This example of a Showcase Award submission is fictional. This submission indicates how information could be provided to address the Showcase Judging Standards. It is <u>not</u> an exemplar. School data and supporting information (appendices) are referenced, but not included.

Annotations have been added to the right of the text (in blue) to indicate information in the submission that supports judging against the Showcase judging standards. Below each section (in orange) are some suggestions to indicate where additional information could be included to strengthen the submission.

2017 Showcase Awards — Example Submission

Award category: The Jack Pizzey Award for Principal of the Year
Nominee name: The Principal
Author: A colleague

Overview

As an exceptional instructional leader, our principal has successfully 'raised the bar' for student learning and achieved high standards of collegial professionalism across the school. She lifted school performance by establishing an inclusive schoolwide curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and instructional leadership model.

Under her leadership, the school achieved measured improvements in learning outcomes in English and mathematics and in the opinions of staff, students and parents.

The school achieved these improvements through the Principal's leadership. Specifically, she led a consistent approach to the analysis and discussion of data, promoted systematic curriculum delivery and developed expert teaching teams. She supported us to prioritise and sustain improved student outcomes. Her relentless commitment to developing herself and others enabled staff to achieve high professional standards and enhanced professional practices.

> The overview describes the professional practice/s. (200 words max).

> The focus areas relevant to the specific Award have been identified.

> The positive outcomes from the contextual application of the department's vision (State Schools Strategy) have been stated.

> The measurable improvement areas have been identified.

> Links to departmental improvement priorities have been included.

Design

Context

The Principal leads a band 9, regional school of 75 staff and 510 P–6 students. The school has an ICSEA value of 876, with an Indigenous population of 21%. Around 30% of students receive adjustments for disabilities. When the Principal first arrived at the school in Term 4, 2013, she shared a clear vision, and demonstrated courage and commitment to providing the highest quality education for all students, regardless of cultural background, socioeconomic situation, disability or difficulty, and a strong belief in the collective professional capacity of the staff.

> The characteristics of the school cohort/ community relevant to the improvement focus have been identified.

The initiative or professional practice/s

The Principal led a three-strategy process, including using the DET inquiry cycle, the implementation of research-based teaching and assessment strategies and supporting staff to develop their leadership capability (Department of Education and Training 2017).

> The initiative / professional practice/s have been described.

Evidence base

The Principal understands that ensuring every student succeeds requires an evidence-based approach to continuous improvement. She presented to the whole community a model of change (Kotter 2012, pp. 37–168) focused on building teachers' pedagogical knowledge and deepening their curriculum knowledge to achieve improvements in student outcomes (DET 2017; Timperley et al 2007, p. 2) (Appendix 1, Fig. 1).

The Principal initially shared improvement data from similar schools and broader contexts, and research to allow staff to recognise the potential for improvement (Boudett and Steele, 2007). She also shared data that outlined impacts of schooling and achievement on future success and wellbeing (Abbott-Chapman 2014, pp. 102–120). A pivotal question arose for teachers, 'If others can do it, why not us?' This created a sense of urgency around the need to make sure that every student finished Year 6 at our school with a 'C' or better result in English and mathematics, to ensure the best start possible in high school. We also wanted to make sure we were 'doing it right' and that the results were comparable within and beyond our school.

Our Principal then used informing evidence from a range of school data sources, including level of achievement data (Appendix 1, Fig. 2) and the school opinion survey (Appendix 1, Fig. 3) to design, with the staff, an explicit improvement agenda. Our students' A–E data showed that only 40% of students who completed Year 6 achieved a 'C' or better in English and mathematics. Further, the school opinion survey data (student) in 'teachers provide useful feedback about their schoolwork' was concerning. Our teachers shared that we didn't consistently use learning goals with students (Appendix 1, Fig. 4) and were therefore not able to give feedback to improve student learning. Our students' work lacked evidence of redrafting based on feedback from teachers to improve their work.

Feedback, that is information given to learners about their performance relative to learning goals, has been shown through research to have very high effects on learning in English and mathematics across all age groups (Education Endowment Fund, 2017). The Principal led us through a process to develop our aim — to improve the learning achievement of Year 6 students in English and mathematics through implementing learning goals and feedback processes with students. Our target was for every student leaving Year 6 to have achieved a 'C' or better in English and mathematics. The Principal's leadership throughout the inquiry process was crucial for developing our understanding of student data and developing a sharp and narrow focus for our actions.

