

Managing National Assessment Report

ACG Parnell College

June 2018

What this report is about

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

- manages internal and external moderation
- 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 limited 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
- *ACG Parnell College NCEA English Assessment Procedures* (Staff manual)
- *ACG Parnell College NCEA Assessment Procedures For Students Information* (Student handbook)
- schemes of work for the courses that assess students against standards on the NZQF.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, the Coordinator for Senior English, two teachers of English and two students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal 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.

Background

ACG Parnell College caters for students from Years 9 to 13. A small number of these students are assessed against standards in English and English for Academic Purposes, with the aim of meeting the university entrance literacy requirements or completing sufficient English standards to study at university.

The school will incorporate one of the other schools in the ACG Group from the start of 2019. The school's management confirms it will review how the needs of these students will be met while maintaining the integrity of its own established systems.

SUMMARY

ACG Parnell College

19 June 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.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2017.

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. Assessment programmes are reviewed and there are strong systems to ensure that grades submitted to NZQA are credible. Teachers and students share understanding about expectations.

Areas for improvement

The school follows up on issues raised in external moderation but does not have a documented process. This should be developed and included in the staff handbook for clarity and consistency of application.

The school's management of resubmissions could result in over guidance, and the English department agrees that it will review practice to ensure that students have the opportunity to submit authentic work.

While students are well informed about assessment, they were not aware that there was a student handbook outlining the key processes, including how to appeal an assessment decision. They should be reminded of the existence of the handbook, so they have access to the information if needed. In addition, there are some minor suggestions for the next edition.

The school has identified that noting the reasons for an assessment decision, particularly on work at grade boundaries, would mean the teachers can build up a set of benchmark samples when internally moderating. These can help in making future assessment decisions.

Agreed action

The school agreed on actions to improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are ensuring:

- the process to follow up on issues raised in internal moderation is documented.
- teachers ensure students have the opportunity to submit authentic work in resubmissions

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1 August 2018

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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 8 April 2014 Managing National Assessment Report The minor points identified in the 2014 Managing National Assessment review have been addressed.

Response to external moderation outcomes The outcomes of external moderation provide evidence that the school's internal moderation processes are effective. The teachers address any issues identified. To further improve, the school's expectations for follow up should be documented, and any actions planned monitored for completion.

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 uses a process to review the effectiveness of their model of limited standards-based assessment to ensure that:

- learner needs are being met
- assessment is credible and quality assured
- data is accurate, and achievement is tracked.

They review how they are meeting the needs of students by talking with students and their parents. One recent outcome is the establishment of a Year 11 course for students with weaker literacy skills to prepare them to meet the university entrance literacy requirements. Parents have been kept well informed of the programme and expected outcomes. The course is intended to be completed within one year, but students could have the opportunity to finish the course the following year.

Agreed action

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

- ensure the process to follow up on issues raised in internal moderation is documented.

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)

Needs of students met The school currently has two English courses:

- one for students with English as another language, who study English over three years
- a new course at Year 11, for students who need additional assistance to reach a level of literacy to enable them to succeed academically.

The school aims to provide selected students with a pathway to complete the literacy requirements for university entrance or transition to their future study path. The students are identified in Year 10 or when they start at the school and have the opportunity to be assessed against a limited range of standards. Flexible deadlines mean that students are assessed when their learning indicates they are well prepared.

The students confirm that their learning in their English classes is instrumental in helping them to meet their educational goals.

Managing Resubmissions One teacher's management of resubmissions may result in students being over guided, preventing them submitting fully authentic work. It is suggested that practice is reviewed to ensure that it meets NZQA's requirements. NZQA's *Myth Buster* on resubmissions is a useful resource to inform this review.

Special Assessment Conditions There are currently no students approved to use special assessment conditions. The school asks any student who may be eligible to provide professional documentation. This is not an NZQA requirement, but is appropriate in the school's situation.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure students have the opportunity to submit authentic work in resubmissions.

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)

Evidence of effective moderation processes The school understands the purpose and requirements for internal moderation. Assessment material is critiqued prior to use and the school currently has the capacity to effectively verify a sample of student work for all the standards offered. The Principal's Nominee confirms that if staffing changes affect that capacity, the teachers will engage with colleagues external to the school. Completion of all the steps of a robust process are recorded on *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* and these were sighted for standards the school has assessed this year.

Teachers have identified that keeping better notes of the reasons for an assessment decision would enable them to build up a set of benchmark samples in the school's context. This can assist teachers to make assessment judgements consistent with the standard. This is good practice.

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

Results data managed appropriately The school generally submit data from August onwards, rather than from April as expected by NZQA. This unusual handling of data is appropriate in their context. For many students the assessment programme takes place over more than one year so results are banked and reported in the following year.

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

ACG Parnell demonstrates effective communication by:

- providing students with course and assessment details
- providing teachers with information about expectations and processes for credible assessment.

Students well informed The students are very clear about what they want to achieve. They understand expectations around assessment and consider they are well supported to achieve their academic goals. However, they did not recall having been given the NCEA assessment handbook in either digital form or a physical copy. It is suggested that they are reminded about the handbook from time to time so that they have a reference when required.

Minor changes to handbooks When the handbooks are next reviewed there are some suggestions to incorporate:

- how issues identified in external moderation are followed up
- clear expectations around resubmissions
- an amendment to the wording for appeals to include that any assessment decision can be appealed.

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:

- making the minor changes to the handbooks as outlined
- reminding students about the handbook.