

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

**Report: Initial Targeted
Consultations**
August – September 2005

Introduction.....	3
Context for the Review.....	3
Purpose of the Review.....	3
Consultation Process.....	3
Phase 1: Initial Targeted Consultation August to September 2005.....	4
Findings	4
2. Valued Knowledge	4
3. Packaging knowledge and syllabus design	5
4. Pathways and the suite of syllabuses.....	5
5. Year 10.....	6
6. Ongoing Review of the syllabuses.....	6
Other concerns	6
Appendix 1	7
Background Paper.....	7
Appendix 2	14
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION – KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS.....	14
Appendix 3	16
Targeted Consultation Groups August – September 2005.....	16
Appendix 4	18
Student Consultation Notes	18
Appendix 5	21
The suite of syllabuses.....	29
Pathways	29
Packaging knowledge.....	29
Year 10	30
Ongoing review	30

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Introduction

The QSA is undertaking extensive stakeholder consultation to review the syllabuses for the senior phase of learning. The consultations seek active engagement of schools, universities, young people and the community in the process of continuously improving the value of QSA products and services.

This report outlines the key findings from the initial consultation with key stakeholder groups undertaken during August and September 2005.

Context for the Review

The decision to review the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) syllabuses in the senior phase of learning was foreshadowed in the suite of reforms — Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF). These reforms encourage more young Queenslanders to complete school successfully and move on to rewarding post-school pathways.

New legislation, effective from 2006, will require all young people to complete Year 10 and then participate in further education or training. The 'learning or earning' legislation will lead to growth in the number and diversity of students staying at school. These young people will enter the senior phase with a wide range of capabilities and with different aspirations for their post school pathways.

The introduction of the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) is designed to recognise the diversity of young people and their varied post-school aspirations. While the QCE is clearly an achievement-based qualification that sets higher standards by requiring students to achieve a significant amount of learning to a set standard and achieve a set requirement for literacy and numeracy, it also opens up greater flexibility. The new qualification allows:

- more learning options
- more places where learning can occur
- more time to complete the senior phase of learning.

The QCE reflects how learning is currently organised. It is therefore timely for the QSA to review its suite of syllabuses for the senior phase of learning and consider whether the current syllabuses:

- meet the needs of young people and are relevant to their futures in a knowledge economy
- provide options for flexible delivery in terms of time and location
- meet the expectations of the community, employers and further education and training institutions and providers.

Purpose of the Review

The review will examine the scope, range and relevance of QSA Years 11 and 12 syllabuses and recommend future directions for:

the form syllabuses might take

decisions about the way the QSA develops and accredits syllabuses within the context of the broader education and training reforms in Queensland.

Consultation Process

The Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning includes three phases of consultation.

- Phase 1: August to October 2005 – initial targeted consultation and a two day colloquium with invited experts and practitioners.
- Phase 2: October to November 2005 - state-wide consultation including public forums and meetings with peak organisations and key stakeholder groups.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- Phase 3: February to March 2006 – targeted consultation with key stakeholders on the draft policy positions to confirm the future directions for syllabus development.

Phase 1: Initial Targeted Consultation August to September 2005

The initial targeted consultations scoped the threshold issues in and options for syllabus development in Queensland and informed the development of a discussion paper for broader community consultation.

Peak organisations and key stakeholder groups were invited to attend meetings, which provided an opportunity to explain the background to the review and discuss a range of issues. The invitation included a background paper (Appendix 1) and questions to focus discussion (Appendix 2).

The following groups were invited to send representatives to participate in the initial targeted consultation (Appendix 3):

- youth groups
- parents
- unions
- employer groups
- higher education
- principals.

Four schools were contacted to gauge the views of students. Subsequently, three meetings were arranged. The key questions were reframed for student discussions (Appendix 2). Student's comments are summarised at Appendix 4. Further meetings with young people, both in and out of school, are scheduled during the state-wide consultation.

Internal consultation with QSA staff was also undertaken.

Each meeting followed a similar format ie a brief overview of the background to the review and the project discussion around the key questions organised under the following headings:

- valued knowledge
- the suite of syllabuses
- pathways
- packaging knowledge
- ongoing review of syllabuses.

A transcript of the meeting notes was forwarded to participants to confirm that they reflected a true and accurate summary. Meeting notes are at Appendix 5.

Findings

1. Consistent Themes

The initial consultation indicated that the flexibility in current syllabuses is highly valued. Discussions also indicated that program delivery was crucial in providing a challenging and intellectually stimulating learning experience for young people.

Relevance to the 'real world' and the importance of creating explicit links within and between the syllabuses was also a common theme.

While there was some discussion of specific subjects, the importance of including a range of generic skills in all syllabuses was highlighted.

2. Valued Knowledge

Valued knowledge raised by the peak organisations included:

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- the importance of literacy and numeracy
- civics and citizenship including an understanding of Australia's history, politics, culture and place in the world
- social skills such as communication skills
- values, ethics and attributes such as work ethic and enterprise
- higher order skills such as research skills, critical thinking, analysis, problem solving, decision-making
- 'employability skills' such as participating as part of a team, meeting deadlines and enterprise skills
- technical knowledge
- pragmatic considerations like prerequisites or assumed knowledge.
- Students valued learning that was linked to the real world. Students specifically mentioned the importance of:
 - communication and social skills
 - computing skills
 - learning how to be independent, to be responsible for your own learning, decision-making and time management
 - career education and management of personal finances
- Students observed that currently these skills are not explicitly taught rather 'it just happens or you get left behind'. In addition, students were also pragmatic about the learning required and mentioned the need to do prerequisites.

3. ***Packaging knowledge and syllabus design***

- The flexibility in the current syllabuses to tailor programs to address local needs was valued.
- Concern was expressed about the amount of content in syllabuses.
- The need for rigour, deep learning and opportunities to make complex connections between related disciplines was highlighted. However, the capacity for more breadth in syllabuses to cater for the range of students was also highlighted.
- Reservations were raised about the necessity for all syllabuses to be 220 hours.
- Suggestions for syllabus design included:
 - capacity to transfer skills across subjects, for example the transfer of science skills across the range of science subjects
 - 'tiering' knowledge and skills to provide learning experiences varying in level of complexity or challenge while focusing on similar subject matter
 - inclusion of explicit connections with the 'outside world' to help students see the relevance of what they are studying
 - embed information technology skills and life skills.
- Students talked about specific subjects and how they are delivered. Their impressions included:
 - content was emphasised
 - too much assessment especially in Term 3
 - too much duplication across certain subjects
 - need explicit links within and between subjects
 - programs were too rigid and they would like more options for personal choice
 - two year subjects can be 'boring' but also the idea of Year 13 to spread things out.