Include in the appendices:
- details of the model of change
- tables, graphs or other data that supports the prioritised problem of practice.

Methods and data plan

A range of measures were chosen to establish that improvements in student learning outcomes and the opinions of students, staff and parents could be attributed to the professional practices implemented. Quantitative measures were used to confirm improvements in learning outcomes and the opinions of staff, students and parents. Interim indicators, including moderated student assessments, student work samples with evidence of feedback and the number of students with learning goals, helped establish we were on track to achieve our goals. Qualitative measures included

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Evidence to support the approach/strategies used to achieve improvement has been identified.

In-text citation has been used to identify the research used, and the source has been included in the references section.

The resources and practices used have been identified, along with an indication of why they were best suited.

The relevant data and how it was used has been included.

The goal and cohort have been named and a measurable objective has been identified.

The method for measuring student improvement has been described.

analysed Principal and teacher discussions as part of the developing performance framework. See Appendix 2 for the strategies, outcomes, measures and data collection times.

To strengthen the submission, include in the appendices:
- a detailed data plan showing the outcomes, measures and data collection times
- a discussion of the use of data, for example how or why datasets were used and explain the validity and reliability of the chosen measures and administration processes
- evidence of external verification of the high quality design (if available).

Systematic curriculum delivery

Providing feedback and learning goals required teachers to start with the question, 'what knowledge and skills do our students need to learn?' Teachers quickly realised that the delivery of the curriculum, particularly in Year 6, was not systematic and that a deeper knowledge of the curriculum and moderation was essential to make sure that a 'B' in one class was the same as in another class. Professional development in curriculum, assessment and moderation was essential, as was team planning to ensure stronger curriculum alignment to the ACARA standards. The Principal allocated resources and created the timetable space for the teaching staff to work collaboratively to develop moderation expertise and curriculum alignment with the help of an experienced colleague from our cluster network. The initial focus for the experienced colleague was to develop capability of the Year 6 teachers and the Master Teacher so they could then become coaches for other teachers.

> The detailed implemented initiative / professional practice/s and links to systemic / curriculum requirements strengthens evidence related to the Showcase Awards focus areas; and judging dimensions – Design and Scalability.

Developing an expert teaching team

To further support the development of expert teaching teams, the experienced colleague utilised resources from ACARA and QCAA. These resources were used to help collaboratively develop curriculum resources, as they showed illustrations of student achievement aligned with the year levels and achievement standards of the Australian Curriculum. The Master Teacher modelled pedagogical practices based on the research of Hattie and Marzano. Between each meeting, teachers engaged the students in the agreed learning experiences using selected effective teaching practices.

Under the Principal's inspirational leadership, our school adopted a 'we are all in this together' attitude. She encouraged us as a team to build collegial accountability. We gathered our own data on the success of the agreed learning, and our leadership team covered lessons to enable us to observe other teachers' lessons and provide feedback. At each meeting teachers would share student outcomes and reflections on practice. The Principal and leadership team showed respect for our learning, but would also challenge us on our interpretation and analysis. Our leadership team was also energised with our moral purpose, shared responsibility, and the recognition and support we provided for colleagues' professional work. The Principal supported us to track student progress throughout the year with data walls, with a focus on re-engaging at-risk students to ensure that every student would have the best possible start in high school.

> The implemented professional practices / support provided and the person's/people's roles relevant to the Showcase Award category and focus areas have been detailed.

Continuing professional development was advocated and supported by the Principal. We deepened our knowledge about assessment and moderation through extended feedback loops with another local school. Our Principal participated in these sessions and actively encouraged a collegial approach, as we tested our thinking with our colleagues in the local cluster. The working

relationships that our Principal maintains with a wide range of schools have enabled us to regularly connect with colleagues to ensure assessments, with an initial focus on English and mathematics, align with the year level achievement standards in the Australian Curriculum.

Impact

After three years' work under the Principal's leadership, A–E data for students now in Year 6 improved from 60% of students achieving 'C' or better in English and mathematics (when the students were in Year 3 in 2013) to 80% for the same cohort at the end of Year 6 (2016). To understand the importance of this result, three years of historical school data was averaged to create a comparison group.

Historically, 57% of our students achieve 'C' or better in English and mathematics at the end of Semester 2, Year 3. However, by the end of Year 6, on average only 40% of our students achieve 'C' or better in English and mathematics.

