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Foreword

The Queensland system of externally moderated school-based assessment in senior secondary schools involves review panels established at two levels — state and district. In 2009, review panels again performed crucial tasks central to the operation of our system.

The roles of the state review panels are to:

- help district review panels and schools develop procedures that are consistent with the processes of externally moderated school-based assessment in senior secondary schooling in Queensland
- supervise the maintenance of statewide standards in senior subjects across all districts
- recommend approval of work programs and levels of achievement in senior subjects offered by schools across the state.

This document is a collation of reports of the moderation process for senior secondary subjects in general implementation. Each state review panel chair prepares a report in consultation with an officer of the Queensland Studies Authority.

This document will help schools implement procedures that are consistent with the processes of externally moderated school-based assessment in Queensland senior secondary schooling.

Peter Luxton
Acting Director
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies — B31

Syllabus
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies senior syllabus (2001) enters its final year of implementation with Year 12 students in 2010. The revised 2009 syllabus will be in general implementation for all Year 11 students in 2010. The first 2009 work program has been approved and schools will be required to submit their own 2009 work program by the end of Term 1, 2010.

The Political Studies (1994) and Futures (1998) syllabuses are being phased out. The final year in which schools can implement these syllabuses with Year 11 students is 2010.

All syllabuses are available from the QSA website. The syllabus references for the remainder of this section of the state review panels report refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (2001) syllabus.

Statewide comparability
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has a state-only panel, responsible for the moderation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Political Studies, and Futures.

The monitoring and verification procedures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Political Studies, and Futures went smoothly in 2009. The panel found the quality of submissions is improving as well as the quality of student work. This resulted in more VHAs and HAs being awarded this year. While a number of submissions were not agreed to on the day of verification, all were successfully resolved during negotiations between the state review panel and schools.

Course coverage
The state panel noted that schools demonstrated good course coverage in terms of the balance in the acquired knowledge and understanding of both Aboriginal identities and perspectives, and Torres Strait Islander identities and perspectives. Schools have reflected this in a range of assessment instruments, particularly the multimodal presentation.

There have been some improvements with maintaining and documenting protocols for working with the Indigenous community for the Local Area Study. Schools are reminded that “consultation must take place before students go out into the community to research”. (Section 6.4, p. 25) The protocols for consultation are outlined in the syllabus in Section 6, pp. 23–27.

The 2009 syllabus will introduce schools to a new general objective: Reflecting on perspectives and processes, which will enable students to reflect on their decision-making processes throughout an inquiry. It is essential that schools understand the importance of ethical research practices as outlined in the 2001 syllabus (p. 25) in developing these processes in preparation for study in the 2009 syllabus.

Quality of assessment
In general, the state panel found that assessment instruments were varied in terms of providing students with opportunities to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards.

- Schools need to ensure they provide students with opportunities to demonstrate efficient management of the research process including documented evidence of research findings. This is particularly relevant to the multimodal presentation and extended written tasks. In-text referencing, annotated bibliographies, and submitted drafts all provide evidence of original student work and help eliminate the possibility of plagiarism (Managing, Processing, Communicating) in research work. The Managing criteria highlight this necessity as per p. 70
of the syllabus: “Observing cultural protocols when working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people” and “accessing and recording appropriate shared information in the community”.

- Learning logs entries need to show sufficient depth and evidence of analytical skills as outlined on p. 63 of the syllabus: “Teachers should be mindful that analytical skills should be reflected in the entries in the learning log”. In addition, a range of learning log tasks should be submitted to demonstrate students’ ability to interact effectively with members of Indigenous communities, and their understanding of the concept of Indigenous identity in present-day Australian society” (Section 10.4, p. 63). This is not evident in all school submissions.

- The panel recommends that task-specific criteria be developed for individual assessment items to provide a greater coverage of standards and an equitable means of assessing student work.

**Subject support**

Two syllabus orientation workshops were held to support the introduction of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 2009 syllabus. These workshops were well attended by schools offering the subject and a number of schools looking to introduce the subject. Feedback from the workshops suggests that the 2009 syllabus provides teachers with a more flexible approach to the implementation of the subject in relation to developing learning experiences that reflect the knowledge, history and culture of Aboriginal peoples and communities, and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The themes and inquiry topics provide a range of learning opportunities and experiences for students and teachers in the subject. Introducing students to the inquiry learning model enables teachers, students and the community to work in partnership with one another — following protocols, consulting, inquiring, communicating, and reflecting.

Schools offering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies are advised to consult the Senior Education Officer (Quality Assurance), and to seek advice from the state review panel chair, panellists and other teachers for advice and support when planning a course of study, particularly the development of new work programs.

