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# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Mackenzie College**

**June 2019**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Mackenzie 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 2019* (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
- *Mackenzie College Assessment Procedures Handbook Year 11-13, 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *Mackenzie College Assessment Procedure Timeline*
- *Mackenzie College Charter, Strategic and Annual Plan 2019*
- *Mackenzie College Quality Management System (QMS) 2019*
- *Mackenzie College Senior Student Handbook 2019*
- *Mackenzie College Senior Student Option Information 2019*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Deputy Principal - Curriculum
- Heads of Learning Area for:
  - English and Languages
  - Physical Education and Health
  - Science (Acting) / TIC Transition
  - Social Sciences
  - The Arts
- three students.

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

## Mackenzie College

05 June 2019

### 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

Mackenzie College responds appropriately to assessment issues identified by both internal and external review. Self-review is driven by the Senior Leadership Team, in consultation with teachers, students and the parent community. This leads to changes in assessment-related practice to better meet students' qualifications goals. The college's 2017 curriculum review has achieved increased curriculum cohesion while allowing greater flexibility to meet individual needs. Students benefit from wider analysis of data to track progress, as well as the introduction of new courses reflective of the school's rural context, and improved communications.

The school provides a broad and flexible range of assessment programmes to cater for the varied pathways its students wish to follow. Programmes are differentiated for students in some subject areas and personalised in others. Pathways are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards the school does not have the capacity to deliver. Greater use of school evidence has enhanced the number of successful applications for those requiring Special Assessment Conditions. These actions assist individual students to meet their academic and vocational goals.

Since the last Managing National Assessment (MNA) review the school has focused on improving its internal moderation and monitoring processes, to ensure consistency of credible assessment and improve staff awareness of best assessment practice. Internal moderation processes and responses to external moderation are tracked and monitored by the Heads of Learning Area and the Principal's Nominee, to ensure credible assessment results are reported to NZQA.

Data management and use effectively support and ensure student achievement outcomes and ensure the timely reporting of results to NZQA. Achievement data is analysed to review faculty practice and courses, set strategic direction and evaluate the effectiveness of changes. Students are encouraged to use their NZQA Learner Login to monitor their own progress. Staff use data to identify students at risk of not achieving a qualification and students capable of raising their level of achievement.

The school has a broad range of communications that effectively allow staff, students and their families to gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

### **Areas for improvement**

The school should clarify staff understanding about what constitutes appropriate conditions for a resubmission, to ensure assessment practice is consistent and conforms to NZQA's requirements.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior leadership agree on the following actions to ensure the consistency of assessment practice across the school. The Senior Leadership Team undertakes to clarify with staff:

- the nature of a "minor" error in relation to resubmission requirements
- an "appropriate" time to correct the error
- how to manage authenticity for a resubmission.

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02 August, 2019

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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 14 Oct 2015 Managing National Assessment Report** The college has addressed the four agreed actions from the 2015 review by:

- increasing the number of applications for special assessment conditions using school evidence
- updating the staff handbook
- standardising the format of course outlines
- using a random selection method for external moderation that meets NZQA requirements.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has procedures for following-up on external moderation feedback. All Heads of Learning Area are required to develop action plans for any issues identified in external moderation reports. The Principal's Nominee meets with each Head of Learning Area (HOLA) as soon as the external moderation reports are published. An *MNA External Moderation Response* form is completed, and action plans are developed where necessary. The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion and evaluates the effectiveness of these plans, supporting teachers with professional learning as required. Where there is variance between the judgements of an external verifier and NZQA moderators, the Principal's Nominee requires a change of external verifier when that standard is next assessed.

### 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)*

In 2017, in response to a combination of internal and external influences, Mackenzie College undertook a comprehensive curriculum review in its senior school to reflect its core belief that the “*learner is at the centre*” of teaching and learning. The review's focus was to ensure that subjects and courses remained relevant, and to enhance student engagement and opportunities for success. Over and above this, the school retained its strategic focus on high student achievement in literacy, numeracy and across the curriculum.

An extensive consultation process with students and the parent community resulted in the addition of five new subjects, which reflect the rural context of the school and student voice: Agribusiness, Agriculture, Food and Fashion, Media Studies and Outdoor Education. Students can now choose to study either English or Mathematics at Year 12, rather than being obliged to take both as in the past. There is now greater flexibility as students can enrol in either a five, or a six-subject programme. Retention in Year 13 is high, reflecting students' increased motivation and engagement through more personalised programmes of study.

Since the 2017 curriculum review, the school's strategic goal of high rates of attainment in national qualifications has been met, as evidenced by NCEA and University Entrance rates comparable to those of similar decile schools. Literacy, numeracy and NCEA achievement targets have been met, or exceeded. However, the school is still working towards achieving some of its endorsement targets, as identified in its review processes.

Following a slight change in the agreement rate between the school's assessors and NZQA moderators, the Principal's Nominee implemented a new tracking sheet to monitor and evaluate internal moderation processes across the school. This provides confidence to the management team that all results reported to NZQA remain credible. Assessors must record on their Internal Assessment Tracking Sheet the internal moderation process for each standard assessed. This is then signed off by the Principal's Nominee.

