

Consistency of Teacher Judgment



QUEENSLAND
SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
COUNCIL

Acknowledgments

The following officers participated in this research project: Judy Gardiner (data collection), Chris Tom (research design, project management, report writing), Kerry Wilson (research design, project management, data collection and analysis, report writing).

The following officers participated in the Consistency Meetings and their contribution to the project is appreciated: Ingrid Clarke (BCEC), Marisa Dann (BCEC), Judy Gardiner (QCEC), Louise Haines (BCEC), Barbara Kroll (BCEC), Harry Newman (BCEC), Sue Robertson (QSCC), Jenene Rosser (AISQ), Maggie Spenceley (QSCC), Madonna Stinson (QSCC).

The cooperation of the following teachers who participated in the research project is appreciated:

Karen Douglas	All Saints School
Kathy Neuendorf	All Saints School
Jill Walkenhorst	Bethania Lutheran Primary School
Ralph Zapart	Bethania Lutheran Primary School
Raelee Lewis	Cannon Hill Anglican College
Sharon Volp	Cannon Hill Anglican College
Darren Iselin	Christian Outreach College
Melinda Pratt	Christian Outreach College
Carolyn Smyth	Mt Alvernia College
Kirsten Wardrop	Mt Alvernia College
Bernie Woulfe	Our Lady of the Rosary School
Michael Poncini	Our Lady of the Rosary School
Adam Richardson	Prince of Peace Lutheran Primary School
Jason Zweck	Prince of Peace Lutheran Primary School
Chuck Forzatti	Siena Catholic College
John Pedrazzini	Siena Catholic College
Chris Hannigan	St Edward the Confessor Primary School
Kellie Brown	St Edward the Confessor Primary School
Jodie Trounce	St John Fisher College
Liesl Profke	St John Fisher College
Matt Smallbone	St Peter's Lutheran College
Russel Hansen	St Peter's Lutheran College
Russell Haug	St Peter's Lutheran College

ISBN 0 7345 2143 x
Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council
Level 27 MLC Centre
239 George Street
Brisbane Q 4000

PO Box 317
Brisbane Albert Street Q 4002

Inquiries:

Reception: (07) 32370794

Fax: (07) 32371285

Email: inquiries@qscq.edu.au

RR 00001

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Purposes of the Consistency of Teacher Judgment Research Project	1
1.2	Background to the project	1
1.3	Research focus	2
1.4	Research approach	3
2.	USEFUL CONSISTENCY STRATEGIES	5
2.1	Planning collaboratively	7
2.2	Using a common assessment task	8
2.3	Developing a common criteria sheet	10
2.4	Comparing samples of student work (moderation)	11
2.5	Sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the outcomes	14
2.6	Sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes	15
2.7	Sharing understandings about assessment	16
2.8	Reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment	17
2.9	Assessing collaboratively	18
3.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	18
3.1	Summary (S)	18
3.2	Conclusions (C)	20
Appendix 1	Teacher handout: Developing consistency of teacher judgment	22
Appendix 2	A three phase model for developing consistency	23
Appendix 3	Cluster groups	24
Appendix 4	Teacher handout: Planning and assessing using the Council's Syllabuses	25
Appendix 5	Teacher handout: Approaches to consistency of teacher judgment	27
Appendix 6	Teacher handout: Consistency strategies identified on the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM	28

List of displays

Display 1	Data collection processes	4
Display 2	Useful consistency strategies	5
Display 3	Rating of confidence in usefulness of consistency strategies	6

Executive summary

The purpose of the Consistency of Teacher Judgment Research Project was to identify and describe strategies that support consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools in order to inform the ongoing development of Queensland School Curriculum Council curriculum materials.

The research project focused on investigating the suggested approaches to developing consistency of teacher judgment listed in the Council's syllabuses (approaches to developing consistency) to identify and describe specific strategies that teachers find useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes (consistency strategies).

Twenty-two teachers implemented consistency strategies while planning, assessing and reporting on a unit addressing core learning outcomes from the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education or Science syllabuses.

Based on the information gained from this research project, the following conclusions were drawn:

- 1 Teachers were able to identify and describe a range of consistency strategies that they found useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes within or among schools.

These consistency strategies were:

- planning collaboratively;
- using a common assessment task;
- developing a common criteria sheet;
- comparing samples of student work (moderation);
- sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the core learning outcomes;
- sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes;
- sharing understandings about assessment;
- reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment; and
- assessing collaboratively.

It is recommended that these consistency strategies are:

- included in the Council's curriculum materials when providing advice to schools about developing consistency of teacher judgment;
- trialled in a broad range of school settings as part of the Council's trial/pilot processes; and
- further explored and tested in any future collaborative interstate activities.

- 2 While it is evident that teachers can devise and implement useful consistency strategies related to the approaches listed in the Council's syllabuses, a refinement of the wording of these approaches is suggested in order to make each approach more discrete and more specific. For example, the existing approaches could be described as *ways to develop consistency of teacher judgment* and could be identified as:

- planning collaboratively;
- using a common assessment task;
- developing a common criteria sheet;

- comparing samples of student work (moderation);
 - sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes and their developmental sequence; and
 - sharing understandings about assessment.
- 3 Given that no information emerged from this research project about useful consistency strategies related to *descriptions of ideal responses*, further investigation of this approach in the Queensland context is recommended if it is to continue to be included as a suggested approach in the Council's curriculum materials.
 - 4 In light of the fact that teachers identified *reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment* as a useful consistency strategy, consideration could be given to further investigating the usefulness of the action research model used in this research project for developing consistency of teacher judgment, as 'reflection' is one of the key phases of this model. The inclusion of such a model in the Council's curriculum materials is worthy of consideration.
 - 5 The Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM being developed by DETE in South Australia could be a useful resource for teachers using the Council's curriculum materials as teachers in this research project confirmed the usefulness of the consistency strategies that are described on the CD-ROM.
 - 6 The detailed information provided by teachers about the consistency strategies they found useful, how they implemented these strategies and why they believed these strategies were useful should be used to further the advice to schools currently included in the Council's curriculum materials about ways to promote consistency of teacher judgment about core learning outcomes.

In particular consideration could be given to using this information to:

- expand the descriptions of the suggested approaches to consistency currently being used in the Council's curriculum materials to include more detailed information about what teachers can do to promote consistency and why these actions promote consistency;
- explicitly identify some of the steps teachers followed when implementing useful consistency strategies (e.g. teachers collaboratively identifying what students need to know and do for the core learning outcome(s), using the elaborations to inform the development of criteria) in the recommended processes for planning and assessing currently outlined in the Council's curriculum materials; and
- provide a detailed explanation in the Council's curriculum materials of the steps involved in implementing specific consistency strategies.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purposes of the Consistency of Teacher Judgment Research Project

The overall purposes of the Consistency of Teacher Judgment Research Project were to:

- identify and describe strategies that support consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools; and
- to inform the ongoing development of Queensland School Curriculum Council curriculum materials.

1.2 Background to the project

In 1999, the Queensland School Curriculum Council's Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus and the Years 1 to 10 Science Syllabus were released to schooling authorities in Queensland for implementation in 1999. These documents were the first of the Council's syllabuses to be released, with syllabuses for other key learning areas currently in development.

The Council's syllabuses provide teachers with a common outcomes framework for planning and assessment. For each key learning area, core learning outcomes are identified which describe those learnings considered essential for all students. Within this outcomes framework, teachers are required to make judgments about students' demonstrations of core learning outcomes. The syllabuses acknowledge that 'the exercise of each teacher's professional judgment is fundamental to assessment and reporting processes'.