Tonia Chalk               Jackie Dunk  
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Accounting — B12

Syllabus

2009 was the sixth year of implementation of the 2003 Accounting syllabus. In 2009, there was a minor revision of the syllabus in line with the cyclic revision schedule. The 2010 syllabus will be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students in 2011.

Feedback from districts

The many schools managing composite or combined Accounting classes are to be commended for their work during 2009.

District review panel chairs report that there are still a number of schools with problems relating to incomplete folios for students. Schools should familiarise themselves with the QSA “Special provisions” policy which is available from the QSA website, and to seek the advice of their district review panel chair when making decisions regarding assessment in these situations.

Statewide comparability

There was a strong degree of comparability across the state in terms of awarding levels of achievement to student folios.

There are still concerns, however, that schools are not consistent in the way they determine rung placement for students. Judgments on the exit level and rung placement for students should be derived from the evidence available in the student folio rather than relying on the student profile. Schools should be positive in their approach, looking for evidence that the student responses in the folio match the standards described in the syllabus standards descriptors. Principles of “fullest and latest” should be applied (as discussed in the State Panel Report, 2008, and syllabus p. 42).

Course coverage

Generally, assessment folios seen in the comparability review indicate good coverage of the understandings from the syllabus. However, there are still significant instances where schools are not following the 2006 amendments (QSA Memo 002/07 on QSA website) which provide for the following changes:

- using updated report titles: Income Statement, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement
- deleting the classifications of extraordinary revenue and expenses
- deleting discounts, in particular from topics FS1, RC2, AP
- adding cost-volume-profit analysis leading to decision making in RD4.

Quality of assessment

At this late stage of the syllabus cycle, schools are developing quality assessment instruments which allow students to demonstrate their abilities in all three criteria.

Schools are to be commended for the work being done in developing instrument-specific criteria sheets. However, it is essential that criteria sheets use descriptors from the standards schema to describe student achievement in each of the standards. Schools are referred to the article available from the QSA website (Accounting 2003, Advice for teachers) for examples and explanation. Some schools are using checklists to give feedback to students, which is appropriate as long as it is understood that this does not form part of the criteria sheet and is not used to make a judgment. Many schools are also including an additional table with minimum...
requirements on their instrument-specific task sheets. These tables are not required, as standards awarded should be based on an on-balance judgment across the instrument.

It is important when using instrument-specific criteria sheets to make judgments about practical criteria, and that consideration is given to consequential follow-through of processes/recording on student scripts. Many accounting responses involve consequential processes — e.g. preparing journals, posting to ledger, completing the trial balance. Students should not be penalised multiple times for a single error.

When assessing the Knowledge, interpretation and evaluation criterion, it is important that instruments provide students the opportunity to demonstrate a comprehensive depth of content understanding, higher-order analysing and evaluative skills, and communicate effectively in business genres. Under the Interpretation and evaluation dimension, it is essential that assessment instruments give students the opportunity to not just interpret and analyse information, but to also make decisions and recommendations — i.e. to make and justify the recommendations. It is also critical that student scripts indicate that the students have been expected to write clearly, concisely and accurately using business genres (e.g. report, memo, and letter).

Assessment in the Challenging practical applications criterion is being well managed by schools. The comparability process identified few cases where instruments did not give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to record, process, report and problem-solve in situations involving complex elements. It is of concern, however, that on occasion, students being awarded a standard A, are not demonstrating sufficiently that they are meeting the syllabus standards in terms of being able to manage these complex elements.

**Subject support**

Materials for the website are being developed by the state panel to support the current syllabus. Syllabus implementation workshops for the 2010 syllabus are planned for Semester 2, 2010. Teachers are encouraged to visit the QSA website regularly to view support materials and professional development opportunities. Panel training will also be conducted in Semester 2.

Judy Beausang
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Agricultural Science — A21

Syllabus
In 2009, the first cohort of students exited under the Agricultural Science 2007 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Agricultural Science (2007). All references in this report relate to the 2007 syllabus.

Feedback from districts
All schools offering the 2007 Agricultural Science syllabus now have approved work programs. At the first monitoring and verification of the 2007 syllabus, panels provided professional advice to schools about the implementation of the course and the standards of assessment.

Statewide comparability
District samples displayed a high degree of comparability of standards across the state. The state panel found evidence in the district submissions to substantiate most school discussions and panel recommendations.

Course coverage
The evidence provided by district panels indicates that schools are implementing courses of study that satisfy syllabus requirements.

Quality of assessment
The state review panel found that most assessment instruments provided the opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability across all three exit criteria.