4. ***Pathways and the suite of syllabuses***

- Some concern was expressed about whether the subjects adequately prepared students for post-school pathways i.e., university, training or employment. Syllabuses need to make explicit, relevant links to these pathways.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- Some concern about whether the suite caters to the diversity of students, for example gaps include:
 - English for students from non-English speaking backgrounds
 - the range of Subject Area Specifications is too 'thin'
 - learning products allowing more capable students to accelerate
 - alternate programs for disadvantaged young people.
- Articulation issues need to be explicitly addressed.
- When considering preparation for post-school pathways students restated the need for
 - personal management skills such as independence, accountability, 'people skills'
 - life skills such as financial management and technology skills
 - study skills such as time management, note-taking, organising and planning and research skills.
- Students also felt that they needed to have greater awareness of their options.

5. **Year 10**

- Most participants agreed that Year 10 is not an end point. Rather, Year 10 is a multi-purpose year preparing students for the transition to Years 11 and 12.
- There should be explicit links between Year 10 and Year 11.
- Concern was expressed that the 'jump' in workload and expectations from Year 10 to Year 11 was too great. The students confirmed this and cited the jump in complexity of learning and the change to the way subjects are delivered. Students specifically mentioned English, Mathematics and Science as subjects where this jump was most noticeable.
- The importance of adequate, relevant information allowing students to make informed choice prior to entry to Year 11 was emphasised.

6. **Ongoing Review of the syllabuses**

- The review process was regarded as too long particularly for syllabuses involving information technology.
- The review process should be seen as a continuous process.
- There is a need for a quality control process that ensures coherence and relevance.

Other concerns

- Unions and principals expressed concern about the number of issues currently facing schools and teachers that could lead to change fatigue. The timing of any change needs to be considered carefully in this light.
- The impact of the Australian Government's education agenda was discussed including the possible flow on effects of the impact of an Australian Certificate of Education.
- The problems that were faced by students who live in isolated areas and those with a disability needed to be considered and an inclusive approach developed. The place of the CPCSE was also discussed.
- The impact of any change also needed to consider the impact upon teacher training and practices.

Background Paper

Introduction

Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) is responsible for providing products and delivering services that schools value and that create pathways for the full range of students to undertake further study at university or in vocational education and training or move to employment.

To continue the process of reform to senior schooling, the QSA will undertake consultation and research to review the suite of current syllabuses available for students in the senior phase of learning.

Purpose of the Review

The purpose is to review the scope, range and relevance of the Queensland Studies Authority's (QSA) Years 11 and 12 syllabuses and to recommend future directions for:

- the form syllabuses might take
- decisions about the way the QSA either develops or accredits syllabuses within the context of the broader education and training reforms in Queensland.

Background to the Review

The Queensland Government has introduced a range of reforms to increase the number of young people completing Year 12 or its equivalent.

Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF)

The ETRF reforms will lead to growth in the number and diversity of students completing the senior phase of learning. If school completion rates are to increase to 90 per cent by 2010, then the senior phase of schooling will include students with a wide range of capabilities. This will place greater pressure on schools to meet the demands for different post school pathways.

The ETRF foreshadowed a review of the QSA's syllabuses in the senior phase of learning to ensure they:

- meet the needs of young people and are relevant to their futures
- provide options for flexible delivery in terms of time and location
- meet the expectations of the community, employers and further education and training institutions and providers.

The ETRF reforms also gave rise to a new approach to providing Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools. The move from embedding VET in Authority-registered subjects to offering VET Certificates as 'stand alone' was announced in the Ministerial Statement on VET issued by Ministers Bligh and Barton in June 2004. Although the Study Area Specifications (SASs), and the Authority-registered subjects they support, are still maintained by the QSA, their continued relevance and adequacy need to be reviewed now that the mode for studying VET in schools has been changed.

Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)

The Queensland Government has also announced the introduction of the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) commencing with the Year 10 cohort in 2006. The QCE is a new qualification recognising student achievement in a broad range of courses of study. The value of the new qualification lies in the pathways it supports for young people as they move on from school to further education and training and/or employment. While it is expected that young people will take up the opportunity for greater flexibility in what and

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

where they study, it is likely that most young people will continue to complete their senior phase of learning at school using the syllabuses provided by the QSA.

To complete the process of reform to senior schooling, it is now appropriate to proceed with the review and subsequent redevelopment of Years 11 and 12 syllabuses in Queensland.

Queensland Curriculum Assessment and Reporting (QCAR)

The Queensland Curriculum Assessment and Reporting (QCAR) Framework will determine what is studied in Queensland schools and how it is assessed and reported. It will define the essentials of learning and set standards of achievement for students across the state from the Preparatory Year to Year 10. It is necessary to investigate the extent to which Years 11 and 12 syllabuses link to the earlier phases of learning.

National Consistency

The syllabus review must also take into account the Australian Government's national consistency agenda concerned with the transferability of learning across the states and the possible introduction of an Australian Certificate of Education that provides a qualification drawn from nationally consistent syllabus outcomes.

Changes to the labour market

There have been substantial changes to the labour market. These changes stem, in part, but not entirely, from the development of Australia's role in a global knowledge economy. The nature of work, the generic skills that are now required in many areas of employment, the industries in which employment is growing and what constitutes a job have all evolved in recent years. Therefore it is timely to review the suite of syllabuses against the new demands of the labour market.

Changes in post-school institutions

There are changes to the way post-school institutions structure the courses that they offer. Traditional disciplines are being redefined, new areas of knowledge are emerging, some areas of knowledge are being given greater significance and traditional areas are being combined in new ways.

The pathways that students take into university are becoming more diverse. Becoming OP eligible remains the most prominent way to get a university place. However, students are increasingly using study in VET as a means of access and some universities have developed programs that allow students to bypass the OP. In new and emerging areas of knowledge, universities are using other selection methods to supplement the OP.

Role of the QSA

QSA is responsible for providing products and services that schools value and that create pathways for the full range of students to undertake further study at university or in vocational education and training or move to employment.

The review provides an opportunity for the QSA to draw on the broader perspectives of the education community along with the employment and further education sectors to ensure strong connections between the suite of syllabuses it provides and the requirements of post-school options in a knowledge economy.

Issues

The education and training reforms and the introduction of the QCE and the flexibility it offers means that it is timely to review the suite of subjects available for students in Years 11 and 12.

Building a P-12 framework

A key reason for the establishment of the QSA was the need for a consistent approach to Queensland school syllabuses from the preparatory year through to Year 12. The

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

development of a coherent P–12 approach requires an evaluation of the connectedness and consistency across the syllabuses and the phases of learning. In the context of new policies, research and practice the traditional juncture between Year 10 and Years 11 and 12 must be re-examined.

Developing study programs that enhance future post-school pathways

Senior secondary schooling provides students with considerable diversity and choice (see Appendix 1). Making sense of this choice requires assistance in understanding the articulation from school to higher education, VET or the labour market. The review needs to examine how well the suite of subjects allows for study programs that prepare students for different pathways.

Providing study options that cater to the diversity of students participating in learning beyond Year 10

From 2006, new laws will take effect requiring young people to participate in education and/or training for a further two years beyond Year 10. As a result, senior schooling must cater to the learning needs of a larger and more diverse group of young people with different aspirations.

