

Managing National Assessment Report

St Mary's College (Wellington)

March 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively St Mary's 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
- *Assessment and Reporting* (Staff Handbook) St Mary's College 2018
- 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 Accounting/Economics, Arts, English, Physical Education, Science, and Social Sciences.

There was a report-back session with the Acting 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

St Mary's College

16 March 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

The school is continuing to meet the needs of its students through good assessment practices and is committed to improving assessment outcomes.

A practice of continual review exists within the school allowing it to identify areas for possible improvement and then act upon them. Improvements in assessment practice have been made to reduce the workload of students and teachers.

A robust moderation system is ensuring credible results are reported to NZQA. The system is well embedded within the school, with teachers demonstrating a thorough understanding of the process. The Principal's Nominee and Heads of Faculty monitor internal moderation assuring senior leadership that the correct processes are followed to report credible results.

Effective data management is ensuring that accurate results are reported to NZQA in a timely manner. Analyses of results are reported annually to the Principal and Board of Trustees and form the basis for enhancing course design. Effective tracking and monitoring of student progress throughout the year identifies those who may require extra support from the school to reach their goals.

The school community is well informed about NCEA and school assessment policy. The information is fit for purpose and is available in print and online for quick access for students and parents. Students and teachers could demonstrate a good understanding of the school's assessment policy and processes.

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.

Kay Wilson
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24 April 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 18 May 2015 Managing National Assessment The school has effectively addressed the two agreed actions in the 2015 report. These were to further develop the process for monitoring internal moderation in all departments, and to initiate a final data check ensuring external entries are correct and internal entries have results reported.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school complies with all requirements of external moderation review and has thorough and robust systems for following up any issues that are identified. An ongoing issue with one subject area has been addressed with the Principal's Nominee working directly with the teacher to rectify the problem.

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)

St Mary's College is effectively reviewing its assessment practice. Heads of Learning Areas and Senior Leadership have regular scheduled meetings each term that focus on reviewing assessment practice, policy and procedures. These ongoing meetings have resulted in a number of improvements to assessment practice, which include:

- limiting the number of credits available to approximately 16 per course
- clarifying teacher understanding of resubmissions to reduce the need for them
- not offering further assessment opportunities in most subjects
- reducing the number of subjects taken from six to five at Year 13.

A review by the Principal's Nominee of the school's moderation system has also led to improvements. Senior Leadership now gaining assurance that internal moderation is happening within departments through the Head of Learning Area evaluation meetings.

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)

St Mary's College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using a range of methods during assessment to gather evidence of achievement
- using formative assessments, student feedback and feedforward to help determine their readiness for assessment
- scaffolding and contextualising assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage student interest
- making portfolio and research-based assessments more manageable using milestones checks and templates
- offering extension opportunities for Year 10 students through undertaking NCEA, and supporting New Zealand Scholarship candidates, as appropriate
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver courses the school is unable to offer.

St Mary's College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- efficiently managing NZQA external examinations
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules and student appeals of assessment decisions
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is standard specific and meets NZQA guidelines
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993.

Supporting students to attain NCEA qualifications The school has effective support structures to help students achieve their goals. Student course selection is done through academic conferencing with parents, students and Ako teachers, so that the best academic pathway for students can be created. Weekly tutorials for English, Maths and Science are available to help students with their NCEA studies. Students can also use subject resources on Google Classroom.

The school has developed a process to support students who are absent from school because they are involved in top level sports. If a student is going to be absent the Principal's Nominee interviews them to determine either a catch-up plan or a commitment to completing work early. An assessment plan is co-constructed with the student to manage the workload, including offering alternative assessments, if required to maintain authenticity.

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)

St Mary's College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists from regional subject forums and teacher clusters to verify purposefully selected samples of student work
- documenting the internal moderation process by using a standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- requiring Heads of Faculty to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their faculty prior to reporting results to NZQA.

St Mary's College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- randomly selecting samples of student work and adequately storing it for external moderation to meet NZQA requirements
- discussing external moderation feedback with teachers, documenting actions and monitoring this is completed
- encouraging teachers to suggest appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan.

Storing digital evidence to facilitate external moderation The growing practice of digital assessment in the school is creating new demands for storing student evidence. A risk to the accessibility of material is possible if storage methods are inappropriate and material is not available to those who need it, for example when managing student appeals. So that storage requirements are future proofed and to facilitate the use of the external moderation application, the school is encouraged to consider developing a school system for ensuring digital assessment evidence is available.

For consideration

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

- developing a school system for the storage of digital evidence.

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)

St Mary's College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - using NZQA statistical reports and analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform decisions about future assessment programme content and design
 - annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
 - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system, the NZQA learner login and NCEA app
 - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
 - ensuring that internal entries are reported with a result or withdrawn, as appropriate
 - holding current memoranda of understanding with external providers and reconciling them with entries made and results reported.

Data use effectively supports student achievement outcomes The effective use of data is enabling the school to monitor student progress towards NCEA qualifications. Data analysis of NCEA results early in the year identifies students who are potentially at risk of not achieving their goals. Ako teachers and Deans continually monitor their progress throughout the year, enacting support plans when necessary.

Subject teachers annually analyse results to gauge the effectiveness of their programmes. A longitudinal comparison of individual standards within each course helps teachers to design a programme that best meets the needs of the students. Assessment tasks are modified in standards where students perform poorly and the balance between external and internal assessments adjusted as necessary.

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))

St Mary's College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through the:
 - staff handbook
 - school website
 - Year 10 NCEA information evening
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system.

St Mary's College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- holding student assemblies to inform them of school assessment policies and procedures
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through targeted evening meetings.

Use of a standard course outline is recommended A standard template for course outlines will ensure consistent NCEA information is communicated to students. Currently, the assessment information within the outlines varies in format and content. A standardised template, including literacy, numeracy, and University Entrance details for each standard, will help to ensure students are receiving consistent assessment information for their courses.

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:

- developing a standard course outline for all courses.