A key issue linked to the role of teacher judgment is consistency. Teachers and the broader educational community need to be confident that a teacher's judgments about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes are consistent with the judgments of other teachers in a school, and teachers in other schools. Therefore, there is a need to identify and describe structures that support the development of consistency of teacher judgment.

The Council's syllabuses identify that materials and processes to support the consistency of teachers' judgments within and among schools can be developed through:

- shared understandings;
- descriptions of ideal responses;
- criteria sheets;
- common planning and assessment tasks;
- examination of student folios;
- progress maps;
- moderation processes (informal and formal).

Little detailed information has emerged from the trialling of Council curriculum documents with respect to materials and processes that teachers find useful in supporting the consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes.

Information about consistency of teacher judgment has emerged from the following three projects involving the Council:

- the 1997 *Trial of the Queensland Levels of Student Performance*;
- the 1998 *Consistency Project*, a component of the *Reporting Outcomes and Teacher Judgment Project*, funded by the Commonwealth Department for Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA); and
- the 1999 *Quality Outcomes Programme: Consistency in Assessment* project also funded by DETYA. The key focus of this project has been the development by the South Australia Department of Education Training and Employment (DETE) of a CD-ROM about consistency of teacher judgment. The content of the CD-ROM focuses on

outlining strategies to promote consistency of teacher judgment that have been identified as useful by teachers in South Australia, Queensland and Victoria.

The Council's Consistency of Teacher Judgment Research Project aimed to build on the knowledge gained from involvement in these projects and focused attention on consistency strategies that teachers find useful when using the Council's syllabuses.

1.3 Research focus

The research project focused on identifying and describing specific strategies that teachers find useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes (consistency strategies). In particular, the research project focused on investigating the suggested approaches to developing consistency of teacher judgment listed in the Council's syllabuses (approaches to developing consistency) to inform the ongoing development of Council curriculum materials.

The project addressed the following research questions:

1. With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, which strategies do teachers find useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
2. What other strategies could support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
3. How do teachers implement strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?

For the purpose of the research project the following terms were defined:

- **Consistency of teacher judgment** relies on a common understanding of the core learning outcomes and what student demonstration of the outcomes looks like and means that a teacher's judgments about student demonstration of core learning outcomes are consistent:
 - as they make judgments within their own classes;
 - with the judgments of other teachers within their own school; and
 - with the judgments of teachers from other schools.
- A **consistency strategy** is an activity that promotes consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes.
- Consistency of teacher judgment **within schools** means a teacher's judgments about student demonstration of core learning outcomes are consistent with the judgments of other teachers at the same school.
- Consistency of teacher judgment **among schools** means a teacher's judgments about student demonstration of core learning outcomes are consistent with the judgments of other teachers from different schools in a cluster group.
- The suggestions identified in the Council's syllabuses relating to the development of consistency of teacher judgment (i.e. shared understandings; descriptions of ideal responses; criteria sheets; common planning and assessment tasks; examination of student folios; progress maps; moderation processes) are referred to as **approaches** to developing consistency.

1.4 Research approach

Design

The research project was descriptive in nature and involved collecting, analysing and reporting descriptive data to address the three research questions. The research design focused on obtaining descriptive information from a small group of teachers about the consistency strategies that they found useful in their settings.

Teachers used an action research model (see Appendix 1) which involved 'thinking, doing and reflecting phases' to develop strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment*. Descriptive data were collected from the teachers during the 'doing and reflecting phases' of this process through self-report and observation.

Teachers implemented consistency strategies while planning, assessing and reporting on a unit addressing core learning outcomes from the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education or Science syllabuses. It is acknowledged that a limitation of the research design was that teachers were required to make judgments about students' demonstrations of core learning outcomes based on the evidence collected from one unit and within a limited timeframe.

Participants

Eleven schools participated in the research project. The schools were nominated by the Catholic and Independent school authorities and were grouped into a primary school cluster and a secondary school cluster (see Appendix 3, Table 1). Two teachers participated from each of the eleven schools. The extent to which the participants were familiar with the Council's Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education and Science syllabuses and curriculum materials varied. Primary classroom, primary physical education and secondary home economics, physical education and science teachers were involved.

The twenty-two teachers formed five focus cluster groups (three primary and two secondary), each involving teachers from two or more schools. Teachers in each of the five focus cluster groups addressed the same core learning outcome(s) in their units (see Appendix 3, Table 2). This provided opportunity for all the teachers in a focus group to make judgments about the same core learning outcome(s) and facilitated discussion about consistency of teacher judgment among schools.

While each teacher in each focus cluster group addressed the same core learning outcome(s) in their units, they planned, taught and assessed their units independently. Therefore, teachers from different schools addressed the outcome(s) in different contexts (e.g. teachers in one school addressed a core learning outcome using cooperative games and a teacher in another school in the cluster addressed the same outcome through a unit focusing on racism).

As a result of the focus group organisation, the two teachers in seven of the eleven participating schools addressed the same core learning outcome(s) in their units. The two teachers in these seven schools implemented strategies that promoted consistency as they made judgments about the same core learning outcome(s). Teachers in the other four schools implemented strategies that promoted consistency as they made judgments about different core learning outcomes.

Procedures

The research project was conducted from July to November 1999. The first primary and secondary school cluster group meetings were each held for one day in late August.

At these meetings:

- teachers were provided with professional development related to planning and assessing using the Council's syllabuses and curriculum materials (see Appendix 4), the approaches to consistency of teacher judgment outlined in the Council's syllabuses (see Appendix 5), and the draft materials for the DETYA funded CD-ROM about consistency of teacher judgment (see Appendix 6);
- the two teachers from each school planned the consistency strategies that they would implement to promote consistency of teacher judgment **within** their school (school consistency strategies); and
- the teachers formed focus cluster groups and planned the consistency strategies that they would implement to promote consistency of teacher judgment **among** the schools in their focus cluster group (cluster consistency strategies).

Teachers then implemented consistency strategies while teaching a unit over the first six weeks of Term 4. Schools were provided with teacher replacement costs to provide teachers with one half day for planning and one half day to conduct a school consistency meeting.







The primary and secondary school cluster groups each met again in November 1999. At these meetings:



- focus cluster groups were given the morning session to conduct a focus cluster group consistency meeting;
- teachers from each school presented a school report in which they described the consistency strategies that they had used to promote consistency between the two teachers at their school and reflected on the usefulness of these strategies; and
- teachers participated in a focus cluster group workshop in which they described the consistency strategies that they had implemented to promote consistency among the schools in their cluster and reflected on the usefulness of these strategies.

Data collection and analysis

Display 1 outlines the data collection processes used to address the three research questions.

Display 1 Data collection processes

Research questions	Data sources: school groups and focus cluster groups
1. With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, which strategies do teachers find useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?	 of school report proformas and focus cluster group workshop proformas  of school report presentations and focus cluster group workshops
2. What other strategies could support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?	 of school report proformas and focus cluster group workshop proformas  of school report presentations and focus cluster group workshops
3. How do teachers implement strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?	 of school report proformas and focus cluster group workshop proformas  of school and focus cluster group consistency meetings, school report presentations and focus cluster group workshops

Key:  = Observation (look and listen)  = Document analysis

Descriptions of how each school group (i.e. the two teachers at each school) and each focus cluster group implemented their consistency strategies were analysed and categorised. The consistency strategies that were identified as useful were then sorted according to the approaches in the Council's syllabuses (see Appendix 5). It is acknowledged that the categorisation and sorting of the consistency strategies were to some extent arbitrary as neither the descriptions of the strategies nor the descriptions of the approaches was discrete.

