

From: **Kristine Kilkelly** <[Kristine.Kilkelly@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:Kristine.Kilkelly@nzqa.govt.nz)>  
Date: 1 November 2016 at 10:54  
Subject: RE: MCAT Response  
To: Karen Chow <[karen.chow@wgc.school.nz](mailto:karen.chow@wgc.school.nz)>

Dear Karen - Thank you for your emails of 12 and 31 October in response to my reply to you of 11 October. I am sorry for the late response to your email of 12 October – this was an oversight on my part.

Firstly we agree with your point about exemplars – we should have provided more exemplars over the last two years. Teachers needed this to fully understand the nature of the changes, and we have received consistent feedback from teachers on this point. The information we provided wasn't adequate and we do regret that we didn't see this and address it at the time. I can assure you that as a consequence we are as a priority working on improvements in the communication processes and important information for teachers.

I would like to turn to two issues that you raised:

The comment that the MCAT was scaled is not correct and I need to be clear on this point. The paper was not scaled, nor treated any differently from our usual benchmarking processes in the finalisation of the assessment schedule. The larger number of question parts going to excellence was a feature of the assessment task as it was set in 2016, and this was not adjusted or manipulated in benchmarking. The process of benchmarking the MCAT involves looking at a large number of actual student scripts (approx. 1000), to ensure that the assessment schedule covers the variety of valid evidence that students have presented. This must be done to ensure that the assessment schedule appropriately credits students for the evidence that they have given. This benchmarking is carried out for every external examination assessment schedule, and it was not treated differently for the MCAT in 2016.

Your concern that several questions were above the specified level of the New Zealand Curriculum - The questions were designed to elicit evidence from candidates at the appropriate level of the NZ Curriculum. While some questions may have presented a context that looked to be at a higher level, only algebraic procedures from Explanatory Note 4 (EN4) of the standard 91027 had to be applied. For excellence, candidates are required to show extended abstract thinking (as described in Explanatory Note 2 of the standard), and this will often involve more than the straightforward use of a single procedure from EN4.

We do intend to complete a full analysis of the questions and expected responses, and this will form part of NZQA's review of the MCAT. This will also include full consideration of the feedback we have received from teachers on particular questions, and we will make this available to teachers early next year. We will use this feedback and the analysis to inform the continued development of the MCAT.

Kind regards

Kristine