The school uses data effectively to both inform and evaluate the effectiveness of its review process and its impact on student achievement. The Deputy Principal - Curriculum uses data continuously to identify students with the potential to gain an NCEA certificate endorsement and those at risk of not gaining the literacy or numeracy component of their qualifications. Once identified, the students are offered targeted support and intensively managed to meet their personal qualifications goals.

**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 2019 5.5)*

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

- providing targeted support for at risk students, as early as Year 7, to meet the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA and University Entrance
- providing differentiated assessment programmes within some courses, such as Technology, which offers both a vocational and a more academic pathway
- supporting Māori and Pacific students to achieve equitable outcomes in STEM subjects through small class sizes and the support of subject specialists
- personalising programmes for students where necessary to meet their learning needs and/or qualifications goals
- capping the number of credits offered in courses to focus on the quality rather than the quantity of credits achieved
- using external providers to deliver courses the school does not have the capacity to offer and to expand the range of courses related to career pathways in response to student demand
- increasing the number of applications for special assessment conditions by using school evidence.

### **Mackenzie College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- monitoring the authenticity of student work
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is based on valid, standard-specific, justifiable evidence
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of assessment rules
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

**Further clarify conditions for resubmission** A resubmission should only be offered where a minor error prevents the award of a higher grade. In courses where evidence is gathered by portfolio, or over an extended period, the use of checkpoints and feedback/feedforward will usually remove the need for a resubmission. In one subject area, students interviewed, reported having an extended period to resubmit work that could have been improved through feedback during the extended period over which the original assessment took place.



## **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior leadership agree on the following actions to ensure the consistency of assessment practice across the school. The Senior Leadership Team undertakes to clarify with staff:

- the nature of a “minor” error in relation to resubmission requirements
- an “appropriate” time to correct the error
- how to manage authenticity for a resubmission.

## 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 2019 6.4b)*

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

- critiquing all assessment materials prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose and where possible, using external critiquers for new standards and tasks
- using suitable subject-specialists from within or outside the school to verify assessor judgements for a sample of student work
- giving explicit guidance to individual staff members on how to use strategic selection according to their individual agreement histories, assessor experience and experience with the standards they assess
- emphasising the purposeful selection of evidence for verification at grade boundaries
- implementing an *Internal Assessment Tracking Sheet* to track and monitor internal moderation processes across the school
- visiting all HOLAs at least once a year to check internal moderation processes meet NZQA requirements.

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

- encouraging teachers to self-select standards to be included in the school's Moderation Plan
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored in both digital and physical formats
- encouraging digital submission for external moderation, with more than half of the evidence uploaded digitally in 2019.

**Strengthening external verification** Where an external verifier has been found to be inconsistent with NZQA moderators' judgements, the Principal's Nominee may require the HOLA to change the verifier the following year. This ensures that the school's assessors are better positioned to find agreement with NZQA's moderators.

### **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)*

### **Mackenzie College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- requiring HOLAs to complete an annual Learning Area report for the Principal and Board of Trustees measuring performance against Learning Area and school strategic goals
- using achievement data to inform teaching and assessment programmes and future strategic goals and actions.

### **Mackenzie College reports accurate achievement data by:**

- submitting consistently accurate results to NZQA in a timely manner
- ensuring all internal entries are reported with a result or are withdrawn, as appropriate
- using the Key Indicators to identify and resolve data submission errors
- checking entries in externally assessed standards to limit late entries.

**Effective academic counselling supports student success** Regular, close monitoring by the DP-Curriculum and the support network in the school, enhances students' likelihood of achieving successful outcomes. Each student attends a Senior Options Conference at the start of the year together with their parents and a teacher to set their academic and/or vocational goals for the year. At the second conference in Term 2, goals are revisited, student progress is analysed, evaluated and appropriate changes made where necessary. Discussions from interviews and follow up meetings are recorded in the student management system, so they are visible to all teaching staff.

**Student progress is tracked and effectively managed** The DP - Curriculum identifies students 'at risk' of not meeting their personal goals in a variety of ways including analysis of Learning Conference data, the fortnightly pastoral care meetings, analysis of student assessment data and discussions with teachers. Likewise, students with potential to achieve an NCEA certificate endorsement are identified and supported if required. The size of the school allows interventions to be intensively managed on a case-by-case basis.

### **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))*

### **Mackenzie College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- holding information evenings for parents to address matters specific to NCEA achievement and course selection
- holding Cottage Meetings (community consultation) over one fortnight, in four locations, to discuss things that the school is doing well, and areas identified for improvement
- ensuring students receive consistently formatted subject assessment statements for each of their courses, in addition to the student planner
- ensuring each student receives a hard copy of the student handbook, which communicates assessment policy and procedure
- providing timely reminders of NCEA related information through the fortnightly school newsletter
- using a physical noticeboard to keep students abreast of key information and dates relevant to all their qualifications
- collecting student voice through surveys conducted using Google Forms
- supporting teachers new to the school in a formal induction programme
- reviewing communications to ensure they are always fit for purpose and current.

### **Mackenzie College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- providing opportunities for staff to discuss changes in assessment best practice, including findings from external review
- reporting student progress to parents three times a year
- providing opportunities for students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification
- ensuring all students can access the portal into the student management system and use their NZQA Learner Login.

### **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.