

Managing National Assessment Report

Wentworth College

September 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how Wentworth College ensures that the relevant aspects of their Quality Management System effectively:

- 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.

This report evaluates the school's capacity to ensure the credibility when assessing and reporting a restricted range of standards.

Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- 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) to maintain their consent to assess, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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 that enhance good assessment practice.

What this review includes

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment where relevant.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every three 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
- *Wentworth College Procedures for Assessment Procedures - Student Guide 2018*
- *Wentworth College Procedures for Assessment in 2018 - Staff Guide*
- *Wentworth College Policy and Procedures for Assessment for National Qualifications* (board of trustee's assessment policy document)
- *Wentworth College NCEA English Course Booklet 2018.*

The School Relationship Manager met with the school's NCEA Administrator, Principal's Nominee, the Head of Department for English, one teacher of English, and two students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Head of College 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.

Background

Wentworth College is a private school that caters for students from years 7-13. Students undertake assessment against limited range of standards in a narrow range of subjects as they are mainly studying towards another qualification.

In 2018 the school has made 36 entries for 13 students in three unassigned internally and externally assessed English standards, to provide students with the opportunity to meet the literacy requirement for University Entrance in New Zealand.

SUMMARY

Wentworth College

20 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* for assessment of the limited range of standards they offer.

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 meeting the needs of the small group of students being assessed against a limited range of standards on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

Senior Management has responded to external moderation feedback by considering teacher capacity to deliver standards-based assessment and reducing the number of standards it offers. It provides just one course, tailored to meet student assessment and University Entrance literacy needs through flexible assessment timeframes.

Teachers are effectively engaged in internal moderation processes. They document all aspects of internal moderation, including the reasons for their assessment judgements, for quality assurance purposes.

Student entry and results data is effectively managed and files are submitted to NZQA on a regular basis.

Newly developed plain English staff and student assessment handbooks provide key information about the school's assessment programme and processes.

Areas for improvement

While low agreement rates between teachers and NZQA assessors have been addressed through review, the school needs to ensure that consistent assessment and moderation capacity is maintained.

It is recommended that any teacher assessing standards contacts a suitably-qualified subject specialist outside of the school to maintain professional learning and build the school's capacity to offer standards in subjects other than those currently provided, should the need arise.

Students should be actively encouraged to use their Learner login to manage their qualifications.

Updates to the Board of Trustee's assessment policy document will ensure that these have the same currency as staff and student handbooks.

Agreed action

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

- use external verifiers when new standards are offered, or to address low agreement rates between teachers and NZQA moderators
- encourage students to use their Learner login to manage their qualifications record
- update the staff handbook and board of trustee's assessment policy document as outlined in this report.

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1 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 found that external review actions have been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 26 November 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

The six actions from the previous Managing National Assessment review have been addressed.

Response to external moderation outcomes The outcomes of Wentworth College's most recent 2017 external moderation showed low agreement between teachers and NZQA moderators. NZQA's external moderators agreed with approximately half of the judgements made by teachers at Wentworth College.

When the Principal's Nominee discussed these outcomes with the school's senior managers, they considered current teacher capacity in offering standards-based assessment. In response, in 2018 the school is offering only those standards where external moderation provides confidence that assessor judgements are valid.

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)

The school's evaluation of all standards offered confirms that the current course, which provides Level 2 English standards to both domestic and international students, is meeting the University Entrance literacy needs of a small group of students.

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 found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

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

- identifying students entitled to Special Assessment Conditions and ensuring they are appropriately resourced for all assessment opportunities
- using milestone checks, feedback and feedforward to support students to complete assessment tasks to the best of their ability
- providing differentiated assessment within a course
- collecting evidence through oral, written and visual means.

