Are you ready for the QCS Test?
Get the scoop on scholarships
OPs and FPs: Fast facts
2012 graduates share their top tips
Win an iPad mini!
Know your key dates for Year 12

May 2013
SUCCESS IN YEAR 12 AND BEYOND

WHAT’S INSIDE
- Are you ready for the QCS Test?
- Get the scoop on scholarships
- OPs and FPs: Fast facts
- Know your key dates for Year 12
- 2012 graduates share their top tips
- Win an iPad mini!

Queensland Government
Queensland Studies Authority
STAY FOCUSED! YOU’RE ALMOST THERE
By now you’re well on your way to completing secondary schooling and hopefully achieving a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). The QCE is an internationally recognised qualification that celebrates your senior schooling achievements. It shows employers and tertiary education providers that you have worked consistently and to a high standard.

This edition of Student Connect magazine focuses on key aspects of Year 12 including the Queensland Core Skills Test, Overall Positions and important dates you need to know.

We also profile past students who share their tips for success in Year 12 and beyond.

With the end of Year 12 in sight, stay focused until the last day of school.

We wish you a happy and successful year.

WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?
Based on trends in the Queensland Government’s Next Step surveys of school leavers, the class of 2013 are likely to follow a wide range of post-school pathways in 2014:
- around 70% will continue in some form of education or training
  - 35% will go straight to university
  - 25% will study vocational education and training (VET) courses
  - 10% will start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- about 30% will be employed or looking for work
- less than 2% will not be in the labour force, education or training.

Queensland Studies Authority (QSA)
www.studentconnect.qsa.qld.edu.au
www.qsa.qld.edu.au
154 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane
PO Box 307, Spring Hill QLD 4004

HAVE YOUR SAY AND WIN AN iPAD MINI
QSA is offering three lucky Year 12 students the chance to win an iPad mini. To be in the running, simply log on to your learning account at www.studentconnect.qsa.qld.edu.au between 1 June and 31 August 2013 and complete the quick online survey.

Winners will be notified in early September and announced on the Student Connect home page.

While you’re in your learning account, don’t forget to check your personal and subject enrolment details. If any information is missing or incorrect, talk to your school or VET provider. In December, the QSA will post your results to the home address in your learning account, so it’s important to let your school know if your address has changed.

You’ll need your LUI (Learner Unique Identifier) and password to log on. If you don’t know your LUI, ask your school for it.
From the time his parents gave him bongo drums at age three, Kieran Kuskopf has been marching to his own beat. He says: “I’ve never thought about doing anything except music.”

A multi-instrumentalist, proficient on piano, ukulele, didgeridoo and drums, Kieran’s senior study program echoed sound advice: choose subjects that you enjoy and in which you perform well. His QSA subjects included Music and Music Extension, and were complemented with a Certificate IV in Music Performance.

Kieran is now studying a Bachelor of Music at JMC Academy in Brisbane, teaching drums to beginners aged 7 to 12 and gigging on the side.

While Kieran’s love of music is key to his study and career choices, he advises Year 12 students not to worry too much about what they will do after school.

“Keep your options open. Aim high but if you don’t get what you want, don’t panic! There are always alternatives.”

However, Kieran has no doubts about his own future: “Every musician wants to be a rock or pop star — I want to do a lot of gigs and play everywhere I can. “But I also really enjoy teaching, so I might start a Bachelor of Education after my music degree and become a school music teacher.”
If you have a medical condition or impairment, or if another factor could make it difficult for you to sit the Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test, you may be eligible for special provision.

**How can I find out what arrangements might be approved in my situation?**

Talk to someone at your school (a teacher or career guidance officer) and read the QCS Test 2013 Special provision handbook at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1102.html.

**Will I automatically receive special provision for the QCS Test?**

No. You will need to apply to QSA for special provision for the QCS Test. The variations that we approve may not be the same as the variations you are allowed for your school tests.

**How will special provision affect my OP?**

Special provision will not affect your OP and there will be no mention of special provision on your Senior Statement or Statement of Results. If exemption is approved or your test grade is declared null and void, you will not receive a QCS Test grade. If you are OP-eligible and do not sit all four testpapers, you will become ineligible for an OP if you do not apply for and receive exemption.

**What sort of documentation do I need?**

It varies depending on your reason for applying and the type of special provision you apply for. Consult the special provision handbook for detailed information on the documentation required and time limits for applying before the test. If you’re applying for special provision for medical reasons after the test, you’ll need to see a doctor on the days of the test or just after.