Schools are continuing to develop extended agricultural investigations (EAIs) that elicit evidence of student ability in all mandatory aspects (general objectives) of the course. Schools are similarly developing instrument-specific criteria sheets which clearly align with the syllabus standards using syllabus-specific descriptors.

The state review panel noted that some criteria sheets included criteria or other language from the previous syllabus, not the current one. Teachers must ensure that students are completing the requirements of the current 2007 syllabus.

The most effective way to assess the Communication general objective is in an extended written technique. This gives students the opportunity to demonstrate the relevant standards. The syllabus states on p. 4 that for communication, students should be able to:

- access relevant information and use suitable referencing conventions
- present information
- use suitable terminology
- use correct language conventions.
Subject support

In 2009, the training for the Year 2 panel focused on improving the quality of advice offered through the verification review process and review notes. Advice for teachers regarding the development of instrument-specific criteria sheets should be available from the QSA website in 2010. Additional sample assessment instruments will be annotated and added to the QSA website in 2010.

Adam Burke                   Colleen Palmer
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Ancient History — B38

Syllabus

2009 was the fifth year of implementation of the 2004 syllabus. In 2009, there was a minor revision of the syllabus in line with the cyclic revision schedule.

In light of the development of the Australian Curriculum in History, the revision of the syllabus has been put on hold as a way to minimise impact on schools in their preparation of work programs. After the Australian History curriculum document becomes available, we will start to put it in place, and it will replace the current 2004 Queensland syllabus.

Feedback from districts

All schools offering Ancient History in Queensland have approved work programs. A number of schools are in the process of negotiating amendments for 2010 cohorts. Schools are reminded to check that advice on Forms R2 is actioned accurately.

In 2009, monitoring and verification of sample folios revealed a significant level of comparability between schools’ judgments and syllabus standards. A small number of submissions were negotiated at state panel level in November during comparability.

Statewide comparability

The review of district sample submissions provides information about comparability of levels of achievement across the state at verification. The process involves matching the verified levels of achievement in the district samples to the syllabus requirements. Procedures are implemented that compare levels of achievement within and between districts. Advice is then provided to the Queensland Studies Authority to inform standards and assessment practices. This meeting also considered four submissions which were unresolved after verification.

It is clear that schools and districts are developing greater consistency of application of standards across the state. In the match between the qualities of work in the folio examples and in the syllabus standards descriptors, the state panel was, in most cases, able to find sufficient evidence to support the judgments made about interim levels of achievement. The greatest areas of comparability were in Limited Achievement and Sound Achievement, with less comparability evident in threshold High Achievement and Very High Achievement samples. Where there was a lack of comparability, it was due to the application of standards to evidence of the sub-criteria of Criterion 1 and 2. Application of most sub-criteria of Criterion 3 is more consistently applied, with the exception of “Refer to evaluation processes without disrupting the argument” and the conventions of indirect referencing.

Course coverage

Schools continue to offer diverse and engaging programs of work. It is clear, also, that most schools are engaging fully with the spirit of the 2004 syllabus. Work programs seem to be clearly implemented although the skill with which schools fully explore the implications of particular themes varies. One problematic area that is occasionally evident is where a school’s program is implemented in a manner more consistent with the 1996 syllabus than the 2004 syllabus. While the topics available for study in the 1996 syllabus remain valid choices for 2004 work programs, the nature of Inquiry themes and demands of assessment tasks, and criteria and standards, are significantly different in the 2004 syllabus, and require a different approach in teaching and assessment if students are to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards.
A key issue to emerge through the review was the need for schools to fully implement the Aspects of inquiry. The Aspects of inquiry are a mandatory part of the syllabus. They are referred to in Section 6, Learning Experiences (p. 19), Section 7, Themes and inquiry topics (p. 25), and Section 8, Assessment and standards (pp. 62–65). It is essential that schools provide evidence, in folios, of student engagement with the Aspects of inquiry, and apply the standard descriptors relating to the Aspects of inquiry when assessing student work. If research booklets are used by students, it would be good practice to design sections explicitly compatible with the Aspects of inquiry.

**Quality of assessment**

The quality of assessment tasks reviewed by the state panel continues to improve, demonstrating a growing understanding across the state of the differing requirements and conditions of each of the four categories of assessment.

Where panels have been unable to agree with decisions about levels of achievement made by schools are frequently due to limitations in the design of some tasks (particularly Category 1 and 4 tests). Schools need to ensure that students from all ranges of ability have the opportunity to demonstrate the standards of which they are capable. Research tasks and examinations must, then, allow for differentiated success.