Further analysis of data focused on identifying patterns in the steps teachers in each school and focus cluster group followed when implementing the consistency strategies and identifying common themes related to the reasons why teachers believed the strategies were useful or not.

2. Useful consistency strategies

This section of the report presents the findings of the research project and addresses all three research questions:

1. With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, which strategies do teachers find useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
2. What other strategies could support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
3. How do teachers implement strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?

The consistency strategies that teachers implemented and believed were useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment within or among schools are identified in Display 2.

Display 2 Useful consistency strategies

Approach as listed in Council syllabuses	Consistency strategies identified as useful
1. common planning and assessment tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning collaboratively • using a common assessment task
2. criteria sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a common criteria sheet
3. descriptions of ideal responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>no consistency strategies used that related to this approach</i>
4. examining student folios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparing samples of student work - student folios (moderation)
5. moderation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparing samples of student work - student responses to selected assessment activities (moderation)
6. progress maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the core learning outcomes
7. sharing understandings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes • sharing understandings about assessment
8. other approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment • assessing collaboratively

The following can be seen in Display 2:

- With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses teachers found a range of consistency strategies useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment within or among schools.

- Teachers also found two other consistency strategies useful that did not relate to the approaches in the syllabuses. These were:
 - reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment; and
 - assessing collaboratively.
- Teachers did not use any consistency strategies that related to the approach identified as *describing ideal responses*. (The research questions for this project did not include a focus on why teachers chose particular consistency strategies to implement. Therefore no information was obtained as to why teachers did not choose to implement strategies related to *describing ideal responses*.)

Teachers in most schools and focus cluster groups identified that they had used a combination of three or more consistency strategies. There was little difference between the consistency strategies that teachers in primary and secondary schools found useful.

After implementing their consistency strategy or combination of strategies, the teachers were asked how confident they were that:

- the use of consistency strategies can promote consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes **within** schools; and
- the use of consistency strategies can promote consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes **among** schools.

Display 3 summarises the teachers' responses.

Display 3 Rating of confidence in usefulness of consistency strategies

Response category	Confidence in usefulness of strategies within schools		Confidence in usefulness of strategies among schools	
	Number of schools	Number of teachers	Number of cluster groups	Number of teachers
Very confident	8	16	3	14
Somewhat confident	3	6	1	4
Not confident	0	0	0	0
Not sure or not able to answer	0	0	1	4
Total	11	22	5	22

As can be seen in Display 3 teachers in most schools and cluster groups were very confident that the use of consistency strategies can promote consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes both within and among schools.

In the remainder of this section of the report, each of the consistency strategies identified in Display 2 is addressed in terms of:

- a **description** of the consistency strategy;
- an outline of the **steps involved** when teachers in schools and cluster groups implemented the consistency strategy;
- a summary of the reasons why teachers in schools and cluster groups believed that the consistency strategy **was useful**;
- a summary of the reasons why, if any, teachers in schools or cluster groups believed the consistency strategy **was not useful**; and
- **comments** about the consistency strategy.

The consistency strategies are addressed in the order that they are presented in Display 2 and the sequence of their presentation is not based on any hierarchy of 'usefulness'.

Some teacher comments included in this section have been edited slightly to promote readability.

2.1 Planning collaboratively

Description of the consistency strategy

Planning collaboratively was identified by teachers as useful for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within schools. The strategy was not used by any cluster group.

Planning collaboratively involved teachers working together to plan units that addressed core learning outcomes. The context of planning collaboratively varied in different school settings and involved two or more teachers either:

- planning and teaching the same activities to address the same core learning outcome(s);
- planning different activities in different contexts to address the same core learning outcome(s) (e.g. addressing the same core learning outcome from the Science and Society strand of the Science syllabus in combination with other core learning outcomes from different strands); or
- planning activities in different subject areas to address the same core learning outcome(s) (e.g. Health and Physical Education and Home Economics).

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Planning collaboratively involved teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- deciding on the context of the unit;
- identifying appropriate core learning outcomes to be addressed in the unit;
- using the elaborations in the Sourcebook Guidelines to clarify the requirements of the core learning outcomes;
- selecting appropriate learning activities for the unit using Sourcebook Guideline modules, school resources or appropriate texts;
- sequencing the learning activities using a common framework (e.g. inquiry approach);
- using a common planning proforma to write and structure the unit;
- identifying activities that would provide opportunities for teachers to collect evidence about student demonstration of the core learning outcomes (i.e. assessment activities);
- teaching the planned activities to students in different classes; and
- participating in ongoing dialogue with other teachers as the unit is being taught.

Why the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers indicated that they believed planning collaboratively was useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment within their schools because the strategy:

- promoted shared understandings about the meaning of the core learning outcomes and how they might be demonstrated;
- promoted shared understandings about how the learning/assessment activities related to the core learning outcomes; and
- facilitated comparability of teacher judgment about student demonstration of the core learning outcomes.

Teachers' comments about planning collaboratively included the following:

- '(collaborative planning gave us a) common purpose and common understanding of what the outcomes meant and how they could be achieved';

- 'using collaborative planning has assisted us to arrive at shared understandings of ways to design learning experiences/assessment that occur simultaneously and assist in making judgments about student performances';
- 'using a common planning proforma helped keep us honest with the outcome'; and
- 'using a common planning proforma has assisted us to arrive at shared understandings of ways to design learning experiences/assessment that are developed from the outcome'.

Why the consistency strategy was not useful

All of the schools that used planning collaboratively as a consistency strategy believed that it was a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within schools.

Comments

Teachers in the 1998 Consistency Project also found collaborative planning a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment and hence *collaborative planning of outcome-based units of work* is one of the consistency strategies identified in the draft materials for the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM.

The perceived usefulness of this strategy in promoting consistency by teachers from different subject areas addressing the same core learning outcome(s) is worthy of note, as several of the Council's key learning area syllabuses include content from more than one subject area.

2.2 Using a common assessment task

Description of the consistency strategy

Using a common assessment task was identified as a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within schools.

Using a common assessment task involved teachers collaboratively planning an assessment task (i.e. a task designed to provide opportunity for teachers to observe and collect information about student demonstration of outcomes) and then each teacher using the same assessment task and using the same criteria to make judgments about student responses to the task.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Teachers described using a common assessment task as involving teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- sharing understandings about the core learning outcome(s) to be addressed (see 2.7);
- collaboratively identifying or designing an assessment task that will provide opportunity for students to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s);
- discussing what student response to the task will look like if students demonstrate the core learning outcome(s) at particular levels;
- identifying the criteria* that will be used when judging student responses to the task;
- teachers using the same assessment task and criteria in each of their classes; and
- comparing student responses to the tasks and discussing the consistency of judgments teachers have made about these responses.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

The teachers indicated that they believed using a common assessment task promoted consistency of teacher judgment because:

- all students were provided with the same opportunity to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s);
- all teachers and students had a common understanding of the requirements of the assessment task and the criteria to be used when judging student responses; and
- teachers could compare the judgments they had made about student responses to the same task.

Teachers from one school indicated that consistency of teacher judgment was promoted 'because students participated in similar learning/assessment activities, teachers and students developed (the same) 'criteria for success', similar assessment instruments were used, and data was gathered in a similar way'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

One cluster group used this strategy to promote consistency among the schools in their cluster and did not believe that the strategy was useful. All of the teachers in this cluster group addressed the same core learning outcome in their units but used different contexts (e.g. one teacher's unit focused on cooperative games and another teacher's unit focused on racism). At the initial cluster group meeting (i.e. prior to implementing the units) the teachers attempted to design an assessment task to be used by all the teachers in the cluster.