Conceptualising ‘subjects’

Currently, Authority and Authority-registered subjects are conceptualised as four semester ‘developmental’ courses of study based on 220 hours taken over two years. Syllabuses for the external Senior Examination and extension courses are one year courses. Given the flexibility of the QCE and the likelihood that students’ learning achievements will be based on a wide range of learning experiences of different mixes and ‘size’, it is timely to reassess:

- the size of syllabuses
- the way complexity or levels of difficulty are addressed
- the academic disciplinary basis of Authority subjects
- the artificial barriers among related subject areas and the notion of transdisciplinary learning
- the relationship of foundation and extension courses.

Building a suite of Authority products for Years 11 and 12

The current suite of Authority products includes Authority subjects, SASs, syllabuses for subjects taken in an external examination and extension syllabuses. There needs to be processes to ensure against proliferation of subjects that could result in unnecessary duplication across Years 1 – 12. This could include a uniform approach to:

- review the range of syllabuses to establish their continuing relevance
- delete syllabuses
- evaluate requests to develop syllabuses
- revise programs developed by schools
- add new areas of learning.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

The Ministerial Statement on VET issued by Ministers Bligh and Barton in June 2004 marked a shift away from embedding VET in Authority and Authority-registered subjects to offering VET certificates as ‘stand alone’. Although the SASs, and the Authority-registered subjects they support, are still maintained by the QSA, their continued relevance and adequacy need to be reviewed now that the mode for studying VET in schools has changed.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

ATTACHMENT 1

Current Queensland Studies Authority Years 11 and 12 Syllabuses

The QSA's legislated responsibility is to develop, approve and/or accredit syllabuses from Preparatory to Year 12. The QSA currently produces a range of syllabus documents:

- Preparatory Year Guidelines
- Years 1-10 Key Learning Areas (KLAs)
- Years 11-12
 - Authority subject syllabuses
 - Authority extension subject syllabuses
 - Subject Area Specifications (SASs) for Authority-registered subjects
 - Subject syllabuses for subjects taken in the Senior External Examination.

Authority subjects

An Authority subject is a course of study based on a syllabus that has been developed and approved by the QSA. The minimum amount of timetabled school time to be devoted to the study and assessment of an Authority subject is 55 hours per semester or 220 hours over two years.

The work programs for Authority subjects and assessment of student achievement are subject to the full moderation procedures of the QSA. Results are obtained through externally moderated school-based assessment.

Authority subjects contribute to the calculation of the Overall Position (OP) and Field Positions (FPs).

Currently there are 51 Authority syllabuses with a further three in trial and/or development. Four have embedded VET certificates.

Extension subjects

Extension syllabuses are written as one-year courses and are designed for students with very good ability, including gifted students. These syllabuses provide deeper understandings and more demanding requirements than do the parent syllabuses on which they are based. There are currently five extension syllabuses available for students in Year 12.

Authority-registered subjects - Study Area Specifications (SASs)¹

SASs are frameworks from which courses of study are developed. Each SAS has a number of strands, with each strand being an Authority-registered subject. The QSA has developed 16 SASs. Each SAS contains Strand A allowing the provision of stand alone VET certificates I and II, Strand B containing vocational education with no VET competencies and Strand C allowing two semesters of vocational learning and a stand alone VET certificate I.

Schools develop a study plan, which must be approved by the QSA, for each Authority-registered subject developed from an SAS. The study plan (Form R9) outlines:

- the scope and sequence of subject matter
- the assessment for the subject.

The minimum amount of timetabled school time to be devoted to the study and assessment of an Authority-registered subject is 55 hours per semester or 220 hours over two years.

¹ Authority-registered subjects also include subjects developed by an individual school to meet a need recognised by the school. School work plans are developed along guidelines provided by the Authority and submitted for accreditation.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Authority-registered subjects do not contribute to the calculation of the OP. The SASs are not subject to the same moderation processes as Authority subjects.

Senior External Examination

There are also 15 syllabuses that lead to an external examination. The Senior External Examination is provided for those students not able to attend a secondary school, for example mature age students and school-age students precluded by distance, disability or chronic illness from attending a secondary school. The external examination also provides the opportunity for Year 12 students to study a subject not offered at their school. These subjects are usually completed over one year.

Summary P-12 QSA Syllabuses

QSA syllabus documents have been grouped according to the Principal Education Officer responsibilities (June 005).

*Subjects with embedded VET

YEARS 1-10	YEARS 11 and 12			
	Authority	Extension	Authority-registered (SAS)	External
ENGLISH				
Yrs 1-10 English	English	English Extension (Literature)	English Communication Literacy (& Numeracy) (being redeveloped)	English
MATHEMATICS				
Yrs 1-10 Mathematics	Mathematics A Mathematics B Mathematics C		Pre-vocational Mathematics (Literacy &) Numeracy (being redeveloped)	Mathematics A Mathematics B
SCIENCE				
Yrs 1-10 Science	Biology Chemistry Physics Earth Science Multi-Strand Science Science21 (trial)			Biology Chemistry Physics
	Marine Studies		Marine & Aquatic Practices	
Levels 4-6 Agriculture Education	Agricultural Science		Agriculture & Horticulture	
ARTS				
Yrs 1-10 Arts	Visual Art		Creative Arts	Art
	Music	Music Extension (Performance)		
	Drama			Drama
	Film and Television Dance			

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

BUSINESS AND COMMERCE				
Levels 4-6 Business Education	Business Communication & Technologies ²		Business	
	Economics			
	Business Organisation & Management		Retail	
	Accounting			Accounting
	Legal Studies			Legal Studies
	Tourism ³ (in development)		Tourism	
SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES				
Yrs 1-10 Studies of Society and Environment	Study of Society Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies Futures			
Yrs 9-10 History	Ancient History Modern History			Ancient History Modern History
Yrs 9-10 Geography	Geography			Geography
Yrs 9-10 Civics	Political Studies			
	Philosophy & Reason (formerly Logic)			Philosophy & Reason
	Study of Religion		Religion & Ethics	
HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION				
Yrs 1-10 Health & Physical Education	Health Education Physical Education		Recreation	
Levels 4-6 Home Economics Education	Home Economics			
			Social & Community Studies	
	Hospitality Studies ⁴		Hospitality	

² Includes BSB20101 Certificate II in Business)

³ Will include THT20502 Certificate II in Tourism Operations)

⁴ Includes either THH1102 Certificate I in Hospitality (Operations) or THH11102 Certificate I in Hospitality

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

TECHNOLOGIES				
Levels 4-6 Information Communication & Technology Education	Information Technology Systems ⁵ Information Processing & Technology		Information Communication & Technology	
	Graphics			
Years 1-10 Technology	Technology Studies			
Levels 4-6 Industrial Technology Education	Engineering Technology		Manufacturing	
	Aerospace Studies (in development)			
LANGUAGES				
Yrs 1-10 French	French	French Extension		
Yrs 1-10 German	German	German Extension		
Yrs 1-10 Indonesian	Indonesian	Indonesian Extension		
Yrs 1-10 Chinese	Chinese			Chinese
Yrs 1-10 Italian	Italian			
Yrs 1-10 Japanese	Japanese			
Yrs 1-10 Korean	Korean			
	Latin Modern Greek Russian Spanish Vietnamese Polish			
EARLY YEARS				
Early Years curriculum guidelines & support materials Preschool Curriculum Guidelines			Early Childhood Practices	

⁵ Includes either ICA30199 Certificate III in Information Technology (Software applications) or ICA30299 Certificate III in Information Technology (General) or ICA30399 Certificate III in Information Technology (Network Administration)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION – KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

What should all young people know and be able to do at the end of 12 years schooling?