The following advice may be useful to schools to help maximise student achievement:

**Category 4 tasks**

- A number of Category 4 tasks do not allow students to demonstrate the full range of standards descriptors. While schools may elect to assess a selected sub-criterion, they should take great care before omitting sub-criteria required to demonstrate a particular level of achievement (e.g. representativeness). If this is omitted, it may be found that a particular level cannot be demonstrated and students are restricted from achieving the full range of standards. It is anticipated that in Year 12, schools would apply the full range of sub-criteria for each criterion for all assessment tasks. Failure to do this may well result in insufficient evidence for panels to verify school decisions about levels of achievement.

- Category 4 tasks provide an ideal opportunity to focus student attention on particular sub-criteria of Criterion 2 to ensure evidence of student achievement. For example, questions which require students to identify implicit values or motives, or to consider issues of representativeness, or to explore likely accuracy or reliability of sources, allow students to demonstrate their ability to achieve higher standards in Criterion 2.

**Category 1 tasks**

- Category 1 tasks in Year 12 must include a range of sources in respect to relevance, reliability, representativeness and the extent to which some of them support the statement or question will be contestable: “Evaluation and application of perspectives must be applied to make judgments” (p. 54). Students must be given every opportunity to demonstrate the full range of standards descriptors through careful task design and selection of sources.

- If large numbers of sources are provided in examinations, students must be provided with adequate time to peruse both the sources and the task carefully. For unseen sources, adequate contextualising information should be provided if students are to effectively evaluate these.

- Tasks should clearly indicate which sources are seen and which are genuinely unseen — that is, appearing on the exam paper without prior study or notice. Seen sources are those which have been dealt with in class and/or which students know will be on the examination.
• The intent of a Category 1 task is for students to use the sources provided to construct a cohesive, valid argument. While students will bring prior knowledge to the task, the argument should be constructed primarily from the sources provided rather than from recalled knowledge. Assessment of Criterion 2 is based upon this use of sources, as are the sub-criteria in Criterion 3 related to argument and evaluation. Schools should not confuse a depth of recalled understanding and fluency of expression with such an argument. Successful responses will explore concepts of change and continuity over time and refer to evaluation processes without disruption and will be based primarily on evaluation of the sources provided.

Category 2 and 3 tasks

• State panel and district panels were concerned about some instances of VHA and HA research evidence that was primarily narrative and descriptive rather than evaluative. Reflections that focused on the interpretation of information or the utility of sources were frequently translated into research tasks which reported findings in a fluent and accurate manner, but with no reference to the problematic nature of the evidence drawn upon. Schools should encourage students to stop regularly during their research to synthesise their key ideas and to explore how representative a view is being provided by the artefacts or authors used to date. This evaluation and synthesis should then be used in their final presentations, in whatever mode is used.

• The state panel again notes that some schools are assessing Criterion 2 using evidence in research booklets or logs and annotated bibliographies. Schools are reminded that evidence for Criterion 2 must be assessed using students’ final presentations, whether written or multimodal. Such critical evaluation of sources must be an integral part of the final product (whether this is an essay, short story, feature article, lecture or museum display). Annotated bibliographies and research notes cannot substitute for evaluation within the text(s) of the final presentation.

• Students are required to “accurately use the conventions of a recognised system of references” for a VHA. This includes referencing both “direct and indirect reference”. Students at a B standard must also incorporate both “direct and indirect reference”. Students should understand that key concepts and facts that might be challenged or are critical to arguments must be referenced, even if the student has paraphrased rather than quoted a source.

• All research evidence should be included in folios unless schools believe sufficient is present to justify decisions made against Criterion 1 standards. The use of research logs or booklets as summaries of a research process may well not provide sufficient evidence on their own of all aspects of Criterion 1. Schools are advised to focus on the wide range of skills required for effective source evaluation, note selection and critical reflection, and for effective and ongoing synthesis of findings resulting in the formulation and reshaping of hypotheses or arguments. While it is useful to provide scaffolds to remind students about key issues or to provide advice on possible approaches, they must be combined with guided practice and a flexible approach to documenting evidence of these skills.

Design of standards matrixes

• While the syllabus mandates the inclusion of instrument-specific criteria and standards matrixes, schools must ensure these represent the syllabus intent. Key language of the standards should not be changed in such a way that the syllabus intent is modified. Instrument-specific standards might nominate the expected genre or identify the topic. If sub-criteria are made task specific for one instrument, these should be present in full, and unmodified, in at least two other items to allow students adequate opportunity to address the range of standards. As previously mentioned, the implications of modifying sub-criteria for the achievement of particular levels should be very carefully considered. It is anticipated that in Year 12 schools will apply the full range of sub-criteria for each criterion for all assessment
tasks. Failure to do this may result in insufficient evidence for panels to verify school decisions about levels of achievement.