**What is the closing date?**

In most cases the closing date for special provision for the QCS Test is 21 May 2013. However, if you develop an illness or if another situation arises after this date which could make it difficult for you to sit the test, apply as soon as possible. If you are applying for special provision after the test (for absentee exemption or to declare a test grade null and void) the closing date for applications is 2 October 2013.

**QUT Open Day.**

You can do all the research in the world, but nothing beats seeing QUT for yourself. So don’t miss QUT Open Day.

**QUT Open Day**
Sunday 28 July, 9am - 3pm at Gardens Point campus
www.qut.edu.au/open-day
If you kept up with the London Paralympic Games last year, you may have spotted Brisbane athlete and student Rachael Dodds competing in the T35 100m and 200m events. Rachael, who has cerebral palsy, says she feels very lucky to have experienced Year 12 and the Paralympics in the same year.

She says: “The thrill of running a personal best in front of 80 000 people will stay with me forever.”

Rachael was training and competing overseas for most of Term 3 (she missed the QCS Test) but with support from her school, family and friends successfullybalanced her academic and sporting commitments.

Back in Brisbane, Rachael is chasing two goals: a spot in Australia’s team at the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, and a career as a biological anthropologist.

Now happily enrolled in a dual degree in arts and social science at the University of Queensland, Rachael wasn’t always so sure of her career path.

“I changed my mind quite a few times about what I wanted to do after school”, she says.

“However, in Year 11 I realised a career in biological anthropology was the answer as it combines my love of history and science.

“Biological anthropology is essentially the study of human society throughout history, using science and physical evidence.

“I like to think that an understanding of history, and how we as humans have developed, can provide insight into the future.”
Sitting the Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test is a key milestone for around 30 000 Year 12 students annually. Your achievement in QSA subjects is the most important factor in determining your Overall Position (OP). But to be eligible for an OP you also need to sit the QCS Test. OP-eligibility maximises your tertiary options in Queensland and interstate.

The QCS Test is the tool QSA uses to compare the achievements of OP-eligible students studying different subjects at different schools across Queensland.

The test is available only once each year. In 2013, it will be conducted on 3–4 September.

**A test for everyone**

Sitting the QCS Test is a good idea for both OP-eligible and OP-ineligible students although only the results of OP-eligible students are used in OP calculations.

Even if you’re not OP-eligible:
- a grade of C or above will ensure you meet QCE literacy and numeracy requirements
- a grade of D or above may boost your Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) selection rank.

**Marking your responses**

Markers receive intensive training and practice in applying the marking schemes. They mark independently at a single venue. Their judgments are monitored so that every script is marked fairly. Referee marking occurs if required.

Your Multiple Choice responses are scanned electronically. Any discrepancies, including blanks and double entries, are investigated. Your Writing Task response is marked by at least three markers, with at least two judgments being provided for each criterion. Similarly, double marking occurs for each of your Short Response items meaning the whole testpaper involves at least 10 markers.

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**ARE YOU READY FOR THE QCS TEST?**

The best QCS Test preparation comes through the study of your school subjects. You should also:
- be familiar with the 49 common curriculum elements
- be aware of the knowledge that is assumed in the test
- understand the key terms before you sit the test
- know the test procedures in advance
- know what equipment you need for each session and what equipment is not permitted in the test room
- sit at least part of a past test
- apply to QSA for any special provision relevant to your circumstances.

By now you should have received a copy of the Student Information Bulletin 2013 from your school. It contains all you need to know about the QCS Test. View an electronic version at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2320.html.
Don’t cheat!

Don’t cheat or engage in any other form of academic misconduct. QSA has sophisticated processes for cross-checking responses. If it is shown that you cheated, you won’t receive a grade for the QCS Test.

Final countdown

In the weeks before the test, review basic arithmetical operations, sample items, solutions and explanations. Hours of intense work in preparation for the test won’t improve your performance and might even make you feel more anxious.

On the day before the test, check your equipment, the starting time and the venue and organise your transport. Get a good night’s sleep, and relax!

Find out more


Quick quiz

A number of key terms are used in the QCS Test so that you know exactly what type of response is required and don’t waste time wondering what is expected of you. If you understand the key terms before you sit the test you’ll have a better chance of tackling the tasks effectively and efficiently.

Do you know what these key terms mean?

- compare
- contrast
- demonstrate
- discuss
- derive
- evaluate
- verify
- exemplify

Page 28 of the Student Information Bulletin 2013 has the answers.
In Queensland in Years 11 and 12, you are taught and assessed by your teachers within a system of externally moderated school-based assessment. This means your teachers have the flexibility to develop their own learning and assessment programs, based on guidelines and syllabuses provided by the QSA.