For example:

What do young people need to know and be able to do to move successfully from school:

to work?

to higher education?

to vocational education and training?

for effective community engagement and active citizenship?

Are there things all students need to know and be able to do regardless of the pathway they select?

Does the suite of syllabuses offered by the QSA provide students with an opportunity to gain a broad and balanced education in the senior phase of learning that is relevant to living and working in a knowledge economy and optimise post-school options?

For example:

To what extent do the subjects provided by the QSA cater to the diversity of students in the senior phase of learning?

Do the subjects provided by the QSA allow study patterns that prepare students for future post-school destinations that is, work, training or higher education?

How can the suite of subjects offered by the QSA be improved to enable the fullest possible access by students to study patterns that meet their learning needs and that will enable them to progress to post-school options?

What form should future syllabuses take to allow schools and other learning providers maximise opportunities in light of new legislation and the QCE?

For example:

- Currently the majority of syllabuses are organised around discrete disciplines. Are there alternative ways to package learning experiences to meet the learning needs of young people in the 21st century?
- Are there artificial barriers between related subject areas? If so, how could these be broken down?
- Currently the majority of syllabuses are organised around a two year course of study. Do all syllabuses have to be two years duration or could learning be packaged over different timeframes?
- Do all syllabuses have to be organised in the same way? Or do different sorts of learning lend themselves to different ways of being packaged?

Are there rules that make it difficult to deliver the current syllabuses? If so, how can these be changed to support the delivery of syllabuses?

How well does the way learning is packaged in Years 1 to 10 link to the learning demands in Years 11 and 12?

What are the practical implications of changes to the way knowledge is packaged?

For example:

What are the issues for schools such as timetabling and delivery methods?

What are the issues for initial teacher training?

What are the issues for professional development?

How would changes impact on the tertiary entrance procedures?

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

How can the suite of QSA syllabuses be continuously evaluated and updated to meet the changing needs of school systems, schools, students, and the dynamic demands of the knowledge-based economy?

What principles should be used to guide the future direction for the development of QSA syllabuses?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION – STUDENT GROUPS

What should all young people know and be able to do at the end of 12 years schooling?

Did your Year 10 'subjects' prepare you for study in Years 11 and 12?

What do you believe are the most important things you have learned at school?

How much of this was learned in the (senior) subjects you studied?

What do you believe are the knowledge and skills that all students need to know and be able to do to move successfully from school:

- a) to work?
- b) to higher education?
- c) to vocational education and training?
- d) for effective engagement and active citizenship?

What knowledge and skills should you learn that you haven't had the opportunity to?

Should there be compulsory subjects? Why/why not?

Are there *aspects* of some subjects that all students should study?

Does the suite of syllabuses offered by the QSA provide students with an opportunity to gain a broad and balanced education in the senior phase of learning that is relevant to living and working in a knowledge economy and optimise post-school options?

Why did you choose the subjects you are now studying?

What do you believe are the purposes of the subjects you study?

Were you able to study all of the subjects you wanted to?

Are all the subjects you have studied been interesting?

Do the available subjects cater for the interests/abilities of all students?

What form should future syllabuses take to allow schools and other learning providers maximise opportunities in light of new legislation and the QCE?

Are there links between any of the subjects you study?

What are the practical implications of changes to the way knowledge is packaged?

Are there better ways in which the subjects you study could be organised?

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Appendix 3

Targeted Consultation Groups August – September 2005

Date	Group	Participants
Monday 22 August	Higher Education	<p>University of the Sunshine Coast Professor Tania Aspland Professor of Education, Faculty of Science, Health and Education</p> <p>University of Queensland Associate Professor Fred D'Agostino Director of Studies, Faculty of Arts Mrs Maureen Bowen Director, Student and Academic Services</p> <p>University of Southern Queensland Ms Louise Alexander Lecturer, Secondary Education Ms Alison Mander Lecturer, Teaching and Learning Studies</p> <p>Queensland University of Technology Mr Ray Morley Director, Student Support Services Dr Don Field Director of Academic Policy and Programs</p> <p>Australian Catholic University Mr Bob Bingham Lecturer in Education</p>
Monday 22 August	Unions	<p>Queensland Teachers Union Ms Kevina O'Neill Vice-President Mr Peter Darben</p> <p>Queensland Independent Educators Union Mr Terry Burke Mr Paul Giles</p> <p>Queensland Council of Unions Mr Doug Stewart</p>
Wednesday 24 August	Employer Groups	<p>Australian Industry Group Mr Glen Porter</p> <p>Commerce Queensland Ms Karyn McEwan Vocational Education and Training Policy Advisor</p>
Monday 29 August	Principals' organisations	<p>Queensland State P-10/12 School Administrators' Association Mr Shaun Konowski Principal, Allora State School Ms Robin Rayner Principal, Roma Middle School</p> <p>Association of Special Education Administrators of Queensland Mr Michael Brett President</p> <p>The Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia Mr Tony McKinnon Head of Senior School, AB Patterson College</p> <p>Queensland Secondary Principals Association Mr Ian Ferguson President</p>
Tuesday 30 August	Youth Groups	<p>Youth Advocacy Centre Mr Rino Randazzo</p> <p>Office for Youth Ms Sue Wright</p>

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Wednesday 31 August	Parents	<p>Isolated Children's Parents Association Ms Rosemary Philp President Ms Ruth d'Hennin</p> <p>QISPC Ms Brenda Baber</p> <p>QCPCA Ms Jenny Goldsworthy</p> <p>FPFAQ Ms Carmel Nash Mr Paul Dickie</p>
Internal QSA		
Friday 26 August	QSA Internal Staff (Standards and Assessment)	David Johnston Leon Schwerin
Wednesday 31 August	QSA Internal Staff (Analysis and Evaluation)	Margaret Veerman Glen Whitaker
Wednesday 31 August	QSA Internal Staff (Syllabus Services)	Kathryn Holzheimer Ian Fyfe Nigel Page Karen Wilson Dayrelle Abbey
Students		
Thursday 25 August	School A	
Monday 5 September	School B	
Thursday 8 September	School C	