During the implementation of their units none of the teachers implemented the common assessment task that they had developed because they believed that:

- there was not enough time at the first cluster meeting for teachers from different schools to adequately plan the details of the assessment task;
- the assessment task did not adequately 'match' the learning activities in any of their units; and
- one assessment task only provided limited evidence of student demonstration of the core learning outcome.

On reflection, this cluster group decided a more useful strategy would be to identify common criteria on which to base their judgments about student demonstration of the outcome. Each teacher could then apply these criteria to a range of assessment activities that were relevant to the context of their units.

Teachers in the cluster group made the following comments when asked what they would do differently in the future:

- 'as a cluster group design assessment criteria, not a task, for each of the outcomes'; and
- 'a better way to approach this would be to make observations across time using common criteria or indicators, therefore getting a true picture of what the child is capable of achieving'.

Comments

The language used by teachers when describing this strategy varied. Some teachers referred to collaboratively planning 'assessment tasks' and others used the term 'assessment activities' or 'assessment profiles'. It appeared that teachers attributed the same meaning to the different terms i.e. an activity that allowed teachers to observe and obtain information about student demonstration of outcomes.

It is also interesting to note that teachers from the cluster that did not find this strategy useful identified that in the future they would attempt to develop a common criteria sheet as described in 2.3.

Teachers in the 1998 Consistency Project however, also found this strategy useful for promoting consistency of teacher judgment and hence *using a common assessment task* is one of the consistency strategies to be identified in the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM.

2.3 Developing a common criteria sheet

Description of the consistency strategy

Developing a common criteria sheet was identified as a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within and among schools.

Developing a common criteria sheet involved two or more teachers collaboratively identifying the criteria to be used when making judgments about student demonstration of the core learning outcome(s) and then each teacher using these criteria as the basis of their judgments within their classes.

The level of specificity of the criteria that teachers developed varied. In some schools and clusters, the criteria developed identified the essential indicators to be used when judging whether students had demonstrated the core learning outcome(s). These criteria were not related to a particular context and were described by teachers as being 'broad' or 'generic'. Teachers used these generic criteria when making judgments about student responses to different assessment activities and to assessment activities in different contexts.

In other schools and clusters, teachers developed criteria that identified the essential indicators to be used when judging students' responses to a particular assessment task. These criteria were described by teachers as being 'specific' and were identified in terms of the context of the particular assessment task.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Developing a common criteria sheet was described as involving teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- describing what the core learning outcome(s) requires the students **to know** and **be able to do** to inform the development of the criteria;
- using the elaborations in the Sourcebook Guidelines to inform the development of the criteria;
- collaboratively identifying the criteria;
- recording the criteria on a criteria sheet;
- sharing understandings with other teachers and students about how the criteria will be used (e.g. must all or some of the criteria be met?) and
- all teachers using the same criteria as the basis for their judgments.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers found this consistency strategy useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment because the basis of their judgments was explicit and the same.

Teachers from one school commented that developing a common criteria sheet promoted consistency of teacher judgment because 'with (common) criteria sheets we both knew what we were looking for.... it was a quick reference for us to see at a glance'.

Teachers at another school indicated that they believed an appropriately designed criteria sheet that was developed collaboratively by teachers is fundamental to consistency.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

Teachers from one school and cluster indicated that they did not believe developing common criteria was useful as a consistency strategy if the criteria were generic. These teachers believed that for the strategy to be useful the criteria needed to be specific to the assessment task and not generic. They commented that 'it is our experience that being specific and prescriptive (when developing criteria) promotes consistency of teacher judgment'.

Teachers in other schools and clusters, however, indicated that they believed common 'generic' criteria were useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment as teachers had a common understanding of what they were looking for with respect to student demonstration of an outcome and teachers could use these criteria regardless of the context of the unit. One teacher commented it 'shouldn't matter what the context of the unit is, your criteria should be generic'.

Comments

It was evident that teachers believed that having a common understanding of the criteria that were being used as the basis for judgments promoted consistency. However, there were varying opinions as to the desired level of specificity of the criteria. Further investigation of this strategy with a focus on obtaining detailed information about what teachers believe common criteria might look like would be worthy of consideration.

2.4 Comparing samples of student work (moderation)

Description of the consistency strategy

Comparing samples of student work was identified as a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within and among schools.

This consistency strategy involved teachers meeting to compare samples of student work and to discuss and compare the judgments they had made about student demonstration of core learning outcomes.

The student work that was compared was either:

- samples of students' folios that included a range of student work that teachers had used to make judgments about student demonstration of outcomes; or
- samples of students' responses to selected assessment activities.

The process focused on comparing and discussing student work to reach shared understandings about how and why teachers had made judgments that students had demonstrated the core learning outcome(s) at a particular level. Based on these shared understandings, teachers' judgments were either confirmed or modified.

Teachers in some schools or clusters referred to this consistency strategy as **moderation**. Other teachers indicated that they did not wish to use the term moderation because of the association of the term with the formal moderation processes used in Years 11 and 12 in secondary schools. Teachers in one school described this consistency strategy as 'post-assessment dialogue' in an attempt to highlight the sharing of understandings involved in the process.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Prior to meeting to compare samples of student work, teachers identified:

- the type of student work that would be compared (e.g. student responses to selected assessment activities, complete student folios, student folios including representative student work); and
- the sample that would be brought to the meeting (e.g. all student work from a particular class, a set number of examples where the students had demonstrated core learning outcomes at particular levels, any student work where the teacher was uncertain of their judgments).

The process of comparing samples of student work involved teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- each teacher explaining the context of the student work (e.g. the context of the unit; how the students were provided with a range of opportunities to show what they know and can do; what a particular assessment task involved and the criteria used for judging student responses);
- each teacher showing the samples of student work and explaining why certain judgments had been made (e.g. why the teacher believes that the student folio provides evidence that a student has demonstrated the core learning outcome(s) at a particular level, why the teacher believes that the student response to a particular assessment activity has met the required criteria for a particular level);
- teachers comparing and discussing the judgments that have been made about each sample of student work (e.g. Does a student folio contain adequate evidence? Does a particular assessment task relate to the core learning outcomes and provide opportunity for students to show what they know and can do? Does the student response meet the identified criteria for a particular level?);
- teachers discussing and reaching consensus about student work that was difficult to judge;
- teachers confirming or modifying their judgments; and
- teachers discussing consistency of judgment within the group.

The process used by teachers in schools and clusters when comparing samples of student work was similar. However, at the **school level**, teachers compared larger samples of student work and explicitly worked towards reaching consensus about whether particular students had demonstrated the core learning outcome(s) at particular levels. At the **cluster level**, the teachers focused on discussing a smaller sample of student work to reach shared understandings about the judgments that had been made about student demonstration of outcomes.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers indicated that comparing samples of student work was useful because this strategy:

- revealed whether teachers had shared understandings about the core learning outcomes and what was required for students to be judged as demonstrating the outcomes;
- revealed whether teachers' judgments about student demonstration of core learning outcomes were consistent;
- promoted a shared understanding about the range of evidence that is required for a student to be judged as having demonstrated the outcome(s);
- promoted a shared understanding about the range of contexts in which a student should be required to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s); and
- provided opportunity for teachers to reach agreement about whether a particular student has demonstrated a core learning outcome at a particular level.

