

From: Karen Chow <karen.chow@wgc.school.nz>
Date: 12 October 2016 at 11:31:14 AM NZDT
To: Kristine Kilkelly <Kristine.Kilkelly@nzqa.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: MCAT Response

Good morning Kristine,

I note that in your e-mail, NZQA acknowledges that a miscommunication in the alterations in the assessment was the cause of student and teacher concerns about the NCEA Level 1 MCAT. While this may have been an issue, the greater problem is that several questions were above the specified level in the New Zealand Curriculum. The disproportionate number of Excellence questions in this paper compared to previous years indicates that intensive scaling was required for this assessment to appear "fair," which in itself is questionable as NCEA is about reaching a set standard - not continually shifting the goal posts as seems to be the case here. By continuing to defend the level of the assessment you are essentially ignoring one of the most important critiques of this year's assessment.

The inability to attain a sincere apology from NZQA for setting an inappropriate assessment that has left many students and teachers disillusioned is disappointing, particularly at a time when STEM subjects are deemed to be of importance to society. For an agency that specifies one of its values as "take[ing] collective responsibility for our teams health and performance" very little accountability for the MCAT has occurred.

Moving forwards, I hope that NZQA ensures that exemplars are provided earlier in the school year so we can ensure that our students are given appropriate guidance. Had exemplars for the MCAT been released at the start of 2016, this would have allowed teachers to have an open discussion with NZQA on the level we are expected to be teaching at.

Regards,

Karen