Appendix 4

Student Consultation Notes

Consultation Issues	School A	School B	School C
Important Things Learned at School	<p>“communication – English orals – those big life skills of communication”</p> <p>“research skills”</p> <p>“computer skills – BCT to office work”</p> <p>“independence of study”</p> <p>“linking skills in subjects is really good – orals in Drama and English”</p>	<p>“Time management”</p> <p>“Don’t get a part-time job.”</p> <p>“Perseverance – because of interest in what you’re doing.”</p> <p>“Self-discipline.”</p> <p>“They are learned more generally.”</p> <p>“You kind of have to learn them to get through – it just happens or you get left behind.”</p>	<p>“Communication skills.”</p> <p>“Maths A is good, simple basics – home loans”</p> <p>“Maths B is irrelevant, not as general as Maths A”</p> <p>“Study of Society is interesting, real world.”</p> <p>“Economics is my most relevant subject – it’s about the real world.”</p> <p>“Biology needs to link with everyday life – the broader things.”</p> <p>“BCT has life skills such as using computer technology.”</p>
Subjects/ Syllabuses	<p>“some teachers teach the subject - they are worried about how much they have to teach”</p> <p>“they don’t teach the students – they don’t bring it down to our learning style”</p> <p>“BCT – there are two classes and the different teachers teach different things to the different class and the students can’t help each other”</p> <p>“Physics – if you’re not fast enough to pick it up it will go straight past you”</p> <p>“Geography, Art, Modern History and Accounting are good”</p> <p>“the subjects do not meet the interests of all students”</p> <p>“make topics we learn more relevant”</p> <p>“take more time”</p> <p>“too much content”</p> <p>“too much assessment and the size of the assessment pieces – a lot of pressure and stress”</p> <p>“drafting assignments – short timelines”</p> <p>“not a lot of room to move in choosing what we do in subjects – what we learn and assessment”</p> <p>“better understanding of what’s happening in the world through some subjects – Economics”</p> <p>“Art – they say you’ve got a major project on ‘metamorphosis’ and they just set it and let you go – maybe they could ‘jazz’ it up”</p> <p>“you need some limitations in what we do in subjects but at the moment they’re set too tight”</p> <p>“if you’re given more of an option to do things you’re interested in you would put in more effort”</p> <p>“could get rid of ‘subjects’ and make it more like university choice”</p>	<p>“I chose the subjects because of university.”</p> <p>“I had to choose one subject because of the lines.”</p> <p>“I chose science because I did well in science.”</p> <p>“Some subjects are needed for courses, English and Science.”</p> <p>I chose my subjects – a wide range to give me better options.”</p> <p>“I want to do pharmacy so I chose English, Maths and Chemistry.”</p> <p>“We need real world examples in all subjects, especially in Maths”</p> <p>“My most interesting subjects are the ones I enjoy.”</p> <p>“The ones I liked are the ones we can use outside of school like Home Economics because it links to Hospitality.”</p> <p>“Woodwork and apprenticeships.”</p>	<p>“We should have a core English and other optional.”</p> <p>“I’m only doing English because I need it for entry into Uni.”</p> <p>“Maths and English, the important things are the general skills, core skills like essay writing.”</p> <p>“I could have done without English, what I did in Study of Society and BCT covered what I needed to know.”</p> <p>“If most subjects had a more practical (real world) basis they would be better.”</p> <p>“Need to visit the basics in the sciences so that Year 12 is not as hard.”</p> <p>“There’s a lot of time wasting in Years 9 and 10 science, we seem to be repeating units.”</p>

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

<p style="text-align: center;">Links between Subjects</p>	<p>"We do 'projectile motion' in Maths C and Physics – the teachers teach it a different way and confuse you"</p> <p>"Tourism and BCT, Tourism and Hospitality, Accounting and BCT, they have similar work, we don't need to learn the same work in both subjects"</p> <p>"I chose Chemistry & Geography instead of Chemistry & Physics & was disadvantaged because the Chemistry teacher assumed we'd done Physics and some of the work in Physics"</p>	<p>"Legal Studies and the essay structure, we could use the skills in English and at university."</p> <p>"There is a little bit of overlap in Chemistry and Physics."</p> <p>"Should be more links between subjects – to teach you things you can use in other subjects."</p>	<p>"I did the same things in Chemistry as I did in Physics, the same with Chemistry and Biology, too many things, too much overlap, a waste of time. They should make merged units of work."</p> <p>"Maybe we should have integrated units."</p> <p>"Multi-strand sounds good but it's not a prerequisite for university."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">What is Needed for Post-school Life</p>	<p>"people skills – communication to different audiences"</p> <p>"life skills – financial understanding – how to write cheques – include them in the subjects rather than just 'chuck' them in HRE"</p> <p>"making what we do learn relevant to what we do after school"</p> <p>"I always ask the Maths teacher why do we need to learn that and he says, 'Just do it'"</p> <p>"more work experience"</p> <p>"handing things in on time"</p> <p>"accountabilities for self - being on time"</p> <p>"more about 'Uni' awareness and options"</p> <p>"note taking"</p> <p>"certain standard of work"</p> <p>"a lot of universities want students with life skills"</p> <p>"essentials – communication technology – sending e-mails"</p>	<p>"Life skills – basic public relations, communication being able to talk to people (manners) getting things done."</p> <p>"We need to be taught more about what employers are expecting of you."</p> <p>"In some we are taught, in some we learn by ourselves, the hard way."</p> <p>"Independence – being able to do it yourself without help from the teachers"</p> <p>"Teachers harass you to get it done."</p> <p>"Organizing and planning"</p> <p>"Time management"</p> <p>"Research skills – able to locate relevant information."</p> <p>"Getting places on time – to be on time."</p> <p>"Common sense."</p> <p>"Some skills are the same no matter where you go."</p>	<p>"More people skills, better ways to deal with different types of people."</p> <p>"Being able to read people and how to react to them."</p> <p>"General Maths, those everyday Maths lifeskills – finance & money."</p> <p>"I'd love to do Maths A for the everyday skills as well as Maths B."</p> <p>"Some of the things we learn in English – public speaking help in you in further life."</p> <p>"But there is other 'stuff' we have to do that is irrelevant."</p> <p>"We need basic English skills but more English life skills included."</p> <p>"Problem solving, practical application through modelling and decision making."</p> <p>"How to approach problems."</p> <p>"Etiquette, dealing with death and what to do at funerals."</p> <p>"Core skills need to be in each subject, though I don't know how."</p> <p>"Treating core skills as a separate is not going to work."</p> <p>"Etiquette, core skills need to be embedded, treating them as separate is not going to work."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Year 10 as Preparation for Senior Phase</p>	<p>"English and Maths ground you"</p> <p>"subjects in Year 10 have no relation to 11 and 12 subjects"</p> <p>"science in Year 10 – I had limited perception of Chemistry – some kind of foundation would be good"</p> <p>"subjects in Year 10 were very vague – they didn't tell you what to expect"</p> <p>"the subject description in the subject selection book didn't tell you what to expect – assessment wasn't clear"</p> <p>"some subjects weren't that different from Year 10 to 11 - BIP to BCT or Home Ec."</p> <p>"science – people are spooked by the subjects"</p>	<p>"Not very well prepared"</p> <p>"Year 10 is too easy, too much of a step to Year 11"</p> <p>"Year 11 and 12 are too much of a shock"</p> <p>"Cruise through Year 10"</p> <p>"We should start the step up in Year 10"</p> <p>"A lot of people change subjects because they find it difficult"</p> <p>"English and Maths are very difficult to step up"</p> <p>"In English we have to do an exposition and critical literacy in the first assessment in Year 11 and we're expected to know it, and we've never done that before."</p> <p>"Physics requires a lot of focus."</p> <p>"Need to bring in all the Sciences and Maths a bit earlier"</p> <p>"There is a lot of building up from Sem. 1 Year 11 to Sem. 4 Year 12."</p>	<p>"Year 10 really didn't help"</p> <p>"Some subjects, science, you get told the basic idea in Year 10 but in 11 and 12 they change the way of doing it and make it more complicated."</p> <p>"English: - doesn't seem real, too much emphasis on genre."</p> <p>- "there's no grammar; it would have been beneficial in the earlier grades."</p> <p>"just assessment after assessment."</p> <p>"We need more general Maths in year 10."</p>

