

Managing National Assessment Report

St Kevin's College

September 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively St Kevin'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
- *NZQF Assessment Policy, Staff Procedures Handbook, St Kevin's College*
- *St Kevin's College Redcastle, NCEA Student Handbook, New Zealand Qualifications Framework Assessment Policy*
- *St Kevin's College Governance Manual 2018 Edition*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13
- St Kevin's College NCEA Student Application forms
- Powerpoint presentations to students on *NCEA Student Handbook* and *The Learner Login*.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - Arts
 - Maths
 - Religious Studies
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal (Head of Curriculum) 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 Kevin's College

19 September 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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within four years.

What the school is doing well

St Kevin's College effectively demonstrates the capacity to undertake its own review and evaluation of the effectiveness of its NZQA assessment practices and procedures. Review processes are centred on improving support and outcomes for students, and on ensuring practices remain fit for purpose.

Assessment processes are managed to meet the qualifications needs of students. The school provides differentiated assessment through multiple course choices in some core subject areas, and individualisation of courses and assessment contexts. Assessment opportunities are extended by using external providers to offer courses and standards that the school would otherwise be unable to provide, with the school providing support for students who choose these courses. Identified students are receive approved special assessment conditions and appropriately supported. Assessment practices are sound and consistently applied. These practices contribute to assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes by offering a range of opportunities to meet their needs.

Robust internal and external moderation processes are embedded across the school. These ensure that any issues are identified promptly and resolved, and only credible results are reported to NZQA. This effective practice is reflected in the level of agreement between teacher and NZQA external moderator judgements.

Data management and use effectively support student achievement outcomes. Assessment data is managed to ensure results reported to NZQA are timely and accurate. Achievement data is analysed to review faculty practice and courses, to set strategic direction, to enable staff and students to monitor progress to complete qualifications, and to identify and intervene with students at risk of not achieving a qualification.

The school has clear and open communications that allow staff, students and parents to gain an understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

Ensuring that all course outlines include information on the availability of further assessment opportunities and if standards contribute to literacy and numeracy requirements will help students manage their progress towards gaining qualifications.

Agreed action

The school agreed that an action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is to:

- ensure all course outlines include the required information.

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5 November 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 17 March 2015 Managing National Assessment Report The review identified two agreed actions to refine assessment-related practices. They have been actioned through updating the student handbook and modifying the process to randomly select student work for external moderation.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. These ensure senior management are fully informed of issues and involved in the review of outcomes where required. Feedback from external moderation shows learning areas do not have widespread or ongoing concerns.

The Principal's Nominee reads each report and shares them with the Head of Faculty and, where applicable, the Teacher in Charge. Staff reflect on each report and are encouraged to seek clarifications and/or appeals if required. They summarise their own reports and record any necessary actions such as modifying a task, requesting professional development or altering assessment programmes. The summary is submitted to the Principal's Nominee and the completion of actions checked. The Principal's Nominee tracks the history of moderation outcomes in a subject area to check if there any patterns of issues that need to be addressed. The moderation records are stored centrally and shared digitally with the Deputy Principal (Head of Curriculum).

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)

St Kevin's College has a strong focus on self-review. It is coordinated and relies on shared ownership. This approach provides assurance to senior management that concerns and potential improvements relating to assessment practices will be effectively identified and appropriately addressed.

Faculties review their practices based on the school's annual plan and the conclusions from the biennial faculty review and their own annual report. The Deputy Principal (Head of Curriculum) leads review through the Head of Faculties Committee focusing on curriculum development leading to improvements in assessment outcomes for students.

Review is also planned at an individual staff level with professional development based on learning groups carrying out a spiral of enquiry. This is a new approach and the focus this year has been on student achievement, aiming for the process to become embedded next year with staff undertaking broader areas of enquiry.

The school follows a servant leadership model and a recent major school-wide review has focused on student agency. This has led to changes in support structures for students including:

- an improved guidance process for subject selection
- developing a mentoring programme involving all members of staff leading a small vertical whānau group
- establishing a student advocate position
- biannual student-led conferences replacing subject based parent interviews.

The Principal's Nominee works closely with the Deputy Principal (Head of Curriculum) to ensure that there is shared knowledge of all NCEA-related processes, their effectiveness and next steps for potential improvements.

Recent changes from self-review include:

- improved gathering of school-based evidence for special assessment conditions applications to increase access for students by removing the potential financial barrier of independent assessor reports
- moving the assessment of supported learning standards from an outside provider back to the school to ensure the assessment is valid and provides better outcomes for students
- creating a digital assessment policy to manage authenticity of student work and ensure work is stored securely and remains accessible
- basing the school timetable on students' four priority subjects to ensure the school can run courses that cover students' essential choices.