Teachers commented that comparing samples of student work:

- 'proved that understandings of the outcomes, the criteria used for judgments and the assessment instruments were consistent, accurate, valid and reliable';
- 'validated that we had a common understanding of how the criteria had been met';
- 'revealed that teacher judgment was consistent about whether the students had achieved the outcome or were still working towards the outcome';
- 'reinforced that we had similar expectations and understandings of levels';
- 'revealed information about teachers' judgments of student demonstration of core learning outcomes';
- 'ensured that we had understood the outcome and the criteria we had developed andenabled us to have consistency across the three senior classes (Yrs 6/7)';
- 'produced concrete evidence of a student's demonstration of a particular outcome';
- 'promoted consistency of teacher judgment (as it) provided comprehensive information that can be objectively viewed by others'; and
- 'made us look more closely and agree (about our judgments)'.

Where teachers from different subject areas had compared samples of student work, teachers believed that the strategy:

- 'promoted understanding of the requirements of the outcome in different contexts and in different subjects within the key learning area'; and
- 'affirmed that teachers could see how the assessment tasks linked to the outcome and could see similarities in the criteria for success even though the contexts of the units were completely different'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

Two teachers in one school believed that meeting and comparing samples of student work was not useful as they were each teaching classes in different bands of schooling. However, these teachers indicated they found the strategy useful when they compared student work with teachers from other classes in the same year level.

Comments

It was evident that teachers valued this consistency strategy because of the opportunity it provided to share understandings about valid assessment in an outcomes framework and compare the resulting judgments teachers had made about student demonstration of outcomes. The process of comparing student work did not appear to be viewed as a process of justification or accountability.

Any moderation of teachers' judgments was primarily voluntary and appeared to be in response to the development of shared understandings. The process did not involve any culminating determination that, as a result of group consensus, teachers should change the judgments they had made about the level at which students had demonstrated the core learning outcome(s).

Moderation of student work samples was identified as a useful consistency strategy by teachers in previous projects and will be included on the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM. The description of *moderation of student work samples* identified on the draft CD-ROM materials is similar to the description of comparing samples of student work (moderation) provided by teachers in this research project.

2.5 Sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the outcomes

Description of the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the outcomes was identified as a useful consistency strategy within schools. This strategy was not used by any cluster group.

The strategy was very similar to sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes (see 2.7). However, when sharing understandings about the developmental sequence teachers focused on developing shared understandings about a particular sequence of the core learning outcomes across all the levels or through a broad range of levels, rather than focusing on one or two levels.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the outcomes involved teachers:

- identifying a sequence of core learning outcomes;
- discussing the meaning of the core learning outcomes in this sequence at a range of levels;
- distinguishing the differences between the core learning outcomes identified at these levels.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers indicated that they believed this strategy was useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment because they developed shared understandings about what students needed to know and be able to do as they progressed through a sequence of core learning outcomes.

Two teachers in one school were teaching classes from different bands of schooling and found this strategy useful as they could see how they were both working towards the same goal. The two teachers were addressing the same core learning outcome sequence from the Earth and Beyond strand of the Years 1 to 10 Science Syllabus. However, they were addressing the core learning outcome at different levels and also using different contexts for their units. The two teachers found that discussing with each other the developmental sequence of the outcomes promoted a common understanding of what the students in each other's classrooms were required to know and do.

Teachers' comments that reflected the belief that this strategy was useful included:

- 'we were certain about what kids could *know and show* at level 4.3 and what they would need to *know and show* at 5.3'; and
- 'this strategy enabled us to view the outcomes selected for the purpose of this exercise as part of a whole picture rather than an entity in itself. It clearly showed us where we were coming from and where we were headed'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

No school or cluster used this consistency strategy and indicated it was not useful.

Comments

Although this consistency strategy was very similar to sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes it was categorised as a unique strategy to highlight the value of the process in developing shared understandings among teachers in different year levels. The strategy was also categorised separately as it related to the suggested approach in

the Council's syllabuses that materials and processes to support consistency of teacher judgment could be developed from 'progress maps'.

2.6 Sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes

Description of the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about core learning outcomes was identified as a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within and among schools.

Sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes involved teachers meeting to discuss the meaning of the core learning outcomes and what student demonstration of these outcomes might look like.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes involved teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- identifying the core learning outcome that will be the focus of discussion;
- discussing the meaning of the core learning outcome at a particular level and the meaning of the core learning outcomes from the level above and below;
- identifying the key words in the core learning outcomes at each level;
- using the elaborations and modules from the Sourcebook Guidelines to assist in understanding the meaning of the outcomes at each level;
- identifying what students need to know and to be able to do to demonstrate the core learning outcomes at each level;
- discussing the key differences between what students need to know and to be able to do at each level;
- considering what demonstration of the core learning outcome(s) might look like in specific contexts; and
- participating in ongoing and continuous discussion with other teachers to clarify understandings about the core learning outcomes.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers indicated that sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes was useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment within and among schools because the strategy ensures that teacher judgments are based on:

- a common understanding of the meaning of the outcomes;
- a common understanding of what student demonstration of the outcomes looks like in a variety of contexts; and
- common expectations about what are required by the outcomes at each level and the differences between the outcomes at each level.

Teachers commented that sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes:

- 'provided opportunity for consensus about what the outcome means and how it would be demonstrated';
- 'helped us to be consistent in our judgment because we were starting from a common understanding';
- 'allowed us to provide professional support to each other in reaching understandings about the intent of the outcome even though we were addressing different core learning outcomes in our units'; and
- 'gave us an understanding of what each outcome was and a shared understanding of what would be expected at those levels'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

All the schools and clusters using this consistency strategy indicated it was useful.

Comments

Elaboration of outcome statements will be identified as a consistency strategy on the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM. The steps identified in the draft materials for the CD-ROM for *elaborating outcome statements* are similar to the steps described by teachers sharing understandings about core learning outcomes in this research project.

2.7 Sharing understandings about assessment

Description of the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about assessment was identified as a useful strategy for promoting consistency within and among schools.

Within schools, teachers shared understandings about assessment when planning their units and after the implementation of their units. Among schools, teachers shared understandings about assessment after the implementation of their units.

Sharing understandings about assessment involved sharing understandings about:

- the process of assessment; and
- specific assessment activities and the criteria used when making judgments about student responses to these activities.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

Sharing understandings about the process of assessment involved teachers in some or all of the following steps:

- discussing how much evidence is required for a student to be judged as having demonstrated the core learning outcome(s);
- sharing understandings about how many opportunities students should be given to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s);
- sharing understandings about what is acceptable evidence of student demonstration of the core learning outcome(s) (e.g. video recordings and photographs, teacher anecdotal records); and
- discussing whether it is acceptable for students to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s) in a particular way (e.g. oral and not written performance).

Sharing understandings about specific assessment activities involved:

- describing the assessment activity and the context of the activity;
- discussing how an assessment activity provided opportunity for students to demonstrate the core learning outcome(s) or aspects of the core learning outcome(s);
- explaining the criteria used to judge student responses to the assessment activity; and
- discussing how criteria were used to judge student responses to an assessment activity (e.g. how many of the criteria must be met).

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers believed that sharing understandings about assessment was useful because the strategy promotes:

- consistency in assessment processes used by different teachers;
- a common understanding about how assessment activities relate to the outcomes; and

- a common understanding about how much evidence is needed for a student to be judged as having demonstrated a core learning outcome.

Teachers commented that sharing understandings about assessment:

- 'assisted us in having consistent teaching and assessment across three different classes';
- 'in some instances forced us to rethink, redesign or discard some (assessment) tasks';
- 'increased confidence in teacher judgment being consistent'; and
- 'revealed that providing the criteria were appropriate we could be confident that teacher judgment was consistent'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

No school or cluster used this consistency strategy and identified that it was not useful.