After almost 40 years' operation, the Queensland system is highly regarded internationally and benefits students in many ways:
- it caters to your individual needs and learning styles
- it prepares you for situations you will face in further education and work
- it encourages your higher-order thinking skills
- it is fair and reliable.

Applying for special provision for school assessment

To ensure that assessment is fair for all students, your school can grant you special provision for school assessment under certain circumstances.

Who can apply?

If you suffer from illness or trauma during Year 11 or 12 and you can prove it has had, or will have, a serious effect on your studies and results, you can apply for special provision for school assessment.

When should I apply?

Let your school know as soon as you become aware of the illness, condition or trauma. You must apply for special provision well before the last day of school in Year 12. It’s too late to apply once you have left school and received your results.

How do I apply?

You’ll need to apply to your school principal with documentary evidence.

What kind of special provision might I get?

Your school principal may decide to make a reasonable adjustment to some forms or items of your assessment. This could include extending due dates, alternative assessment arrangements, or exempting you from some assessments.

To be fair to other students, you can’t be given credit for work you haven’t done or for how well you might have achieved.

Want more info?

Talk to your school or visit www.qsa.qld.edu.au for more information.
Subjects: Maths B, English, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Religion and Ethics

Career goals: James — To work overseas as a chemical engineer
Keegan — To be a reconstructive surgeon

James and Keegan Hunter, 18
Faith Lutheran College, Plainland

Identical twins, identical school subjects, identical OPs! James and Keegan Hunter gave their parents twice the reason to celebrate last year when final results were released. Both boys received an OP1.

Describing their relationship as “super competitive”, James and Keegan share the same focus and drive.
But they also agree there should be more to your Year 12 experience than school work.

Keegan was actively involved in community-based service at a local nursing home, got work experience at a medical centre, participated in a peer tutoring program, and helped out with the flood recovery.

He says these activities taught him valuable time management, organisational and communication skills, and helped with his applications for medical schools.

James adds that you need to find the balance between knowing when to relax and enjoy yourself and when to work. “Take the initiative, get prepared and work steadily from the start of term. It will save you a lot of stress later on.”

This year Keegan is studying medicine at Griffith University while James is studying chemical engineering at the University of Queensland.

While they may have gone their separate ways for now, you can be sure James and Keegan will bring the same single-mindedness to their studies and achieving their career goals.

“Take the initiative, get prepared and work steadily from the start of term.”

APPLYING FOR TERTIARY STUDY?

If you plan to go on to tertiary study you’ll need to apply through the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC).

QTAC processes applications for the majority of undergraduate courses at Queensland and northern New South Wales universities, TAFE Queensland and other selected colleges and institutes.

Want more info?

Visit www qtac edu au or call 1300 GO QTAC or 1300 467 822.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important QTAC dates in 2013</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 June onwards</td>
<td>QTAC Guide sent to schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>mid-June</td>
<td>Course information for 2013/2014 admissions available online</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 August</td>
<td>Applications open for 2013/2014 admissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 September</td>
<td>On-time due date for applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 September onwards</td>
<td>Higher application fees apply</td>
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</table>
Your OP is your position in a statewide rank order indicating how well you have done in Authority subjects compared to all other OP-eligible students in Queensland. OP1 is the highest, and OP25 is the lowest. Only Authority subjects contribute to OP calculations — VET certificates, Authority-registered subjects and other studies are not used.

**How are OPs calculated?**

Your OP is calculated from data on where you rank in each of your subjects. Your teachers assign subject achievement indicators (SAIs) to show this. You should ensure you check your SAIs with your school. SAIs are scaled using information about your subject group’s and school group’s performance on the QCS Test. This allows your position in the statewide rank order to be determined.

**What are Field Positions (FPs)?**

“Field” refers to areas of emphasis in the senior curriculum. Your FPs are a rank order from 1 (highest) to 10 (lowest), based on your overall achievement in QSA subjects in up to five fields:

- **Field A** — extended written expression involving complex analysis and synthesis of ideas
- **Field B** — short written communication involving reading, comprehension and expression in English or a foreign language
- **Field C** — basic numeracy involving simple calculations and graphical and tabular interpretation
- **Field D** — solving complex problems involving mathematical symbols and abstractions
- **Field E** — substantial practical performance involving physical or creative arts or expressive skills.

FPs may be used to differentiate between students with the same OP when the number of places in a course is limited.

