

### Background

Year 12 students in approved secondary schools and non-school-based applicants who have previously completed Year 12 or who are at least 18 years of age (through private entry) are given the opportunity to sit for the Queensland Core Skills Test (QCS) Test. The QCS Test is:

- a common statewide test for Queensland Year 12 students
- an achievement test, not an intelligence test nor an aptitude test
- grounded in the Queensland senior curriculum
- accessible to all Year 12 students regardless of individual differences in subject patterns
- a standardised test requiring reading and writing in Australian English.

### The Queensland Core Skills Test

The QCS Test is dual-purpose: it produces a result for each candidate, and it provides information for the calculation of OPs. However, individual results in the test are not used directly in the calculation of a student's OP.

It tests the 49 assessable common elements that are the threads of the Queensland senior curriculum. These elements are called Common Curriculum Elements (CCEs), see [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/testing/cross-curric/cce.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/testing/cross-curric/cce.html). The test consists of four papers – Writing Task (WT), Short Response (SR), and two Multiple Choice (MC) papers. Candidates are expected to respond to a variety of stimulus materials such as prose passages, poetry, graphs, tables, maps, mathematical and scientific data, cartoons and reproductions of works of art.

While the level of sophistication demanded by the test is appropriate to Year 12 students, particular knowledge of specific Year 12 subjects is not tested. However, the test assumes basic levels of general knowledge and vocabulary and a Year 10 knowledge of mathematical operations. The test, being cross-curriculum, provides useful supplementary information to the subject results and is an important component of the Student Education Profile (SEP).

The **WT paper** tests candidates' command of the written English language. It requires the composition of an extended piece (about 600 words) of continuous prose, which allows students to demonstrate their expressive and productive skills. Each WT script is marked in six aspects, with each aspect marked twice. At least three markers assess each script, each in four of the six aspects, and they work independently. The trained and registered markers mark according to predetermined standards developed for a set of criteria. There is a process for monitoring marker consistency.

The **SR paper** requires candidates to respond to a command or to answer a question, e.g. by writing a sentence or paragraph, drawing a diagram or performing a calculation. The responses are marked by trained and registered markers who are given detailed instructions and a specific marking scheme for each test item. Each candidate response is marked at least twice by different markers working independently. A referee marking occurs when markers disagree. There is a process for monitoring marker consistency.

For each item on the **MC papers** there are four options (A, B, C, D). Candidates are asked to select the best option, given the context set by the stimulus material and the conditions specified in the item. The response sheets are marked electronically. Each correct answer scores one mark, each incorrect answer scores zero, each unattempted item scores zero and an item that has more than one response scores zero.

Test items are grouped under different criteria according to how they test a student's ability to:

- comprehend and collect
- structure and sequence
- analyse, assess and conclude
- create and present
- apply techniques and procedures.

# Attendance

Students who are eligible for an Overall Position (OP) or equivalent-OP are required to sit for the QCS Test. Students who are ineligible for an OP or equivalent-OP are not required to sit for the test but may elect to do so.