With the Principal's direct support, and our whole school focused on improving student learning outcomes in English and mathematics, 80% of the 2016 Year 6 students exited the school with a 'C' or better in English and mathematics. This equated to an additional 27 Year 6 students passing English and mathematics in 2016 compared to students from the comparison group. See Appendix 3, Fig. 1 for more detail.

Additional measured changes during 2013–2016 include:
- task and process level feedback increased from 10% to 80% across Year 6 students over three years (Appendix 3, Fig. 2)
- increase in students with learning goals in Year 6 for English and mathematics from 0% to 100%
- staff morale, as indicated across areas of collaboration, feedback, evidence-based practices and leadership roles increased between 5% and 15% (Appendix 3, Fig. 1)
- 100% improvement in all 35 areas regarding staff satisfaction (Appendix 3, Fig. 2)
- parent satisfaction that the school is a good school improved from 85.7% to 95.1% (Appendix 3, Fig. 3)
- moderation meetings in the cluster increased from one Year 6 meeting per semester to one per term across Years 1–6
- student voice data identifies the range of feedback levels across classes and impact on learning (Appendix 3, Fig. 4).

> Qualitative and quantitative data is included to support claims of measurable improvement related to the aims /intended outcomes.

> Include in the appendices:
> - tables, graphs etc. confirming improvement in English and mathematics results throughout the three- year improvement cycle
> - examples of task and process level feedback
> - tables, graphs etc. confirming improvement in school opinion survey results
> - examples of student voice data.

Scalability

Key elements for successful implementation of the professional practice/s include:

Principal leadership
- a clear vision, courage and commitment to providing the highest quality education for all students, regardless of cultural background, socioeconomic situation, disability or difficulty
- a strong belief in the collective professional capacity of the staff
- encouragement and support to build leadership capability at all levels of the school community.

A culture that promotes learning
- a focus on building each student's and staff member's sense of self-worth to create a learning community that collaboratively enables everyone to succeed
- establish higher expectations and provide opportunities for all students to achieve positive outcomes
- enable teachers to 'practise excellence' in pedagogy by providing targeted professional development and differentiated support.

A hands-on, instructional approach to leadership
- enabling the systematic delivery of the Australian Curriculum across the school
- delivering direct support to enable teachers to focus on differentiating planning, targeted teaching and assessment to allow all students to achieve to their highest potential.

Previously, the Principal has implemented these leadership practices at Showcase State School, a regional band 8 school, with similar results from 2009 to 2012. See Appendix 4 for more details, as well as supporting documentation from Showcase State School's Assistant Regional Director.

> To strengthen the submission, include in the appendices:
> - evidence of implementation elsewhere, as well as a brief description of the results in that setting
> - external verification of the implementation of these professional practices on a larger scale (if available).

Key features of the implementation
Throughout the initiative, documentation was developed to support staff to implement the initiative as planned. This documentation was also used to in-service new staff as they joined our team. Examples of documentation are provided in Appendix 5, including a resource list, workshop materials, data wall images, how student progress was shared and teacher reflections.

To implement the **improvement initiative**, the Principal ensured:
- professional development (PD) for lead teachers — a teacher from each year level (Years 1–6) attended a full-day workshop on feedback (prior PD had been provided around the pedagogical framework)
- school-based PD for all staff delivered by an outside expert during twilight sessions in Terms 1 and 2
- timetabling adjustments for a synchronised team meeting each fortnight
- professional conversations around student achievement and implications for future explicit teaching – ongoing as needed

The key elements required for successful implementation of the initiative / professional practice/s to ensure success has been described, with more detail available in the appendices.

Descriptions and documentation to support audiences to implement the initiative or professional practices in their settings is provided and linked to the key strategies.

- utilising staff meetings for cluster moderation meetings once per term
- coaching/feedback for each teacher by a leadership team member
- review of curriculum units to streamline content, pedagogy and assessment.

To implement the team **coaching model**, the Principal ensured:
- funding for professional development to support the leadership team and identified teachers
- coaching conversations occurred between the Principal and staff to developed leadership capabilities
- funding for additional coordination time to support this initiative.

To support **monitoring** of all **students' progress**:
- data walls were established in the school to illustrate the student progress
- explicit sharing of student progress and teacher reflection on effectiveness of strategies was trialled.