The extent to which a subject contributes to each FP depends on the weighting of that subject. The QSA publishes the table of subject weights for FPs each year. A template on the QSA website can help you to work out which FPs you are eligible for. Many students are not eligible for all five fields, and may receive FPs in only two, three or four fields, depending on their subject choices.

**Are you on track?**

To be eligible to receive an OP and FPs you must:

- complete 20 semester units of credit in Authority subjects
- study at least three of your subjects for four semesters
- sit the QCS Test
- attend school until the final day of Year 12, which is 15 November 2013.
Fact: All subjects are treated equally in the calculation of OPs, and you can achieve a high OP including an OP1, with any combination of subjects. In 2012, there were 702 OP1 students. They studied 391 different Authority subject combinations!

Myth: There is a bias in favour of certain schools

Fact: Students, not schools, are awarded OPs. The procedures followed for the calculation of OPs are exactly the same for students at every school.

Myth: Students in a small group or small school are disadvantaged

Fact: The QSA has special procedures in place for small groups and small schools to ensure students are not disadvantaged. Subject achievement indicators are assigned differently and the scaling processes are adjusted to make sure that OPs reflect students’ performances fairly.

Myth: My school can predict my OP

Fact: Only the QSA has all the necessary data to calculate OPs. Any prediction your school makes is only a guide.

Myth: QSA allocates the number of OP1s for each school in advance

Fact: QSA does not set a quota of OP1s or any other OP rank for a school. OPs and FPs compare the performance of students — not schools — across the state.
SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS
COUNTRY GIRL
KEYS TO THE FARM

Born and raised on a cattle farm in Far North Queensland, it’s maybe no surprise that Danielle Lorensen has always had a strong interest in beef farming. And now, thanks to a Queensland Government Supporting Women Scholarship, Danielle is further developing her knowledge and skills in this field by studying a Diploma of Agriculture.

“Studying via distance education through Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE’s Roma Campus allows me to work at my own pace,” she says. “I also have a great tutor who will answer any of my questions.”

“Currently, I’m working on livestock production plans, weed control and the feasibility of our livestock operation.”

“Getting the scholarship means a lot to me. Without it I wouldn’t have been able to further my study for at least another couple of years.”

At school, Danielle studied both QSA and VET subjects including rural operations, agriculture, furnishing and hospitality. She completed two school-based traineeships in Beef Cattle Production — a Certificate II in Agriculture in Year 9 and a Certificate III in Agriculture in Year 12. She was Vocational Dux at Malanda State High School.

Danielle says she was unsure about exactly what she would do after Year 12 until she received her Supporting Women Scholarship.

“Right now I aim to finish my diploma before travelling to North America to see how agricultural operations work there. When I return to Australia, I’d like to get a job in the agricultural industry.”

Danielle’s advice to current Year 12 students?
“Give everything a go! There are opportunities coming up for you all the time.”

Danielle Lorensen, 17
Malanda State High School


Career goal: To work in the agricultural industry

“Getting the scholarship means a lot to me. Without it I wouldn’t have been able to further my study for at least another couple of years.”
With more than 250 programs, ranging from short courses to Advanced Diplomas, you’ll gain the relevant skills and knowledge to be job ready or get a great start on a pathway to further study.

University credit
Studying with The Bremer TAFE is also a great alternative pathway to university. We have excellent credit arrangements with all major Queensland universities. If you complete a diploma or advanced diploma, universities will welcome you directly into a wide variety of their degree programs and they’ll even give you credit for the study you’ve completed.

This means you could skip the application process with QTAC and jump straight into the second year of university!

The Bremer TAFE offers a world of opportunities to build skills and set you on the path to success.

Improving your Tertiary Entrance Rank
Studying at The Bremer TAFE will improve your Tertiary Entrance Rank. The minimum Tertiary Entrance Rank which may be awarded upon successful completion of our programs is:

- Diploma - Tertiary Entrance Rank of 82 (Approximately equivalent to an OP 10)
- Advanced Diploma - Tertiary Entrance Rank of 91 (Approximately equivalent to an OP 6)

Enrol now
To find out more or to enrol in a program contact our Customer Service Centre.

Phone us on 3817 3000 or email CustomerServiceCentre.TBIT@dea.qld.gov.au

THE SCOOP ON SCHOLARSHIPS

Did you know there are thousands of scholarships on offer each year in Queensland? And not just for university study. Scholarships are offered by universities, TAFEs, private education providers, the Commonwealth and Queensland governments, and some professional associations and industry groups.

Common categories include:
- sporting scholarships
- equity scholarships for women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- scholarships for specific fields of study
- financial hardship scholarships.

