

## 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	Total Students	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
2008	41151	25028	27267	564	28	2797	768
2007	40886	26185	28267	449	22	2530	654
2006	39579	26233	28183	465	46	2408	566
2005	38953	27027	28886	490	37	2344	441
2004	38471	27235	29233	442	39	2436	406

Table 2: QCS Attendance For Visa Students<sup>1</sup>

Year	Total Students	OP-eligible	Sat QCS	QCS Exempt		OP-ineligible who sat	Otherwise eligible but did not sit
				Eligible	Ineligible		
2008	869	679	685	24	1	30	22
2007	713	578	591	16	1	29	29
2006	738	616	639	7	2	30	20
2005	759	618	667	10	2	59	21
2004	778	677	709	9	0	41	8

<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: OP-eligibility and QCS Attendance

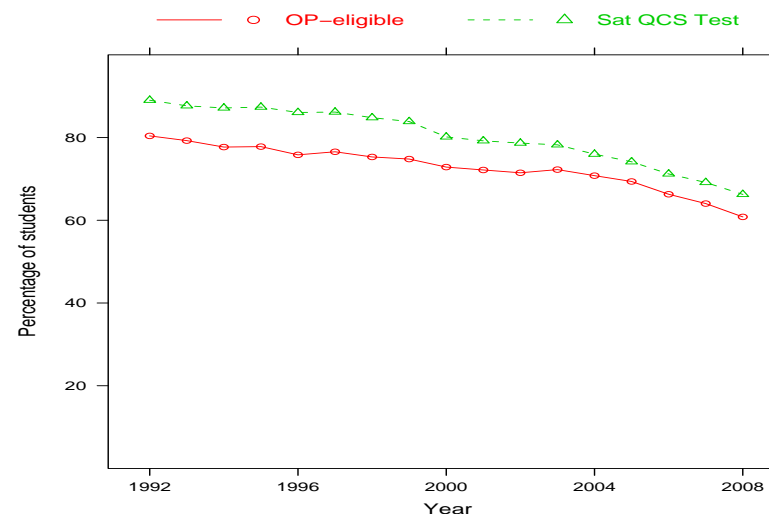
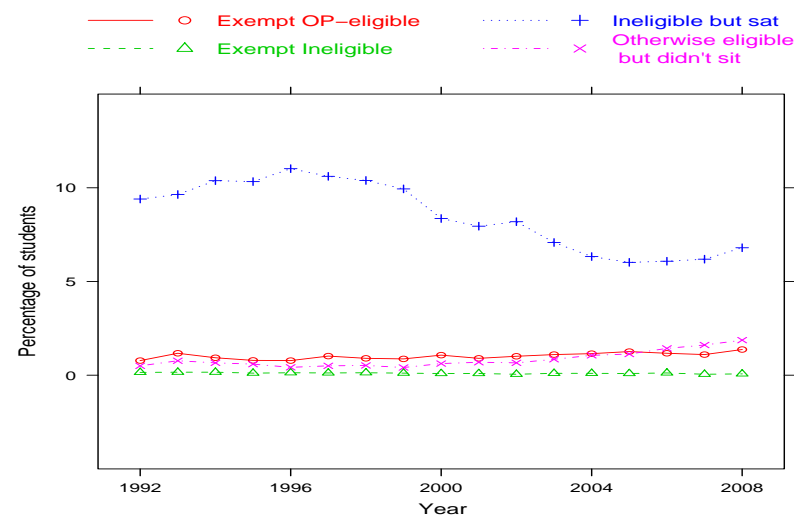


Figure 2: QCS Attendance



## 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	2108	4135	5183	2521	2	13949	57
	Male	2063	3487	3555	1401	10	10516	43
	All	4171	7622	8738	3922	12	24465	
OP-ineligible	Female	12	98	515	909	36	1570	56.1
	Male	11	91	410	656	59	1227	43.9
	All	23	189	925	1565	95	2797	
Equivalent OP-eligible (Visa students)	Female	10	36	86	195	16	343	52.4
	Male	11	24	73	182	22	312	47.6
	All	21	60	159	377	38	655	
Equivalent OP-ineligible (Visa students)	Female	0	0	1	9	2	12	40
	Male	0	3	1	11	3	18	60
	All	0	3	2	20	5	30	
All students who sat	Female	2130	4269	5785	3634	56	15874	56.8
	Male	2085	3605	4039	2250	94	12073	43.2
	All	4215	7874	9824	5884	150	27947	

Figure 3: 2008 distribution of QCS Grades by gender

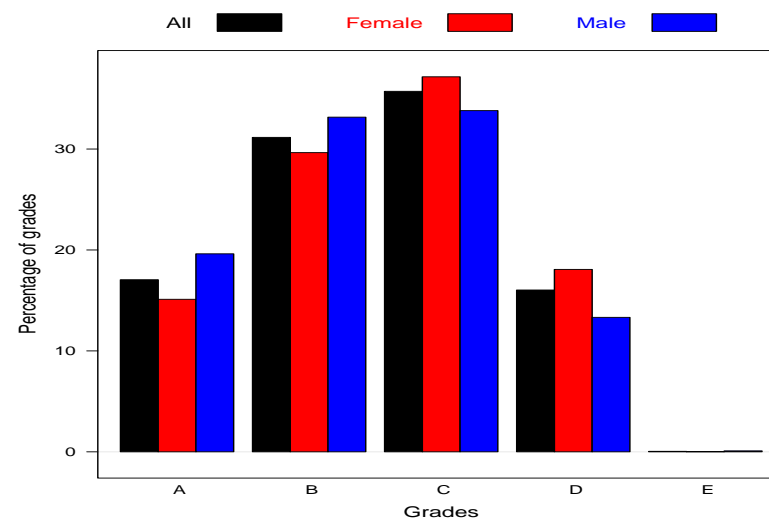
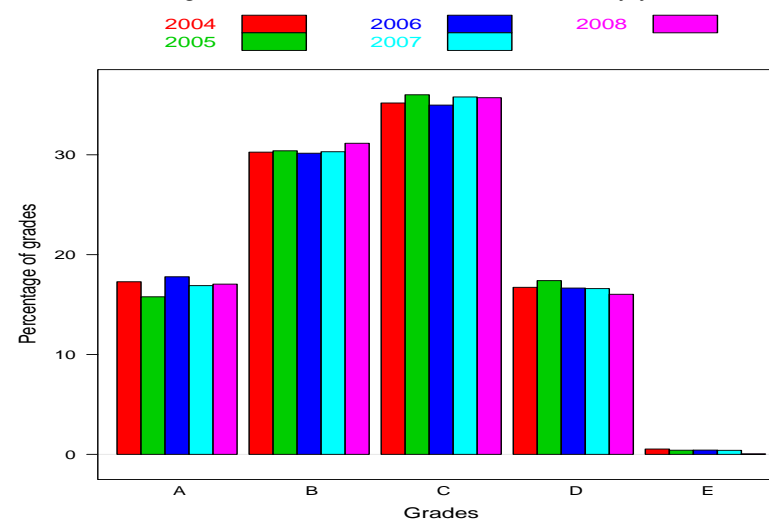


Figure 4: Distribution of QCS Grades by year



## 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](mailto:analysis_evaluation@qsa.qld.edu.au)