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Points of Interest	<p>“if you know what you want to do the subjects you choose is pretty easy”</p> <p>“don’t stress over the little things”</p> <p>“there’s always someone to help you – teachers, peers”</p> <p>“when the ‘Unis’ come, they just tell you how good their ‘uni’ is”</p> <p>“a lot is based on the OP – some students are not naturally academic but others are really hard workers”</p> <p>“I don’t think OPs should be the only thing to choose students”</p> <p>“you are told to choose subjects that you like and do well in, know you might enjoy, not what you think are the important ones”</p> <p>“I put some effort into all my subjects”</p> <p>“move the QCS – with show holidays – too much loss of time but the workload doesn’t change”</p> <p>“people seem to crack – get ill”</p> <p>“expectations are too high – we’re people too”</p>	<p>“We’re piled with assignments all at once, needs to be more organized.”</p> <p>“6 assessments in 3 days!”</p> <p>“Business and Uni. Should have more to say in what skills we need to learn to get a job.”</p> <p>“School is too much a closed environment.”</p> <p>“QCS should be moved, Term 3 is the busiest term.”</p>	<p>“Less emphasis on the OP</p> <p>“One subject over 2 years can get boring.”</p> <p>“Too much assessment.”</p> <p>“Why not introduce a 13th year to spread out the work – and allow us to get more work experience.”</p>
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Targeted Consultation – Higher Education 22 August 2005

General comments

To what extent will the review mean changes to the OP.

Worthwhile to look at the DEST literature on first year experiences.

Importance of teacher training

Valued knowledge - What should young people know and be able to do?

- Some universities required prerequisites for certain subjects for example Engineering and Veterinary Science at UQ which are highly dependent on prerequisite knowledge. Prerequisites are identified so that knowledge and application does not have to be repeated. Experience has shown that students who do not have the prerequisites struggle in the courses.
- Not all universities have prerequisites. Instead they have assumed knowledge. Faculties need to identify assumed knowledge explicitly – rather than a subject for example, Maths B. Some faculties require more assumed knowledge.
- Universities that don't have prerequisites structure their subjects so that students who don't have the required knowledge can catch-up as is the case at QUT or the Foundation courses to 'prove' competency used at USQ. Students need to choose subjects that universities perceive as providing the 'assumed learning'.
- It is dangerous to say what you must have. Social sciences use more generic capabilities – see graduate attributes. Students in sciences do well with basic skills but have trouble if they go into social sciences.
- Need enabling skills to do tasks. Can't teach content if students don't have basic skills.
- Need attitude as learners – independence, ability to research (this could be taught in Years 11 and 12 although should be taught prior to Years 11 and 12). It was agreed that this was a valued attribute.
- New knowledge – the technologies
- Clientele has diversified. Need to look at generic skills. Need multiple sets of basic learning to suit all groups.
- Comment was made about whether the literacy and numeracy requirement for the QCE is the version of literacy and numeracy required by different faculties at university.
- Students need knowledge as well as skills.

The suite of syllabuses - are we meeting/matching university needs?

- Universities have had to adapt to what has been offered to students not necessarily what universities require.
- The version of literacy and numeracy required by universities is different from what is required in work.
- A pass in Maths does not always include the practical knowledge, therefore students need extra tutoring to catch up.
- The subject "English" doesn't always serve students from non English speaking backgrounds well.
- Wide discussion regarding syllabuses of 220 hours including:
 - a) Can students 'test out' earlier
 - b) Need more flexibility
 - c) Look at the clientele – many students work part-time
 - d) The concept of the classroom and 220hrs is dead and gone

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- e) Need 2 or 3 ways of accessing this information, pedagogies need to be varied for example students should be able to learn online in their own time
- f) Different approach than 'full subjects'
- g) External students are some of the best students
- h) Logistical problems - do all schools needs to deliver all things.

Pathways

- Discussion about the proportion of students using an OP to go to university – comment was made that not all are OP eligible – they may be coming through another path.
- Important to keep in mind that the new work order has changed
- Students need very specific advice – importance of information about multiple pathways.

Packaging knowledge

There are problems either way with too much or too little choice.

- Students could compose own curriculum using assumed knowledge packages selected from a range of subjects. Although this brings in the question of balance.
- Learning could be organised as basic, essential (critical) and optional for gifted or disadvantaged.
- Trans disciplinary knowledge as well as deep knowledge – it's not a case of either – need both. The task is to determine which areas are for depth and which are for trans disciplinary. The QCE offers a model with 3 in depth studies the rest could be trans-disciplinary.
- Packaging needs to reflect the multi purposes of schooling so student choice is neither too broad nor too narrow resulting in a cul de sac.
- Consider 'tiering' subjects using a core for all students then options to do 'real world activities or greater depth and breadth with each articulating to each other.
- It's not about throwing things out but looking at things differently.
- Can the number of subjects taken be changed e.g. 3 instead of 5

Year 10

- Year 10 is a transition multi purpose year.
- Importance of advice during Year 10 – students need to try things and build up other things.

Ongoing review

- Piloting syllabuses is a good concept but it just goes for too long. 'Slow' is ok because it is important to listen to stakeholders and this can take time.
- Importance of quality control of Authority subjects.
- Everything should be QSA authorized but with a different purpose, thus the auditing will be different for each level.
- Could investigate the capacity to hibernate courses if not being used, renewal and incubate.
- If a subject hasn't been used in five years then put in on the shelf. Changes will come and go as times change.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Targeted Consultation – Unions 22 August 2005

General comments

- Change fatigue (QCAR, Teacher Registration, Australian Government demands) – hasten slowly – don't want change for change sake with no apparent gain - timing to take into consideration how much the system can handle
- Teacher workload – need to look at teachers' capacity to take on changes and the level of PD that supports the changes
- Important to engage teachers because if teachers are uncomfortable then it's hard for students

Valued knowledge

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Civics – knowledge of the way society works – citizenships
- Technical knowledge
- Critical thinking
- Minimum knowledge of Maths, English, science and social sciences
- Expectation about higher order thinking skills in the syllabus is implicit but it should be explicit
- Common curriculum elements very important
- Value recall and knowledge
- Parents value English and maths