Developing relationships to support students was a fundamental part of the approach, and the data walls supported this process.

Investment

The following costs estimate the investment in leadership development and teaching quality for 2016 to achieve the improvements.

Resourcing for fortnightly meetings:
- Use of existing non-contact time 45 mins/fortnight

Output:
- 80 staff engaged in 45 min cycles each fortnight across 40 weeks.

Resourcing for teacher leadership:
- Professional development, feedback and coaching $4000
- Teacher release time $6000.

Output:
- 8 staff trained in feedback and coaching.

Resources to support inquiry model and teaching and feedback:
- Stationery $2000

> Resources and costs are identified and are related to outputs. Normal operating costs are NOT included.

> To strengthen the submission, include:
> - a discussion of the value for money (e.g. cost per output, cost per outcome) and, if possible, compare to similar initiatives/professional practice/s that use the same outcome measures to allow the cost-effectiveness to be understood.

Conclusion

Embodying excellence in leadership, the Principal has not only facilitated the improvement of students' learning outcomes, but she has also inspired a culture of improvement and belief in success for all our students and teachers. She has created challenging roles and opportunities for school leaders and teachers through a targeted use of school resources, supporting effective professional practices and her personal commitment to 'raise the bar' for everyone. Importantly, through all this she has helped us know we are 'doing it right' through evidence-based practices and knowing our students through data and feedback.

References

Abbott-Chapman, J et al 2014, 'The longitudinal association of childhood school engagement with adult educational and occupational achievement: Findings from an Australian national study' in *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(1), pp. 102-120.

Boudett, K P and Steele J L 2007, *Data Wise in Action – Stories of Schools Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning*, Harvard Education Press, Cambridge.

Department of Education and Training 2017, *The Evidence Hub* (online). www.learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/85109497-c7b1-4b39-b56b-610667cf9c47/1/index.html#!/engage-in-inquiry [accessed 3 March 2017].

Fullan, M 2014, *The Principal: Three Keys to Maximizing Impact 1st Edition,* John Wiley & Sons, Inc., San Fransisco.

Teaching and Learning Toolkit - Feedback (online). 2017, Education Endowment Foundation www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback/ [accessed 12 December, 2016].

Timperley, H et al 2007, *Teacher Professional Learning and Development – Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration [BES]* (online). www.educationcounts.edcentre.govt.nz/goto/BES [accessed 11 January, 2015].

Appendices

Appendix 1:   Inquiry Cycle diagram
Tables, graphs etc. that demonstrate the compelling case for the professional practices that were implemented.

Appendix 2:   **Data Plan**

Key strategy	Outcome	Measure	Data Collection Times
Using inquiry cycles to monitor and improve the learning of all students in English and mathematics	• Proportion of students* achieving 'C' or better in English and mathematics at the end of each semester • Proportion of students with learning goals and reporting achievement of their goals	• Level of achievement data (A–E) • Interim levels of achievement through moderated assessment items (Moderation occurred within year level team each term. Cluster moderation was held once per term).	• LOA data monitored each semester, with successes being shared with staff. • Comparison data, historical school aggregate data from 2011 to 2013.
Increasing student engagement through implementing research-based teaching and assessment practices (Hattie; Marzano)	• Proportion of students that receive feedback on learning in class and on assessment tasks each semester • Level of teacher satisfaction about their capacity to moderate and provide quality feedback	• Number of assessment items with written feedback • Student voice – response to question about level of feedback (Hattie) • Staff opinion survey – staff collaboration, feedback and evidence-based practices	• Baseline data collected at the end of Term 4, 2013, of the number of assessment items with written feedback, monitored each term within year level teams • Staff opinion survey – baseline 2013 • Comparison data, historical school aggregate data from previous 3 years
Developing teacher leadership within year level groups (Fullan, 2014)	• Level of staff satisfaction by the end of each year • Number of teachers leading inquiry cycles	• Staff opinion survey – leadership roles	• Qualitative data – analysed leadership / teacher discussions (P - 6)

Note: While the inquiry cycle was used across the school, more detailed data was collected from the Year 6 students and teachers, as they were the first group involved.

Appendix 3:   Data – tables, graphs supporting improvements in English and mathematics and school opinion survey results

Appendix 4:   Description of professional practices at Showcase State School with ARD endorsement

Appendix 5:   Documentation and examples to support implementation

Appendix 6:   Endorsements