A scholarship can help with course fees, text books, accommodation costs and living expenses. No matter what your further education and training goals, it’s worth finding out what’s available.

Where do I start?
- Check out university, TAFE and other education institute websites
- Search for scholarships on www.myfuture.edu.au
- Talk to your school career guidance officer

Supporting Women Scholarships
Queensland Government Supporting Women scholarships are available for study in fields where, traditionally, there have been fewer women employed such as agriculture, architecture, building services, engineering, geology, and information technology. Scholarships of up to $20 000 are available for study at university, TAFE or registered training organisations in Queensland. Applications for study in 2014 open in the second half of 2013. Visit www.skills.qld.gov.au/supportingwomen for more information.
Careers expos and open days are a great way to find out about different careers and courses.

At a careers expo, you’ll have the opportunity to talk to representatives from tertiary institutions, student support services and a wide range of employers about career options and further education and training. If you want to check out a specific institution, attending an open day is the way to go. Open days give you the chance to experience life on campus, explore facilities and talk to staff and students.

**See you at TSXPO**

Celebrating its 32nd year in 2013, TSXPO is Australia’s largest tertiary studies expo. With representatives from Queensland, interstate and overseas universities, TAFE, the Defence Force, private education colleges, and student support services, TSXPO will give you a great insight into the tertiary study programs and career options that best suit you.

Visit the Queensland Studies Authority stand for information on the QCE, QCS Test, OPs, FPs and more!

**Date:** 20–21 July 2013  
**Time:** 10 am – 4 pm  
**Where:** Exhibition Building, RNA Showgrounds, Brisbane  
**Cost:** Free admission  
Visit www.tsxpo.org for more information.
“I’d like to help young people to identify their goals and know that they can achieve no matter what is going on in their life outside of school.”

GUIDED BY EXPERIENCE

Years 11 and 12 can be challenging for many students. Balancing study, extra-curricular activities, part-time work and a social life is tricky.

For Natasha Adams the juggle was intensified by a year on student exchange in Italy, an illness in her family and moving out of home.

“When I got back from Italy, I decided, with a family member being unwell, it was best for me to live independently,” Natasha says.

“I went to school, worked two jobs to pay my rent and other expenses, and stayed up late most nights to study.”

Despite the demanding schedule, Natasha was named 2012 Far North Queensland school-based trainee of the year and was a Queensland finalist.

Having excelled in VET studies and as a trainee at a bookkeeping firm, one might assume Natasha would now be studying or working in business administration. But that’s not the case.

Natasha says she’s always kept her options open, and hopes to study psychology at James Cook University from July.

“I’d thought about becoming a mechanic, teacher, childcare worker and travel agent; studying international hotel management; working in administration in the mines; and much more.”

But motivated by her own experiences, she aims to become a school guidance officer.

“I’d like to help young people finishing high school to identify their goals and know that they can achieve no matter what is going on in their life outside of school.”

Natasha Adams, 18
St Mary’s Catholic College, Cairns

Subjects: Social Community Studies, English, Italian, Prevocational Maths, Religion and Ethics, Certificate III in Business Administration

Career goal: To be a school guidance officer
### STAY ON TRACK IN 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>QCS Test: Closing date for special provision applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 August</td>
<td>Provisional statements: Check your personal and enrolment details and tell your school if there are any errors or omissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>Senior External Examination: Closing date for special arrangements applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4 September</td>
<td>QCS Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 September</td>
<td>Workplace, community or self-directed learning projects: Last day to submit evidence of learning for QCE credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 September</td>
<td>QCE credit transfer for interstate and international courses of study; Last day to submit applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 October</td>
<td>QCS Test: Closing date for special provision applications after the test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 October</td>
<td>Senior External Examinations start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 October</td>
<td>Provisional statements: Check your personal and enrolment details and tell your school if there are any errors or omissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 November</td>
<td>Final day for Year 12 students: You must stay at school up until this day to be eligible to receive a QCE and OP</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 November</td>
<td>Schools publish subject achievement indicators (SAIs): Check you’ve been placed in the correct position compared with your classmates — if you see an error, talk to your school immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 December</td>
<td>Senior Education Profiles (SEPs) posted: You should receive your SEP from Monday 16 December 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 December</td>
<td>Results online: Your Year 12 results and OP will be available in your learning account at <a href="http://www.studentconnect.qsa.qld.edu.au">www.studentconnect.qsa.qld.edu.au</a></td>
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### YOUR CAREER CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**1 300 BE A COP**