The suite of syllabuses

- Need for a large number of equivalent Authority-Registered type subjects to cater for the non tertiary bound students e.g. Multistrand science meets needs of non tertiary students but Science 21 clearly does not – need some other applied science course to fill the gap
- Will changes result in proliferation of registered subjects (this happened and resulted in the SASs – is it back to the future?)
- SASs can marginalize students from high status subjects with rigour
- Need an ESL subject – gap in English – more international students and migrant students – current English syllabus requires cultural knowledge (see South Australian syllabus)
- Need a rigorous demanding curriculum - all the options must have rigour in terms of student and end-user perceptions – why is this done? Why is it included?
- Don't need a major revamp of the senior syllabuses

Pathways

- A rounded curriculum rather than second guessing what is wanted by the end users
- Need depth not shallowness
- Will need guidelines otherwise just pick and choose any combination

Packaging knowledge

- Individual syllabuses need an explicit statement of purpose/pathway – earning or learning
- Range of levels so not locking students out
- A 'core' of maths at senior level that all access - a basic level that allows access to any pathway and another level for specialization
- science and maths now look like social sciences

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- Ability to use the same syllabus but different work programs to suit different purposes – the older syllabuses allowed teachers to ‘slow down’ the curriculum
- The current syllabuses are a framework and flexible enough to allow schools to tailor curriculum to local needs and conditions
- Need to look at the links between the Year 11 and 12 subjects e.g. science subjects have different ways of assessing – Biology and Chemistry are compatible the others aren’t – sciences need to ‘talk to each other’- the intellectual underpinnings need to be treated in a consistent way

Year 10

- Link between Year 10 and Years 11 and 12 very important – the jump between Year 10 and Year 11 is too big

Ongoing review

- There are satisfactory mechanisms for generating new subjects

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Targeted Consultation – Employers 24 August 2005

General comments

- Standardized literacy and numeracy assessment across Queensland for all is considered useful so it can be clear to see the standard of the student.
- Year 9 literacy standard on QCE would not be as satisfactory as Year 12 standard. A “C” in the QCS test would reflect an adequate standard of literacy.

Valued knowledge

- Industry wants literacy and numeracy.
- Employability skills must be incorporated i.e. communication, teamwork, ability to organize. Employability skills are needed regardless of whether a student goes to university or not. Everyone eventually goes on to work so these skills are not wasted.
- Employability vs. work readiness skills: work readiness is good but exposure to paid work makes a big difference. It is far better to have exposure to paid work.
- Every subject could include a component to add to employability skills, but it's not the only way to go. We can have different approaches.
- Work ethics are important as is some exposure to work. Skills are not as important but students must have a capability to learn along with the right attitude. Specifics can be taught later.
- Apprenticeship schemes are a great way to learn work ethics as opposed to free work experience.
- VET in schools is very useful in instilling these skills
- Enterprise education needs to be included as there is a hole at the moment.

The suite of syllabuses

- There are a broad range of Authority subjects but the Subjects Area Specifications (SAS) are too skinny in number. Stand alone VET is good as students get recognition.
- Both Maths and Science are very lacking.
- SAS Maths needs strengthening as there is not enough of the world of work included.
- In Science students need basic information from those areas. It is widely used in apprenticeships and training.
- Students don't necessarily need the subjects Maths A, B or C but they do need basic skills in trigonometry, formulae etc. They have the basic concept but it's too challenging for them.
- Better information is needed for students and employers as to what Maths A, B or C means and how they can be used.
- There needs to be a minimum standard, a core set of knowledge and skills that all students can do that would be useful for further studies. For example e.g., in Masters Business students couldn't do basic transposition formulae because they didn't do it in Year 12. There was an assumption by the teacher that the students would have this basic knowledge. The students had to do additional learning in order to continue their studies.
- Hopefully by Year 11 students should have the basic skills. Maybe in Year 12 they can specialize in their preferences.

Pathways

Employers are becoming more aware of SATs so in future it will be easier for more students to get school-based apprenticeships. They should be integrated into current subjects. Learning strategies should incorporate employability – doing two things at

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

once. However, it is still important to be able to measure employability skills against subject matter.

Teachers need to be better informed about what industry wants.

Packaging knowledge

- Theory is very important but where possible, eg Physics, Chemistry, Maths, but it is important to ensure what they are learning is relevant to the outside world. If knowledge and skills are taught in a 'silo'; that's all the students will know.
- Applying knowledge is good but fundamental skills are still needed. It would be good to use skills learned practically.
- Teachers need to speak about various industries in relation to what is being taught.
- We need a certification package that can be taken to an employer that is useful.

Year 10

- Students in Year 10 don't currently have enough exposure to give them the information to move into senior learning and further education.

Ongoing review of Syllabuses

- Everything doesn't have to be reviewed at the same time. It should be a continuous process such as the training review process.
- The QSA 6 year process too long for subjects such as IT. It would always be out of date if not reviewed continuously. Some things need to be reviewed more regularly than others, particularly for industry specific areas. Don't have a blanket approach.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Targeted Consultation – Principals' Associations 26 August 2005

General comments

- The issue of the Australian Certificate of Education could have significant implications for the review.
- The impact of quadrennial Federal funding could also have flow on effects
- A gap year is used by students who are then using their OP to get into university at a later date.
- The review needs to make reference to the CPCSE. The CPCSE needs to be incorporated to provide a sense of inclusion.
- A number of other levels of consultation occurring around the same time such as destination surveys and the EGPA. A large number of policy changes overlap. There is need to slow down, the timelines for all these are very tight.
- The review is overdue.
- What our students are doing now needs to link to what they do after school.
- There are also students who come from a range of backgrounds that schools must deal with.
- Reporting A to E is going to be very difficult for outcomes education in P-9. Is outcomes P-10 the way to go or should outcomes be 'killed off'.

Valued knowledge

- Knowledge is a limiting term these days, knowledge is changing rapidly and no-one can know all. Knowledge is a tool. There is more than one level of knowledge.
- There is more emphasis on aspects such as attitudes, team work and critical thinking.
- Communication skills need to be reflected in syllabuses.
- In Queensland over the last 30 years the move has been towards higher level thinking. NSW is bogged down in standardized testing. We're light years ahead.
- The future of the well-rounded education is a concern as we seem to be specializing earlier and earlier. These new schools of excellence are an example.
- There is a need for students to know more about Australia, its history, culture and political systems including its place in a global community.
- We should look at what students need to determine what is required in a syllabus. The sciences have not changed whereas Economics and Modern History have moved on. Chemistry and Physics are what was done 30 years ago. IPT has run its course in applicability

The suite of syllabuses

- Is the concept of a syllabus outdated? Syllabuses need to be viewed as a conceptual focus.
- This is a suite of learnings not a suite of syllabuses. If a child is failing, are the syllabuses failing? We need to look at the success or failings of learnings offered.
- There are issues around the full range of students, those not catered for by syllabuses but are by teachers. More breadth in syllabuses is needed to cater for more diverse needs.
- Syllabuses have to cater for the traditional two years as well as those who can accelerate.
- The current syllabus packaging is good and provides security for people. The current design is its strength.
- Physics is outdated.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

- The new Chemistry and Physics syllabuses allow for flexibility but schools may not implement them appropriately.