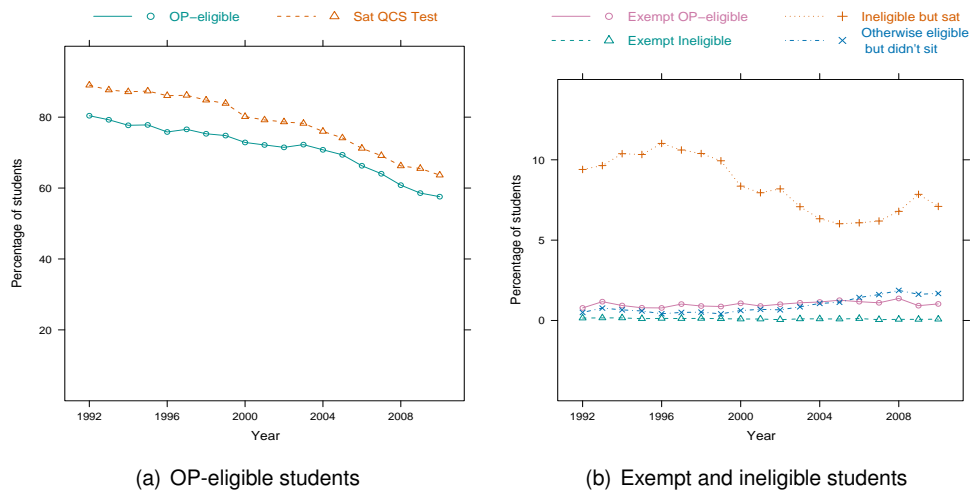
**Table 1: QCS attendance, 2006–2010**

Year	Total Students	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
2010	44652	25704	28420	459	36	3169	744
2009	43196	25306	28302	399	29	3393	699
2008	41152	25030	27262	564	28	2795	768
2007	40886	26185	28267	449	22	2530	654
2006	39579	26233	28179	465	46	2408	566

**Table 2: QCS attendance for visa students<sup>1</sup>, 2006–2010**

Year	Total Students	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
2010	1081	862	892	17	0	47	19
2009	1004	812	845	8	0	41	38
2008	869	679	685	24	1	30	22
2007	713	578	591	16	1	29	29
2006	738	616	639	7	2	30	20

<sup>1</sup> A visa student is a student who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Australia. They may qualify for an equivalent-OP. Visa students are not included unless indicated.



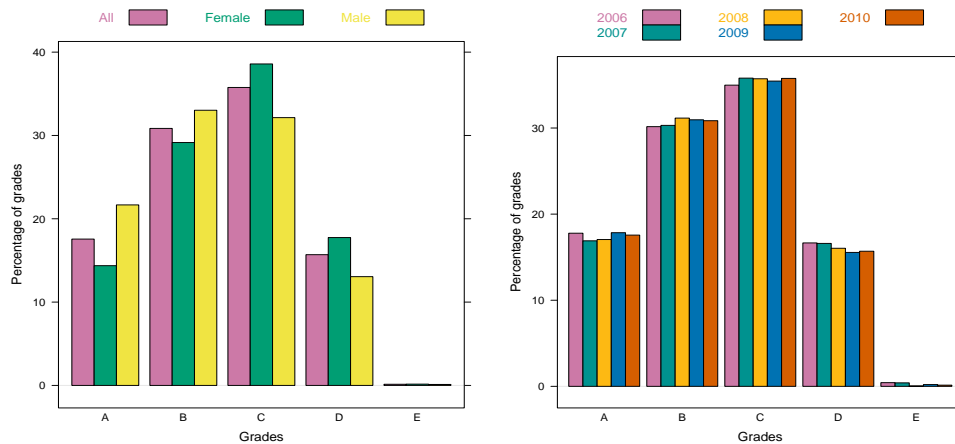
**Figure 1: QCS attendance, 1992–2010**

## Grades awarded

A student's individual QCS result is expressed as a grade from A (highest) to E.

**Table 3: Numbers of students per QCS Grade awarded, by OP-eligibility and gender**

	Gender	A	B	C	D	E	Total	%
OP-eligible	Female	2040	4138	5477	2519	22	14196	56.2
	Male	2395	3651	3553	1443	13	11055	43.8
	All	4435	7789	9030	3962	35	25251	
OP-ineligible	Female	48	143	527	932	51	1701	53.7
	Male	61	168	449	728	62	1468	46.3
	All	109	311	976	1660	113	3169	
Equivalent OP-eligible (Visa students)	Female	15	43	103	228	24	413	48.9
	Male	11	35	97	235	54	432	51.1
	All	26	78	200	463	78	845	
Equivalent OP-ineligible (Visa students)	Female	0	1	4	16	1	22	46.8
	Male	1	1	1	16	6	25	53.2
	All	1	2	5	32	7	47	
All students who sat	Female	2103	4325	6111	3695	98	16332	55.7
	Male	2468	3855	4100	2422	135	12980	44.3
	All	4571	8180	10211	6117	233	29312	



(a) By gender, 2010

(b) By year, 2006–2010

**Figure 2: Distribution of QCS grades**

## Contact us

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