Short Course: Numeracy 2018

Frequently asked questions

What are the key features of Short Courses?

Short Courses are:

- one-unit courses requiring approximately 55 hours of teaching, learning and assessment time
- available for delivery in Years 10, 11 or 12.

Short Courses have:

- two summative internal assessments, each with two parts
- instrument-specific A–E standards for each assessment
- exit folios of student responses on which student results are determined.

Results in Short Courses:

- do not contribute to an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) calculation
- may contribute to attainment of a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE).

Why offer this Short Course?

The QCE system aims to ensure students exit the education system as literate and numerate people with a genuine capacity to overcome challenges in the 21st century.

The Numeracy Short Course is aimed at students who may not otherwise attain the minimum requirements for numeracy that are necessary for awarding the QCE. It may also be used as a supplemental course for students who require or wish to pursue additional or further numeracy exposure.

Who should complete this Short Course, and when?

Students most suited to this course are those who may have been identified as being disengaged with studies in Mathematics, who might benefit from further exposure to numeracy, or who are at risk of not attaining the numeracy requirement for their QCE.

Students must be performing at least at Level 2 of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) to undertake this course.

It is a school-based decision as to how and when the Numeracy Short Course is implemented. It can be undertaken by students in Years 10, 11 or 12.

What will students study?

The course is designed to support students in developing their knowledge and capacity to apply numeracy skills to complete valuable life-related tasks. There are two focus topics:

- Personal identity and education, where students learn to apply numeracy skills and mathematics in structured learning situations, e.g. making financial decisions based on spreadsheets, timetables, survey data, utility bills and graphical displays

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- The work environment, where students learn to deal with situations in the work environment that involve the use and application of a range of mathematical skills and knowledge, e.g. understand operating procedures, data collection, instruction manuals, material lists or catalogue items.

Students also learn how to structure and think about their learning in numeracy.

How long does the course take to complete?

The Short Course has been developed with a notional teaching, learning and assessment time of 55 hours. Schools may implement the Short Course in a number of different ways. They may choose to:

- deliver the course
  - as a timetabled unit of work
  - over an extended period, e.g. a semester or year
  - before or after school
  - in partnership with non-school providers
- offer the course as part of a timetabled subject, e.g. offer the course as an integrated component of another Mathematics course of study.

How much support should schools offer students completing this Short Course?

Students will require help and guidance as they progress through the course. Teachers are responsible for modelling and providing strategies for students working at a dependent, guided or independent level of study to understand the following core skills of the course:

- identifying and communicating mathematical information
- approaching and solving mathematical problems
- learning.

How do schools make accurate judgments about student achievement?

This syllabus has two assessments. Each assessment has two parts. Standards are provided for each part of each assessment. Teachers match the student response to the instrument-specific standard. The student responses are collected to represent a student's exit folio. Schools are required to determine an A–E exit result from the course using an on-balance judgment applied to the folio of student work. A level of achievement is awarded by matching the student work to a standard, even though it is not necessary for the student's responses to have been matched to every characteristic for a standard.

Schools and teachers must have strategies in place for ensuring that work submitted for internal summative assessment is the student's own.

For successful completion of the Short Course, students will be required to demonstrate numeracy skills equivalent to Level 3 of the ACSF. Further information on the ACSF influence on the Numeracy Short Course is available in the *Australian Core Skills Framework* (Department of

Education, Employment and Welfare 2008, Commonwealth of Australia, https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/acsf_document.pdf).

How does the Numeracy Short Course differ from other Mathematics subjects?

The rigour and depth of learning in the Numeracy Short Course differs significantly from other Mathematics subjects. Successful completion of the Numeracy Short Course means that students have demonstrated numeracy skills equivalent to Level 3 of the ACSF. This will suit students who are interested in pathways beyond school that lead to vocational education and/or work.

The Numeracy Short Course focuses on developing a student's numeracy and learning skills, whereas the senior Mathematics subjects cover subject matter as outlined in the respective Australian Curriculum Mathematics courses. The senior Mathematics subjects increase in complexity of mathematical understanding from Essential Mathematics to General Mathematics, Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics.

Key similarities and differences between the Numeracy Short Course and senior secondary Mathematics subjects

Numeracy	Senior secondary Mathematics subjects	
Numeracy Short Course	**Essential Mathematics (Applied subject)**	**General Mathematics, Mathematical Methods, Specialist Mathematics (General subjects)**
• a single unit course that may be delivered in Year 10, 11 or 12	• a four-unit course, generally delivered over two years	• a four unit course, generally delivered over two years
• two summative internal assessments, each with two parts, collated in an exit folio from which a student's result is determined	• four summative internal assessments from Units 3 and 4, collated in an exit folio from which a student's result is determined	• three summative internal assessments and one summative external assessment from Units 3 and 4, the marks from each added together to provide a subject result
• Short Course result does not contribute to ATAR calculation	• subject result can contribute to ATAR calculation (no more than one Applied subject can contribute to ATAR calculation)	• subject result can contribute to ATAR calculation
• results may contribute to attainment of QCE	• results may contribute to attainment of QCE	• results may contribute to attainment of QCE

Where can I find out more?

If you would like more information, please:

- visit www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/subjects/short-courses

- phone (07) 3864 0375

- email seo@qcaa.qld.edu.au.