



Section 5 Workshop 9
Handout 1

Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs) Frequently Asked Questions

How long will QCATs take to complete?

Each QCAT takes about 90 minutes for students to complete. To maximise flexibility, teachers have eight school weeks to implement them.

Will QCATs be used to gather data about teachers? Will they be linked to pay?

QCATs are not tests. They don't require strictly controlled conditions. They don't have to be implemented at the same time across Queensland. Teachers' salaries cannot be linked to QCATs.

If QCATs are not tests, will the results be meaningless?

QCATs provide information to teachers and students about what is working well and what needs attention. It is not recommended that teachers "teach to them". They are not about assessing what students have just learned. They provide information about how well students can apply what they know, understand and can do in different contexts.

Will QCATs be an "add on" (another thing to do)?

QCATs can be included as part of a school's assessment plan. The selected *Essential Learnings* will stay the same for two years to support this. The QCATs will change each year so teachers won't feel obliged to "teach to" the tasks. QCATs provide teachers, students and parents with worthwhile information to inform future teaching and learning programs.

Will QCATs be appropriate for my students?

QCATs are based on a small selection of *Essential Learnings*. The current KLA syllabuses have been the primary information source for the *Essential Learnings*. This means that the QCATs are based on existing expectations around student learning. QCATs are trialled in a number of classrooms before being finalised, and are developed to be age appropriate.

I know my students, so why would I want to do the extra work involved with QCATs?

KLA syllabuses don't include advice about standards. This means that judgments we make about student work are inconsistent across schools throughout Queensland. The best way for teachers to make more consistent judgments is to discuss and critique actual student work together. We have processes in Queensland for building consistent judgments through the Year 2 Diagnostic Net and in Years 11 and 12. QCATs provide the processes and resources for teachers to achieve this consistency in Years 4, 6 and 9.

Will the results of students in the QCATs be used to compare schools?

The information collected from the QCATs can't be used to compare schools. The information belongs to schools to provide feedback about consistency of teacher judgments, as well as what is working well and what needs improvement. The information is useful to provide feedback to students as well as parents.

The QSA will write a report for teachers providing information on the QCATs, how effective they have been, and what we can learn from them.