

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.

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

Year	Senior Certificates	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
1996	32176	24395	27692	251	42	3547	136
1995	31687	24657	27684	250	36	3273	186
1994	32944	25597	28711	305	52	3419	217
1993	33979	26924	29789	399	53	3282	263
1992	35085	28202	31232	272	53	3304	175

Table 2: QCS Attendance For Visa Students¹

Year	Senior Certificates	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
1996	587	498	537	2	0	41	10
1995	537	461	487	1	1	27	17
1994	447	388	411	2	0	25	12
1993	458	412	422	3	1	13	8
1992	416	375	390	1	0	16	7

¹A 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: OP-eligibility and QCS Attendance

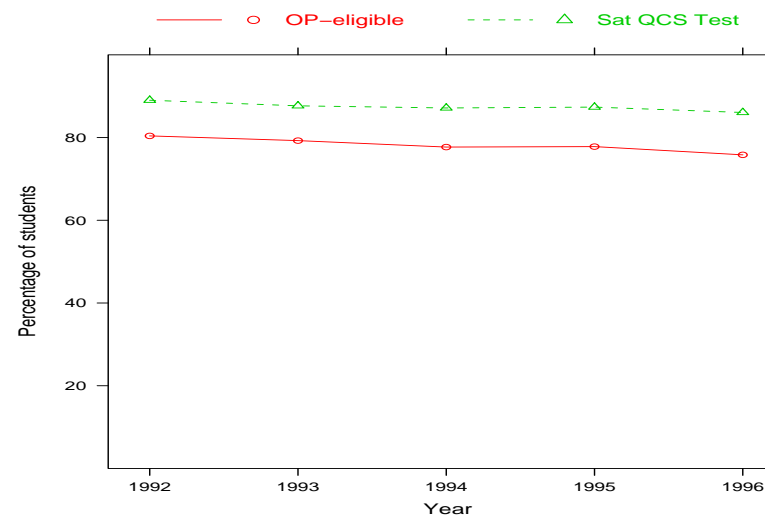
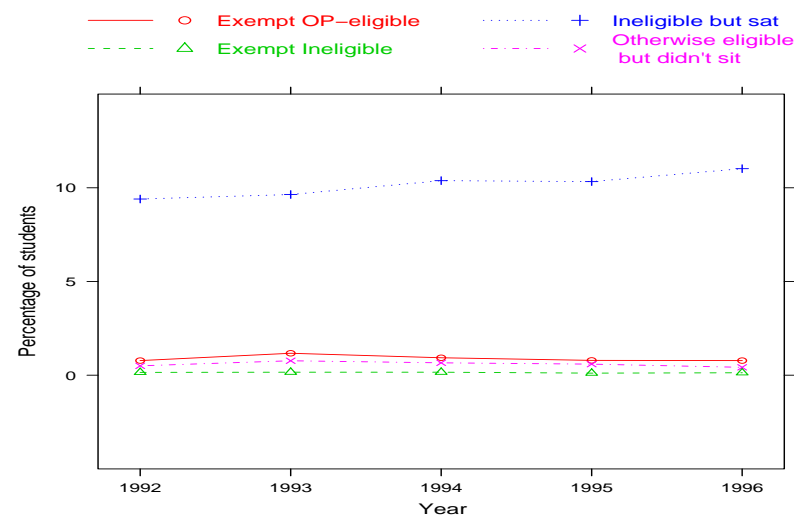


Figure 2: QCS Attendance



1996 QCS Attendance and Grades

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	Per cent
OP-eligible	Female	2151	4500	5185	1337	187	13360	55.3
	Male	1945	3586	3945	1091	216	10784	44.7
	All	4096	8086	9130	2428	403	24144	
OP-ineligible	Female	7	99	660	637	276	1679	47.3
	Male	11	77	641	728	411	1868	52.7
	All	18	176	1301	1365	687	3547	
Equivalent OP-eligible (Visa students)	Female	7	23	81	95	24	230	46.4
	Male	5	23	90	96	52	266	53.6
	All	12	46	171	191	76	496	
Equivalent OP-ineligible (Visa students)	Female	0	0	8	8	6	22	53.7
	Male	0	0	5	5	9	19	46.3
	All	0	0	13	13	15	41	
All students who sat	Female	2165	4622	5934	2077	493	15291	54.2
	Male	1961	3686	4681	1920	688	12937	45.8
	All	4126	8308	10615	3997	1181	28228	

Figure 3: 1996 distribution of QCS Grades by gender

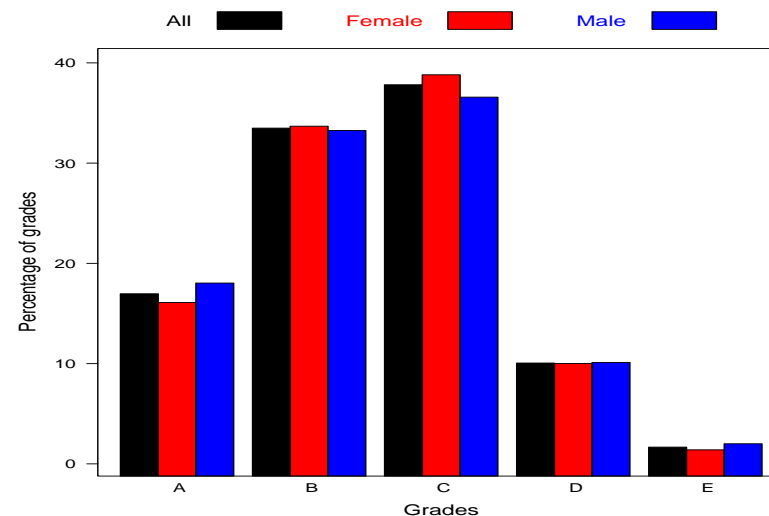
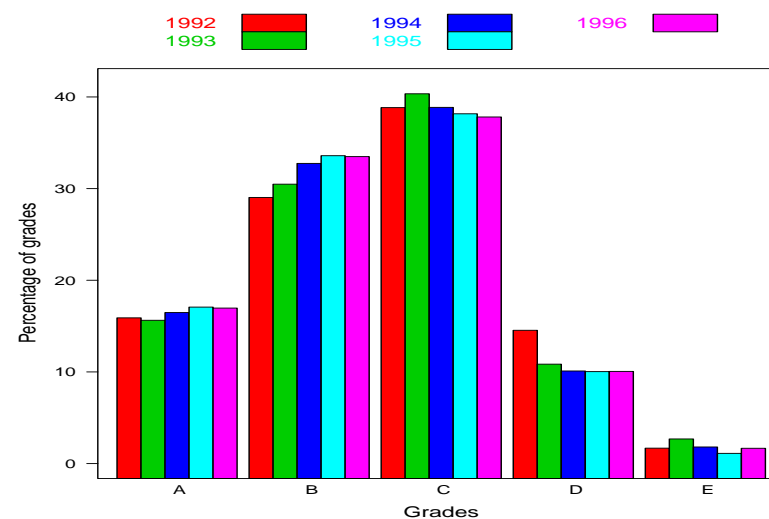


Figure 4: Distribution of QCS Grades by year



The QCS Test

The 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 <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.

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 Writing Task 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 by writing a sentence or paragraph, drawing a diagram, performing a calculation, etc. 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.

Contact Us

For further information about this document contact:

Analysis and Evaluation Unit
Queensland Studies Authority
Phone: (07) 3864 0256
Email: analysis_evaluation@qsa.qld.edu.au