Comments

The reasons teachers believed this strategy was useful were similar to the reasons they believed *comparing samples of student work (moderation)* was useful. Teachers perceived that both strategies provided opportunities to share understandings about what was valid assessment in an outcomes framework and how judgments were made about student demonstration of outcomes. However, when teachers were *sharing understandings about assessment* teacher discussion focused on how they had assessed and how they had made their judgments without explicit comparison of student work.

2.8 Reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment

Description of the consistency strategy

Reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment was identified as useful in promoting consistency within and among schools.

This consistency strategy involved teachers in reflecting on the consistency of the judgments they had made about student demonstration of core learning outcomes within their own classes. It also involved teachers in reflecting on whether their judgments were consistent with other teachers.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

No specific steps were identified in the description of this strategy.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers at one school commented that 'this process enabled us to clarify and articulate our internal consistency strategies. It ensured consistency within our own classes'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

No school or cluster indicated that this strategy was not useful.

Comments

Throughout the research project, teachers used an action research process that involved 'thinking, doing and reflecting phases' (see Appendix 1) to develop consistency of teacher judgment. The identification of *reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment* as a specific consistency strategy would appear to support the usefulness of the action research process in developing consistency of teacher judgment.

2.9 Assessing collaboratively

Description of the consistency strategy

Assessing collaboratively was described as a useful strategy for promoting consistency of teacher judgment within schools.

This strategy involved one or more teachers meeting together to collaboratively assess or 'mark' student work. Teachers believed that this process promoted consistency because teachers shared the responsibility for making judgments.

Steps involved in implementing the consistency strategy

No specific steps were identified in the description of this strategy.

Reasons the consistency strategy was useful

Teachers' comments that supported this process included:

- 'we were able to agree with each other about students' demonstrations of outcomes, therefore our judgments were consistent'; and
- 'students were not disadvantaged by the bias of a teacher....fairness was guaranteed'.

Reasons, if any, the consistency strategy was not useful

No school or cluster found that this consistency strategy was not useful.

Comments

This strategy could have been viewed as an extension of *planning collaboratively*. However, not all the teachers that planned collaboratively believed that *assessing collaboratively* was useful or necessary, so the strategy was categorised separately. Indeed, in some cases teachers believed that if planning of learning and assessment activities was done collaboratively then there was no need for teachers to assess collaboratively to ensure consistency.

3. Summary and conclusions

This section provides a succinct summary (S) of the findings of the research project and draws appropriate conclusions (C) with respect to the research questions.

3.1 Summary (S)

1. With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, which strategies do teachers find useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
2. What other strategies could support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?

- S1 With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses and other approaches, teachers implemented the following consistency strategies and found them useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes within or among schools:
- planning collaboratively;
 - using a common assessment task;
 - developing a common criteria sheet;
 - comparing samples of student work (moderation);
 - sharing understandings about the developmental sequence of the core learning outcomes;
 - sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes;

- sharing understandings about assessment;
 - reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment; and
 - assessing collaboratively.
- S2 With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, teachers did not investigate the usefulness of any specific consistency strategies that related to the approach described in the syllabus as *descriptions of ideal responses*.
- S3 There was little difference between the consistency strategies that teachers from primary and secondary schools and clusters found useful.
- S4 After implementing their school and cluster consistency strategies, teachers in most schools and clusters were very confident that the use of consistency strategies can promote consistency of teacher judgment within and among schools.
- S5 Teachers were able to describe the consistency strategies they used and identify why they believed that the strategies were useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment.
- S6 Four of the consistency strategies that teachers in this research project described as being useful were also identified as useful by teachers in previous Consistency Projects and are therefore described on the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM being developed by the South Australia Department of Education Training and Employment (DETE) for the Commonwealth Department for Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA).
These consistency strategies are:
- planning collaboratively (described as *collaborative planning of outcomes based units of work* on the CD-ROM);
 - using a common assessment task (called a *common assessment task* on the CD-ROM);
 - comparing samples of student work – moderation (called *moderation of student work samples* on the CD-ROM); and
 - sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes and the developmental sequence of the core learning outcomes (called *elaboration of outcome statements* on the CD-ROM).

<p>3. How do teachers implement strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?</p>

- S7 Teachers in most schools and clusters implemented a combination of three or more consistency strategies. The steps that teachers followed when implementing different consistency strategies were sometimes similar, highlighting the inter-related nature of the consistency strategies.
- S8 Teachers devised and followed identifiable steps when implementing the consistency strategies they found useful. (These steps are described in detail in Section 2 of this report.)
- S9 Teachers in primary and secondary schools and clusters implemented the consistency strategies in similar ways.

3.2 Conclusions (C)

Based on the information gained from this research project, the following conclusions may be drawn with respect to the research questions.

1. With respect to the approaches identified in the Council's syllabuses, which strategies do teachers find useful in supporting consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?
2. What other strategies could support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?

- C1 Teachers were able to identify and describe a range of consistency strategies that they found useful in promoting consistency of teacher judgment about student demonstration of core learning outcomes (see S1). It is recommended that these consistency strategies are:
- included in the Council's curriculum materials when providing advice to schools about developing consistency of teacher judgment;
 - trialled in a broad range of school settings as part of the Council's trial/pilot processes; and
 - further explored and tested in any future collaborative interstate activities.
- C2 While it is evident that teachers can devise and implement useful consistency strategies related to the approaches listed in the Council's syllabuses, a refinement of the wording of these approaches is suggested in order to make each approach more discrete and more specific. For example, the existing approaches could be described as *ways to develop consistency of teacher judgment* and could be identified as:
- planning collaboratively;
 - using a common assessment task;
 - developing a common criteria sheet;
 - comparing samples of student work (moderation);
 - sharing understandings about the core learning outcomes and their developmental sequence; and
 - sharing understandings about assessment.
- C3 Given that no information emerged from this research project about useful consistency strategies related to *descriptions of ideal responses*, further investigation of this approach in the Queensland context is recommended if it is to continue to be included as a suggested approach in the Council's curriculum materials.
- C4 In light of the fact that teachers identified *reflecting on consistency of teacher judgment* as a useful consistency strategy, consideration could be given to further investigating the usefulness of the action research model used in this research project for developing consistency of teacher judgment, as 'reflection' is one of the key phases of this model. The inclusion of such a model in the Council's curriculum materials is worthy of consideration.
- C5 The Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM being developed by DETE in South Australia could be a useful resource for teachers using the Council's curriculum materials as teachers in this research project confirmed the usefulness of the consistency strategies that are described on the CD-ROM.

3. How do teachers implement strategies to support consistency of teacher judgment about the demonstration of core learning outcomes within and among schools?

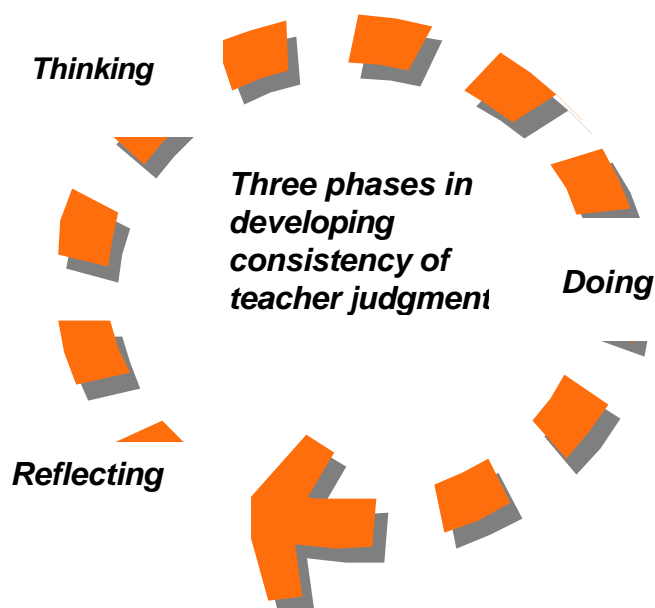
C5 The detailed information provided by teachers about the consistency strategies they found useful, how they implemented these strategies and why they believed these strategies were useful should be used to further the advice to schools currently included in the Council's curriculum materials about ways to promote consistency of teacher judgment about core learning outcomes.

