rates between teachers and NZQA moderators.

Senior management agreed that when issues are identified, action plans should be documented, monitored for completion and outcomes evaluated to future self-review. Currently teachers access their own external moderation reports and discuss any issues of concern with their Heads of Department and the Head of the Senior school. Common templated documentation would allow more effective monitoring of completion school-wide and allow the outcome to be used to identify patterns and inform future improvements. Senior management need to be aware of any unresolved external moderation issues that would impact on the credibility of results reported.

Internal review

Evidence for 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)

The school has a collaborative approach to self-review that is informed by the effective use of data. Leadership of assessment practice is shared school-wide to ensure credible assessment and support students to achieve to their potential.

The Principal's Nominee works closely with senior managers to monitor compliance with assessment and moderation processes. Schoolwide self-review is building on existing systems by:

- focusing on quality assessment by placing limits on the number of credits offered in courses
- investigating the use of project-based learning to create contexts that engage students, such as the Wearable Arts Window at Te Papa Tongarewa
- encouraging the use of digital tools to collect valid, authentic and verifiable evidence
- reviewing digital storage protocols to ensure that all external moderation is digitally submitted to NZQA, and that work is easily located for this purpose
- using student voice and data to inform course design.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review Senior management undertakes to:

- monitor completion and evaluate outcomes of external moderation.

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)

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

- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities across classes in the same subject and within courses, including the use of Te Kura programmes and optional standards
- offering a range of methods to present internal assessment evidence including portfolios of oral, visual, digital and written evidence
- extending students' academic aspirations by supporting them to make entry into New Zealand Scholarship with extra tuition
- providing tutorials to support students at risk of not completing qualifications and tailoring their courses appropriately
- offering a limited range of standards to challenge identified Year 10 accelerated learners
- mentoring through form teachers and the Careers Counsellor to help students choose options that reflect their interests and aspirations
- identifying students who would benefit from special assessment conditions by adequately resourcing support.

Queen Margaret College has effective processes and procedures for:

- assisting students to present authentic evidence using a range of appropriate strategies, and the use of *Turnitin* during the assessment process
- investigating and resolving breaches of assessment rules
- ensuring students understand the requirements for valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- managing missed and late assessments and appeals
- providing information to students about derived grades and gathering standard-specific evidence of student achievement to support applications.

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)

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

- critiquing assessment material before use as appropriate
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded for a sample of marked student work for every standard
- requiring staff to document each step of the internal moderation process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, including noting discussions at grade boundaries
- requiring Heads of Department to check the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* to confirm internal moderation is complete before grades are submitted to NZQA
- conducting a documented, annual Principal's Nominee internal moderation monitoring visit to each department to check that processes are being completed
- providing senior management with an annual Head of Department attestation that all grades have been subject to the school's internal moderation process before they are submitted to NZQA
- storing exemplars of student work at grade boundaries for future reference and to support staff new to NCEA, or new to a standard.

Queen Margaret 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 of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored
- using feedback from external moderation to identify and store exemplars to help with making future assessment decisions.

Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency The school should provide staff with further guidance on strategic selection and verification of judgements at grade boundaries for internal moderation.

Learning Areas assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However, some staff interviewed verify more samples of student work than this. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, especially in larger departments, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed. This process could be more clearly documented in the staff handbook so that practice is strategic.

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)

Queen Margaret College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - ensuring that all students know how to access their Learner login and the school management system to check their own results
 - analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform course design, improve teaching and learning outcomes and set school-wide strategic achievement targets
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reporting results to NZQA in a timely manner
 - reporting Not Achieved results where appropriate
 - ensuring students, teachers and Heads of Department check and sign off results for accuracy
 - minimising any late entries into external examinations.

Student progress is effectively tracked to improve outcomes The school uses effective processes to monitor student progress and provide appropriate interventions.

Form teachers regularly discuss with students the credits gained and their progress towards meeting qualification requirements. There are three reports evenings each year where credit summaries are discussed with students and their families. The Head of Senior School tracks progress through the school management system and meets with each student who requires specific intervention to achieve her academic goals.

Teacher investigation of internal/external outlier data There is an expectation that staff compare internal and external achievement data in a course to identify variations. They are provided with *On Your Marks* data to check the patterns of internal results with external results for each of their courses. Staff explain any reasons for the variations in their annual report to the Principal and outline remedial action if required, to ensure the reporting of credible results.

Teacher as inquiry informs project-based learning Data analysis has effectively focussed staff inquiry projects on the use of mastery learning and its application to real-world projects. Teachers are investigating the use of cross-curricular learning and assessment to engage students in “passion” projects that reflect the strategic vision of the school. This approach to assessment will allow students to more easily display skills such as collaboration and presentation as required by the New Zealand Curriculum.

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 for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Queen Margaret College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive standardised outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff, students and their families through a range of media
- supporting teachers new to the school through induction strategies and buddying with more experienced staff
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Queen Margaret College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking whether teachers, students and parents are following processes
- publicising the school's assessment calendar and other information on assessment processes on *News@QMC* and the school's website
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification
- conducting NCEA parent evenings for Years 10 and 11 as part of option selection and encouraging parents and students to ask questions about NCEA processes.

Provide information on the use of student work as exemplars While the school meets the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 when returning student work, students have the right to determine if their work is used as exemplars by other students. There is currently no information covering this requirement in the handbook. The school has acknowledged this and will include appropriate information about granting approval in the next edition of the handbook.

Communications for staff require updating as follows:

The Principal's Nominee plans to ensure the staff handbook is current by:

- adding a reference to "school-based evidence" for special assessment conditions
- updating "National Qualifications Framework" to "New Zealand Qualifications Framework"
- changing the required timeframe for maintaining student work from twelve months to two years, or until it is replaced
- updating information on internal moderation processes to reflect the use of strategic selection for verification
- outlining the process for using common templates to develop action plans for external moderation issues.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- update the assessment handbook as outlined in this report.