Internal self-review is a continual process and many of the initiatives are still being reviewed as they develop. The next planned steps include:

- trialling the use of content matching software as another tool to assist students in presenting authentic work
- replacing the package used to process results data for annual analysis and reporting on results with a programme that can also be used to manage the quality assurance processes
- the Principal's Nominee developing a calendar based on NZQA key dates to help Heads of Faculty with their planning.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews 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 Kevin's College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- extending assessment opportunities through using a range of external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against standards related to career pathways
- supporting students working with other providers through a Vocational Dean and Gateway Coordinator
- ensuring that students potentially entitled to special assessment conditions are identified and support trialled
- clearly informing staff of students' special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance
- accelerating suitable students in Year 10 in Science and/or Mathematics to allow them to follow a wider choice of pathways in subsequent years, such as other subjects instead of Science or Mathematics or completing University papers
- where practical, assessing when ready.

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

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- collecting credible evidence of student achievement for derived grade applications
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Tailoring assessment opportunities to individuals The school effectively caters to individual students' assessment needs in a variety of ways. Some core subjects offer different courses for students to select. Some learning areas provide a few optional standards that students may select, and others negotiate withdrawal from certain standards where appropriate. Some courses offer students the opportunity to complete their assessment in self-selected contexts.

The school has developed an enquiry driven programme for Year 11 to Year 13 Religious Studies, which are compulsory courses. This has been designed to engage students and allow them to progress at their own pace. Students work through structured tasks and have access to a range of resources to support their learning. They share their work digitally with their teacher to receive regular feedback. Milestones guide students in pacing their own progress but assessments are

completed when a student decides they are assessment ready. An additional standard is available to those who wish to extend the course.

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

- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists, within and outside the school, to verify a strategically selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- retaining and sharing work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements.

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

- negotiating suitable changes to the moderation plan
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring student work is readily available by being adequately stored and the Principal's Nominee knowing the location of the materials
- encouraging staff to submit work soon after the internal moderation process is completed to receive timely feedback.

Effective monitoring of internal moderation Processes assure senior management that all reported results are credible. Heads of Faculty proactively monitor the completion of all aspects of internal moderation. They submit an annual Quality Assurance document to the Principal's Nominee. This outlines all of their NCEA related processes, including evidence of these being followed. Throughout the year they complete an online spreadsheet recording for every standard each step of the moderation process, including who has critiqued and verified the material. The Principal's Nominee regularly checks on progress and results cannot be submitted to NZQA until the spreadsheet is completed. By the end of the year the Internal Moderation Cover sheets are also submitted to the Principal's Nominee, who reconciles them with the information recorded in the spreadsheet and results reported.

Consider nominating standards for external moderation to provide targeted professional development The school should consider making use of the ability to nominate standards for inclusion in the external moderation plan. This would give the school more ownership of the process, extending it beyond a focus on quality assurance to include more targeted professional development. It could allow teachers the opportunity to receive feedback on standards they wish to focus on and provide senior management the ability to target support when required.

For consideration

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

- nominating standards to be included in the external moderation plan.

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 Kevin's College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - Heads of Faculty analysing pre-formatted data with a focus on next steps, which informs the modification of courses and teaching practice
 - analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to set strategic direction
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
 - recording Not Achieved results or withdrawing student entries, as appropriate
 - having student, teacher and Principal's Nominee checks and sign off processes at key times during the year
 - closely managing late entries
 - only reporting results for standards for which the school holds consent, or against the correct code of outside providers with whom the school holds current memoranda of understanding
 - resolving any issues highlighted in the *Key Indicator Checklist*.

Student progress is effectively tracked and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes The school effectively uses data to track student progress, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. The school uses a range of indicators to identify potential patterns of concern and initiate support for students at risk of not achieving to their potential. Issues are first discussed between the whānau teacher and student. An advocate is available when required to act as an intermediary between students and staff and coordinate the involvement of a Year Dean, hostel staff and any other necessary support.

Consider how to further support students so they can continue to access the functions provided through their NZQA Learner login The school should consider how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner login so they can continue to access the functions it provides. When students do not register their NZQA Learner login, they cannot apply for reconsiderations and/or reviews for external assessments, order certificates and their New Zealand Record of Achievement or check their personal details and the reporting of results to NZQA. Over recent years close to 100 percent of students registered their Learner login, but this dropped to 90 percent in 2017.

The introduction of the facility for students to access their data in the student management system appears to have impacted on the number registering their NZQA Learner login. The school encourages students to register both their NZQA Learner login and use the student portal in the student management system to track their progress and check entries and results.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner login.

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 Kevin's College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff, students and their families using a range of methods
- publicising NZQA fees and financial assistance information
- annually reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

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

- providing access to assessment policy, procedures, forms and NCEA publications in both physical and digital formats
- using a variety of year level meetings at key times in the year to brief students about assessment policy and procedures
- presenting NZQA and school assessment-related processes in a parent meeting, Pasifika evening and through timely reminders in newsletters
- inducting new staff to familiarise them with assessment and moderation processes.

Students show a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures The students interviewed could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently.

Ensure course outlines provide the required information Course outlines need to consistently present information on the availability of further assessment opportunities and if standards contribute to literacy and numeracy requirements. Including this information in all course outlines will help students with their understanding and management of their progress towards qualifications.

The school does have a check list of required content to guide Heads of Faculty.

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:

- ensure all course outlines include the required information.