In particular, consideration could be given to using this information to:

- expand the descriptions of the suggested approaches to consistency currently being used in the Council's curriculum materials to include more detailed information about what teachers can do to promote consistency and why these actions promote consistency;
- explicitly identify some of the steps teachers followed when implementing useful consistency strategies (e.g. teachers collaboratively identifying what students need to know and do for the core learning outcome(s), using the elaborations to inform the development of criteria) in the recommended processes for planning and assessing currently outlined in the Council's curriculum materials; and
- provide a detailed explanation in the Council's curriculum materials of the steps involved in implementing specific consistency strategies.

How can we develop consistency of teacher judgment?

The model below has been adapted from the draft materials for the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM being developed by the South Australia Department of Education, Training and Employment for the *Quality Outcomes Programme: Consistency in Assessment* project being funded by the Commonwealth Department for Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA). The model outlines one approach to developing consistency of teacher judgment.

**Thinking**

Why do I need to be consistent?
 What are the needs and complexities of my students?
 Is my school/setting 'data rich'?
 Are staff confident about the level of consistency?
 What impact does the level of confidence have?
 What do we already do at my school (or among like schools) to be consistent?
 What information is available about consistency strategies?

Doing (Planning and Acting)

Consider the timeline, levels of involvement, learning areas, strand/s, goals etc.
 Identify, select and implement a strategy (or strategies) that will enhance the consistency of teacher judgment.
 Choose a strategy (or strategies) that best suits needs 'at this time'.

Reflecting

What did the strategy indicate about the levels of consistency of teacher judgment?
 How does it inform your next strategy?

The Three-Phase Model: Phases in developing support for consistency of teacher judgment

Teachers are in the best position to observe and judge student achievement and growth in a range of contexts over time. Student progress can be described and mapped over time using a developmental assessment framework such as the profiles. The data derived from teacher judgment can be used to inform curriculum development.

For the data to be derived from teacher judgement to be reliable, there needs to be consistency between teachers. For teacher judgment to be consistent and reliable, three things are needed: a shared framework for describing student learning outcomes, a shared understanding of what those learning outcomes mean and a shared understanding of what student performance looks like at each level. The diagram below outlines an action research approach for the development of strategies to enhance consistency.

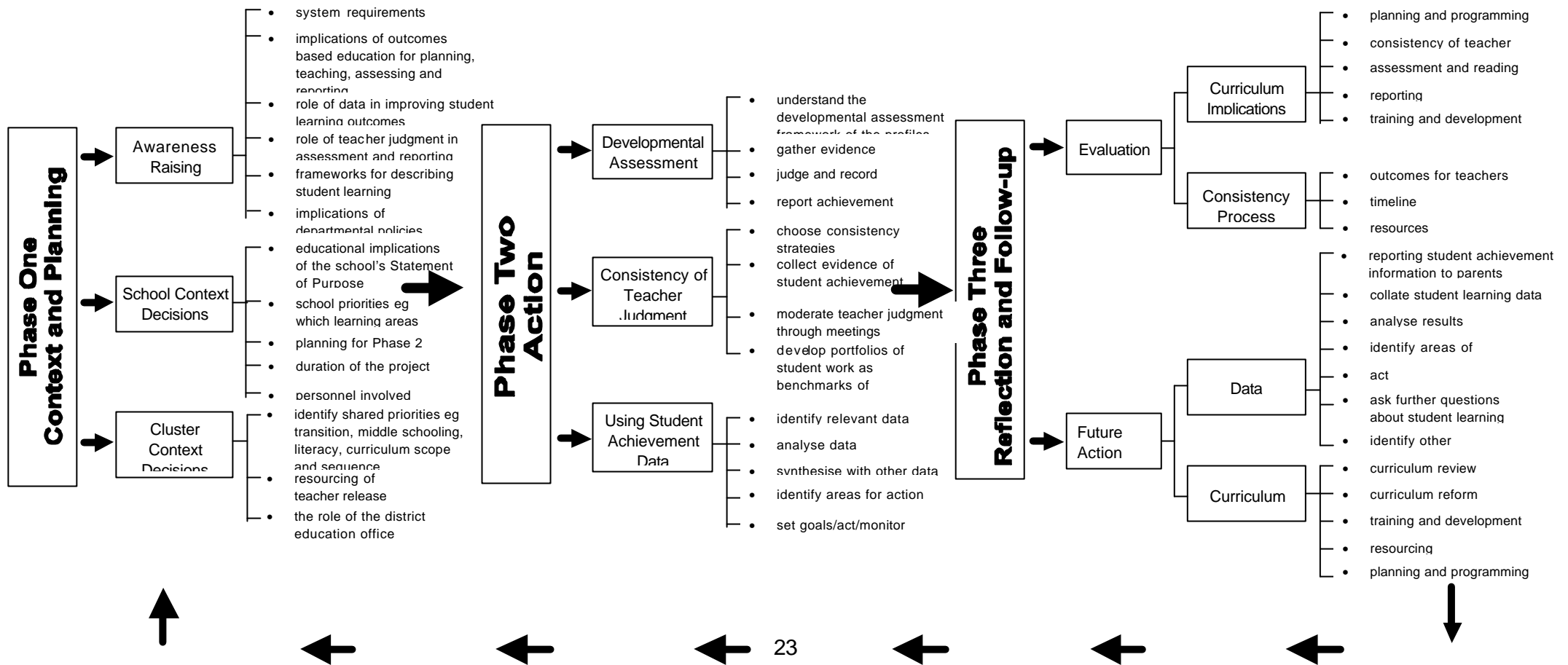


Table 1
Primary and secondary cluster groups

School authority	Primary Cluster	Secondary Cluster	Total
Catholic	3	3	6
Independent	3	2	5
Total	6	5	11

Table 2
Focus cluster groups

Cluster group name	Number of schools	Number of teachers	Focus core learning outcomes
Lower Primary Science	4	4	Science, Earth and Beyond, 1.1-2.1
Upper Primary Science	4	4	Science, Science and Society, 3.2-5.2
Upper Primary HPE	3	4	HPE, Enhancing Personal Development, 2.4-4.4
Secondary Science	3	6	Science, Science and Society, 3.2-6.2
Secondary HPE	2	4	HPE, Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities, 5.3

How might I approach planning learning, assessment and reporting when using the Council's syllabuses?