Pathways

- Students who have a good HA in Chemistry at school and gone into Biochemistry at university have struggled.
- There are traditional parental expectations to gain entry to university, however, increasing numbers of students are not following traditional pathways.
- There is concern over access to TAFE and further training and associated costs.
- TAFE does not provide support to students.
- This review should be looked at from a student's perspective, TAFE should be involved. There is too much hit and miss, QSA and TAFE need to link more closely on issues. Articulation issues need to be included in syllabuses and the links with pathways to TAFE. This paper should focus on pathways not syllabuses.
- We've taken on an industry focus.

Packaging knowledge

Year 10

- In Year 10 options start to open up. Students select subjects they love and do well in. Students are shopping for post-school courses and also looking at courses in other states.

Ongoing review

- Syllabus review processes should not be accelerated as the cost to schools is too great.
- Syllabuses could be written in conceptual ways so that change can be more readily incorporated.
- Change in the world has been dramatic and this should be reflected in syllabuses. The ability to run with change must be incorporated and syllabuses must have tolerance and flexibility to cater for this.
- The disciplines need to interact with each other: for example, do we create a subject called International Studies comprising Economics, Modern History and Geography.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Targeted Consultation – Youth Groups 30 August 2005

General comments

- Participants emphasised the importance of support from the system/schools for young people who have 'missed out' on achieving the basic skills and who do not have family/parental support - that is, extra tutoring, one on one tutoring
- Need to be realistic about what disadvantaged young people can achieve
- Delivery in a way that makes sense to students Tap into what makes sense – if too far removed from this context, students won't relate as one boy said, "it's only real when it's real"
- When working with young people (males in particular), the majority have no male role models, as well as having issues at home. When they are able to get work experience with older men this has a positive effect – the importance of the relationships.
- How will this review link to Special Schools and Special Education Units

Valued knowledge

- Participants identified the following basic skills necessary for young people as they interact with employers
 - Literacy
 - Numeracy
 - Analysis
 - Problem solving
- Literacy and numeracy should cover social literacy and numeracy.

The suite of syllabuses

- Alternate programs may be needed for disadvantaged young people
- Students need something that is tangible, that they can relate to because they live it
- Need to identify students who are not dealing with current syllabuses and that are sliding through the gaps.
- Need real scope to capture students that won't make it in the mainstream environment

Pathways

- Core learning still needed even if students are not going to university
- VET is not always the answer

Packaging knowledge

- Need creative ways of delivery
- There are embedded learning skills in most syllabuses, however in some syllabuses the content outweighs these things - don't target content
- Where do relationships and how we interact with each other fit within the syllabuses – what are the core social skills
- Statements about teaching values is stating the obvious, especially with young people who aren't brought up with these skills
- Years 11 & 12 may need more on how society works

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Year 10

- Students who would normally leave in Year 10 but come back in Year 11 – what do you do with them.

Ongoing review

- Without support, what's going to change
- The report that comes from this review may be used to address further gaps in education.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

Targeted Consultation – Parents 31 August 2005

General comments

- The Federal agenda needs to be considered in relation to this. This could be an opportunity to develop a national curriculum.
- The unions don't want too much change (too much training for teachers). The attitude of unions is to resist any changes being made for the benefit of students.
- Some teachers are not technologically equipped. They are intimidated by IT. Computers in some classrooms are not being used. Teachers need to be trained because that's how students learn now.
- Isolated students don't have the same access to computer connection speeds etc. The nearest repair shop could be 600km away and there are also long repair waiting times.
- Delivery methods need modifying to suit changes eg the use of laptops. There is no policy on how long students should sit at laptops. Computer use needs to relate to real life. Do computers damage eyes and fine motor skills?

Valued knowledge

- Some students will be able to vote before they leave school, there is a need for politics education.
- Social skills, political knowledge, basic life skills are not always taught by parents.
- The first contact some students have with the community is school. Engaging in the community is important because if that doesn't work they may not want to engage in the community in the future.
- What the community wants needs to be determined; we need to look outside and listen to the community, but don't let it limit what students want.
- Students need to understand that everyone has something to offer, to contribute to the community – this message must come across.
- Values need to be incorporated into the curriculum but the question is whose values? Students need to be exposed to a range of views. What is learned, these values need to relate to the real world. It's about freedom and developing free will.
- Life skills need to be embedded into subjects. Survival skills.
- Basics: reading, writing and arithmetic.
- An ability to notetake.
- History skills helped in university studies. Primary schools teach research skills
- Students need to be taught how to study.
- The focus should be on the end point or skills needed. A total university focus is dangerous but some parents are scared to allow their students do what they want.
- More understanding is needed about being able to analyse a situation and come up with the best solution. The skills to make these decisions are needed.
- Students should be able to access relevant information, process it into relevant knowledge, adapt it and discard it when circumstances change - as they will throughout life - in contrast to rote learning.
- Students need to have an optimistic view of life, that you really can learn something. Learning is something that should be fulfilling, good and productive.

Review of Syllabuses for the Senior Phase of Learning

The suite of syllabuses

- Teachers should negotiate with their class about choices. What happens in primary school needs to filter through to high school.
- My son got a VHA for English but is not good at history; subjects need to relate to each other.
- If skills have been taught for ages why haven't they been learned.

Pathways

- Students want to know why they're doing something and how will it help them.

Packaging knowledge

- Not many teachers would actually teach 220hrs over a course because of all the interruptions. There are really only three semesters because students achieve very little in the final semester.
- There needs to be flexibility. Students could do subjects over two semesters instead of one or do less subjects/semesters and feel they achieved a goal.
- It's better to do fewer subjects per semester rather than having to do more. Universities do this.
- The ability for students to complete a whole subject within less than the traditional 4 semesters is a good idea.
- More integration of subjects would allow students to better gain skills. Having three things embedded in a subject will allow students to learn more.
- Packaging a number of things into a subject makes it more interesting and gives flexibility. It's not about not being able to it's about the will.
- There needs to be an IT component embedded in all subjects.
- Some subjects could be integrated; such as Economics, Politics, History, and Geography or Maths and Science.
- There is some resistance of teachers in secondary to teach across disciplines because they don't have the training.

Year 10

- In Year 10 it is crucial to learn other skills, to be able to do other things than just focus on the end results such as just prepare for university.
- Year 10 sits in limbo. Year 10 is no longer an end point.
- Year 10 should be a transition year not an end point. There are problems for isolated Year 10 students in P-10 schools when they have to go into Years 11 and 12 at another school.
- The outcomes of Years 11 & 12 are different for students coming from a P-10 school compared to students in a P-12 school.

Ongoing review

- We should continue the six year cycle otherwise things would be left too long. Six years would be the maximum. It is essential to keep tight timelines. Six years is a reasonable timeline, however, is it money well spent to do every two years?
- Content must be focussed on. Some content wouldn't change much but how you teach a subject would. There have been changes in Geography e.g. countries that existed twenty years ago no longer do.
- Review is needed even if there are some stable parts because other things change rapidly.
- IT needs two years
- Continual update would be useful.
- Distance education students get left behind with changes.