

The QCAR Framework — Information for parents

Queensland students need to have the knowledge, skills and capabilities to contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the community. The QCAR Framework provides school communities with direction and resources to help improve learning.

The Framework:

- defines what is essential for students to be given opportunities to learn
- supports teachers' assessment practices
- provides advice to schools on reporting to parents/carers
- helps parents/carers understand what their child knows and can do.

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) has developed the QCAR Framework in partnership with the State, Catholic and Independent schooling sectors. Schools from all sectors and from across Queensland have worked with the QSA to refine and trial QCAR Framework materials.

The QCAR Framework has five components:

- Essential Learnings
- Standards
- Assessment Bank
- Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs)
- *Guidelines for Reporting.*

Essential Learnings

The Essential Learnings are clear statements of what is important for all students to know, understand and be able to do by the end of Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. They describe the key concepts, facts, procedures and ways of working that students need for ongoing learning, social and personal competence, and participation in a democratic society. The Essential Learnings represent the part of the curriculum that is to be common across all Queensland schools. Parents/carers can be confident that a core curriculum will be offered in all schools. The Essential Learnings are available on the QSA website.

Standards

Standards for the Essential Learnings are the basis for judging how well students have demonstrated what they know, understand and can do. They provide a common language that teachers can use to:

- build a shared understanding of the qualities of student work
- communicate student achievement to students and parents/carers.



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Partnership and innovation

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The Standards are written using a five-point scale and are the same for all key learning areas (KLAs). Over time, parents/carers, students and teachers will become familiar with the Standards. The Standards are available on the QSA website.

Assessment Bank

An online Assessment Bank — available from mid-2008 — will provide teachers across Queensland with access to a range of quality assessments, linked to the Essential Learnings and Standards, for all KLAs. The Assessment Bank will model effective practices and is designed to support teachers with everyday classroom assessment.

The assessments will be accompanied by resources to support teachers in implementing the items and making judgments about student work. Teachers will be able to use the assessments as they appear in the Assessment Bank, or modify them to suit individual contexts. A sample assessment is available for viewing on the QSA website.

QCATs

Once a year, students in Years 4, 6 and 9 will complete Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs) in English, Maths and Science. These are performance-based tasks — not tests — implemented and marked by the classroom teacher. Parents/carers will receive a report from participating schools on their child's achievement and will be able to see how their child has performed on a task that other students in the year level have also completed. Schools will be able to use the results of these tasks to guide future planning and teaching. The QCATs are designed to help teachers and schools work towards consistency of teacher judgments.

Two types of QCATs are in development:

- centrally-devised — developed by the QSA
- school-designed — developed by schools and endorsed by the QSA.

In 2008 all schools will be invited to join a trial of centrally-devised assessment tasks before implementation in 2009. A small number of schools will work on refining school-designed assessment tasks.

Sample QCAT packages are available for viewing on the QSA website.

Guidelines for Reporting

Guidelines for Reporting will be published in 2008. The *Guidelines* will provide advice to schools and school sectors on twice-yearly reporting and on reporting the results of individual student achievement on the QCATs to parents/carers.

The QSA has consulted widely to find out what parents/carers consider to be best practice in reporting. The information gathered will inform the advice provided, to develop greater consistency in reporting practices across schools.