Planning activities & units	Process
Select the focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider prior learning of the students. • Identify the learning outcome(s) to be the focus of activities. • Identify core learning outcomes from the same strand, other strands or other key learning areas that could complement the learning associated with the focus core learning outcome(s).
Develop an over-view of the unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the outcomes at the levels above and below the focus outcomes to be cognisant of the developmental sequence. • Analyse the outcomes to identify what students are expected to know and be able to do. • Use elements from the syllabus (including the core content) and sourcebook guidelines (elaborations) to support understanding of the outcomes.
Select and sequence activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the specific needs of the students in the class for which the activities (or unit) are planned (special needs, target groups, previous experiences and prior learnings). • Consider the available school and local resources. • Use the analysis of the outcomes to guide the selection of activities. This analysis will provide the basis for the development of criteria to be used when making judgments about students' demonstrations of outcomes. • Identify core content which is relevant to the core learning outcome(s) and which could provide contexts for activities which meet the needs, interests and abilities of the students. • Develop activities or use the sourcebook modules from the relevant key learning areas and other resources to identify activities which provide learning opportunities through which students develop an understanding of the knowledge, practices and dispositions described in the core learning outcomes. • Identify teaching strategies for activities. • Sequence activities according to a preferred teaching approach, for example 5Es instructional model; Interactive approach; Orientating , Enhancing, Synthesising. <p><i>(The activities may relate to one key learning area only or may be related to a number of key learning areas. Sourcebook modules could be used as a source of suitable materials and to suggest a possible organisation of activities.)</i></p>
Identify opportunities for demonstration of outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities within the activities where students can demonstrate outcomes. • Develop criteria which identify essential components to be used when judging students' performances, responses or products.
Gather and record evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the principles and purposes of assessment to guide the selection of the range of techniques and instruments to be used. • Select techniques and instruments for collection of evidence which may be used later to make judgments about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - students' demonstrations of outcomes; - student needs in terms of different or additional learning opportunities. • Decide on the most appropriate way of recording evidence.
Make judgments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider strategies to be used for making judgments about students' demonstrations of outcomes to ensure consistency of teacher judgment.

Appendix 4 (cont) Teacher handout: Planning and assessing using the Council's syllabuses

How might I select techniques and instruments for gathering evidence?

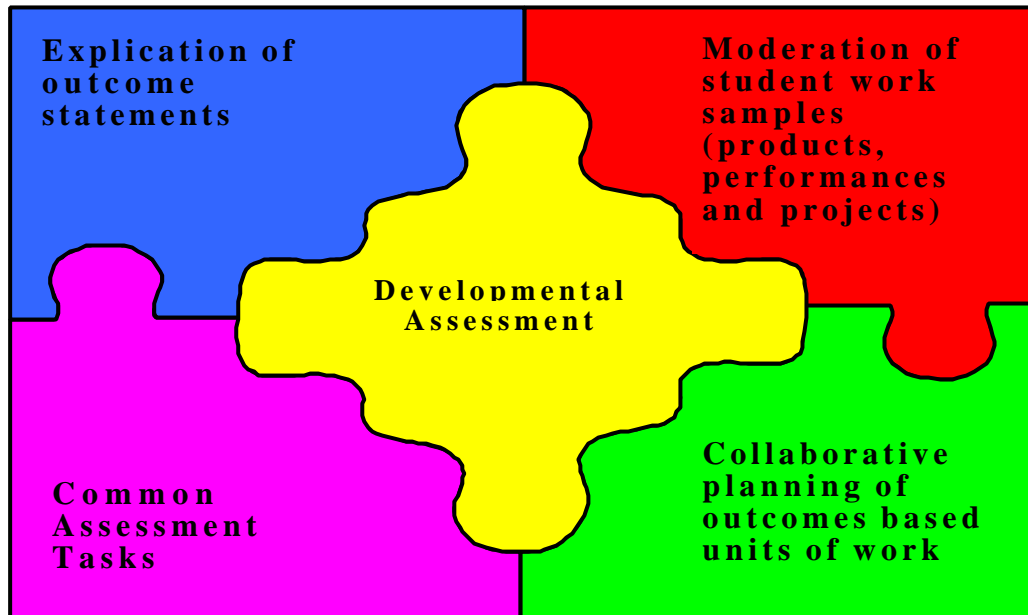
	Context	Evidence gathered	Instruments
Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Learning) Work in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practices and dispositions when working cooperatively; concentrating and following through on a task; communication skills; manipulative skill development; use or application of techniques related to a performance; strengths and areas where further assistance is required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal records Audio/visual tapes Checklists Criteria sheets Reflective diary Running records Photographs
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal questioning and discussion with students. Involvement with student discussion groups. Interviews about instances or events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dispositions and depth of understanding. degree to which students transfer learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal records Checklists Criteria sheets Conference log Student/teacher discussion Questioning
Focused analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class presentations/ performances with varying amounts of teacher input and using class and/or home time. Projects or exercises completed using home and/or class time. Supervised tests with no teacher input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> degree of understanding; skills in analysis, synthesis and evaluation; application of knowledge; processing and presentation of information; communication skills; location, selection and use of information; use of terminology; use of problem-solving strategies; use of decision-making strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on: research projects, investigations, fieldwork Practical tests: constructed models, games, skill drills, peer tutoring, role-plays, group performances, creation of movement sequences Concept maps Annotated drawings Written tests: multiple choice, extended response Oral tasks: group discussion, talk, debate, role-play, interview, persuasive speech Written tasks: instructions/plans, description, information report, newspaper report, notemaking, analytical exposition, explanation, hortatory expositions, review, scientific report, creative writing, completed worksheets, planning and report sheets Posters, brochures Think books/journals
Peer-and-self assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students reflect on their own learning identifying what they understand and areas with which they have concerns. Students critique the work of their peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use or application of techniques or processes strengths and areas of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checklists Criteria sheets Reflection sheets Scrapbooks, diaries or journals Photographic records, video or audiotapes

What information about consistency strategies is contained in the Council's curriculum materials?

The curriculum materials identify that materials and processes to support the consistency of teachers' judgments within and among schools can be developed through the approaches identified below.

Consistency of teacher judgment	
Common planning and assessment tasks	Where two or more teachers plan activities together, they can reach a common understanding of learning outcomes. Where different groups of students undertake the same activities, discussion about consistency of judgment is facilitated.
Criteria sheets	Criteria sheets contain the essential components, attributes or specifications, rules or principles used to judge student performances, responses or products. Careful defining of criteria facilitates comparability of judgments about students' demonstration of learning outcomes.
Descriptions of ideal responses	Descriptions of ideal responses provide specific references for teachers to use in determining whether an outcome has been demonstrated. They promote a common understanding of the demonstration(s) of the learning outcome(s).
Examination of students' folios	A folio used in the context of achieving consistency of teacher judgment contains selected items only. It is a show folio containing valid and reliable instruments (as described on page 9) with any criteria used to make judgments clearly stated. Where necessary the amount of assistance provided to students will be noted.
Moderation processes (formal and informal)	Formal moderation processes occur when school authorities require teachers from within or across schools to compare student work and to discuss the consistency of judgments about demonstrations of learning outcomes. Informal moderation occurs any time teachers share their understandings of judgments of student demonstrations of learning outcomes.
Progress maps	These provide frameworks for monitoring student progress against described developmental continua. The concept of a progress map underlies the sequencing of the core learning outcomes in each of the strands of a syllabus. A student's progress in relation to the development of understandings of a key learning area is plotted against the six levels used to describe the core learning outcomes.
Shared understandings	Where possible, teachers should collaborate with others to develop a shared understanding of the learning outcomes, and what demonstration of the outcomes might look like in a range of contexts. Shared understandings can also be developed about how much evidence is required and in what range of contexts. These understandings can be developed through formal and informal processes and will promote consistency in making judgments about demonstrations of learning outcomes.

What consistency strategies are identified on the draft materials for the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM?



(Taken from draft materials for the Consistency of Teacher Judgment CD-ROM being developed by SA DETE)