Wentworth College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent schoolwide assessment practice on missed and late assessment, resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- students to appeal any assessment decisions
- addressing breaches of the assessment rules
- collecting standard-specific evidence from valid practice assessments to support student applications for derived and emergency grades
- using a range of strategies including digital tools to ensure that student work is authentic
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Standards offered contribute effectively to University Entrance literacy attainment Currently the school offers an English course for students from Year 12 and 13. Most students are from non-English-speaking backgrounds and successful completion of this course helps them to meet their literacy requirements for a New Zealand university. Students are assessed against a menu of internal and external standards including two reading and two writing standards, and a further optional English standard. Readiness to be assessed is considered through flexible deadlines that do not impact upon the authenticity of student work. Teachers and students meet authenticity requirements in the assessment and marking process using a range of strategies.

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 found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Wentworth College has effective processes and procedures for managing the consistency of internal moderation by ensuring that teachers:

- critique materials prior to use so they are fit-for-purpose
- use NZQA clarifications documents to develop teacher understanding of the standard
- annotate student work with detailed comments explaining grade boundary decisions
- document verification on the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* with their completion attested to senior management
- maintain copies of *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* and attest to their completion with senior management
- store exemplars of student work at grade boundaries to benchmark future assessment decisions.

Wentworth College has processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work randomly to meet NZQA requirements
- ensuring student work is available by being adequately stored.

Next steps in building capacity to offer assessment for the NCEA across a range of subjects NZQA suggests that any teachers offering standards should engage with a suitably-qualified subject specialist outside the school to verify grade decisions. This will further develop teachers' professional learning and build the school's capacity to offer standards from other subjects, and to address those standards with low agreement rates.. The current course provides a model of effective internal moderation practice as it ensures that assessor judgements are quality assured. This should become shared practice as appropriate.

Consider digital storage protocols The school is encouraged to develop a digital storage policy. In 2017 one third of material was submitted digitally for external moderation. The Principal's Nominee agreed that consistent digital storage protocols mean evidence is more easily accessible for both internal and external moderation purposes.

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:

- ensure credible results by engaging with suitably-qualified subject specialists in other schools for internal moderation.

For consideration

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

- developing a digital storage policy to ensure improved accessibility of materials for internal and external moderation purposes.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence found that data management and use supports student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Wentworth College effectively

- manages data appropriately by:
 - ensuring students sign acceptance of their grades on an individualised coversheet when work is returned
 - submitting regular data files to NZQA throughout the year
 - analysing student results annually through department reports and discussing with the Principal the effectiveness of assessment against standards offered as part of teacher appraisal.

Tracking student progress Students should continue to be encouraged to use their Learner login to manage their qualifications records, identify any potential data errors and ensure that fees are paid. Currently they track their own progress and are shown how to use the school management system and NZQA's Learner login. However, in 2017 less than one third of students checked results through their NZQA Learner login.

For consideration

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

- actively encourage students to use their Learner login to manage their qualifications record.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Wentworth College has effective processes and procedures for:

- providing students with course outlines and a comprehensive assessment handbook
- using Google Classroom to ensure consistent communication with students over assessment dates and resources
- developing a plain English staff handbook covering assessment practice for NCEA
- ensuring that teachers are members of professional subject associations
- mentoring staff and students to have a clear understanding of their NCEA goals through mentoring meetings with the Principal's Nominee.

Clarifications in the staff handbook The Principal's Nominee agreed to further clarify the staff handbook by adding reference to:

- collecting school-based evidence under the section on Special Assessment Conditions, to align documentation with actual practice
- adding the word 'Internal' to the section on Internal Moderation to clarify the difference between internal and external moderation
- the requirement for Memoranda of Understanding, should the school be using external providers
- documenting the process for applying for financial assistance.

These clarifications will help with teacher *understanding of school processes and* provide accurate documentation to assist with succession planning

Update the Policy and Procedure for Assessment for National Qualifications

The school's handbook provides current information on derived grades. However, the Board of Trustee's Policy and Procedure for National Qualifications should be updated to remove the words 'compassionate consideration'. This will align the school's documentation with actual practice and remove any potential misunderstanding about the intent of the process.

Reference to credit, merit and excellence should be updated to refer to Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit and Excellence.

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 staff handbook and board of trustee's assessment policy document as agreed.