- Schools should ensure that the syllabus intention and spirit are maintained in regards to the design of specific standards matrixes. Schools are reminded that syllabus criteria and standards must be used to make judgments about standards.

- Actually annotating a specific sub-criterion achieved for each standard is a helpful way of illustrating what students have demonstrated and what is yet to be demonstrated.

Subject support

Subject workshops are planned to occur in Semester 2, 2010. Please check the QSA website (Professional development and events) for details at the beginning of Term 2, 2010. Panel training will also occur at this time.

Sue Burvill-Shaw    Mary-Anne Vale
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Biology — A06

Syllabus
The 2004 Biology syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Biology (2004). All references in this report relate to the 2004 Biology syllabus.

Feedback from districts
While there was considerable disagreement between initial school proposals and panel advice at verification, there was significant agreement reached at the district level, indicating that schools and panels were able to negotiate resolutions according to syllabus standards. Schools are encouraged to consult the support materials from the QSA website for further guidance on task design and advice.

There was a lack of evidence of higher-order thinking in student work such as applying and linking ideas, concepts and theories to explain phenomena in a range of situations (syllabus, p. 4). Assessment tasks must provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate these higher-order processes in all three criteria. Without this evidence, panels may not be able to support the level of achievement decisions proposed by schools.

The matching of evidence in the folios with syllabus standards is an area for further consideration by schools. Carefully reviewing the verbs used in the syllabus descriptors is an appropriate way to ensure that decisions align with standards.

Finally, schools need to note that all levels of achievement are required to be verified. Schools are required to send in folios for the LA and VLA levels when the R6 indicates that students have been awarded these levels. Even if the available folios are “atypical” in some way it is essential to have these decisions verified. Information on atypical folios is found from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Statewide comparability
The state panel found evidence in the district samples to support most school decisions. However, some threshold VHA decisions could not be supported due to the lack of complexity and challenge in some tasks. In a few instances, poor instrument design resulted in there being insufficient evidence in one whole criterion, usually Evaluating biological issues (EBI), to support school decisions.

Schools are encouraged to get to know the QSA’s “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” to ensure that levels of achievement are awarded in alignment with the policy. The policy is found on the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Special provisions.

It was again noted that some students are conducting investigations on vertebrate animals that may contravene the Animal Care and Protection Act (2001). Schools are required to carefully monitor student-designed investigations to ensure that they comply with this Act and its regulations (syllabus, pp. 15–16). The same principles must be applied when experimenting on human subjects.
Course coverage

Schools are reminded that the syllabus requirement for an Extended experimental investigation (EEI) is an instrument developed to answer an open-ended practical research question. The focus is on planning and problem solving using primary data generated through experimentation by the student (syllabus, p. 23). A computer simulation could be one way to explore a topic prior to students formulating a question to investigate but it is not a substitute for a practical, student-designed investigation which includes experimentation.

While most schools include evidence of field work in their verification folios, some of this work did not include “… an analysis of field work primary data” as required by the syllabus (p. 21). Evidence of the analysis of field data must be evident in the verification folio.

The state review panel encourages schools to review their policies on annotating student work. Many schools do not annotate at all, while other schools note key elements of the standards criteria (such as “justifies”, “describes” or “makes links”) as they appear in the responses. This style of annotation is encouraged as it clarifies, for both students and reviewers, how the responses match with syllabus standards descriptors.

Quality of assessment

The state review panel noted a wide range of creative, high-quality tasks being used by some schools.

The syllabus states that EBI must contain a clear “biological issue” and needs to be structured so that students know what is expected of them when responding (p. 5 of the syllabus). The issues being assessed should be embedded in the learning experiences for the unit, not tacked on to the task at the end of the unit. It is essential to teach and practise skills such as “making and justifying decisions” with students prior to their use in tasks. Many tasks lack a clearly defined biological issue resulting in a significant imbalance in the evidence available for making level-of-achievement decisions. Consequently, panels were unable to support school decisions due to the lack of evidence in the EBI criteria. Refer to “A step-by-step approach to designing assessment tasks for Evaluating biological issues” for guidelines assessing this general objective (http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Biology (2004) > Advice for teachers > Biology — A step-by-step approach to designing assessment tasks for Evaluating biological issues).

Judgments about the standard of student work are made against criteria derived from the syllabus exit standards. Standards descriptors on criteria sheets are to align with syllabus standards descriptors and they need to be specific to the instrument. Using the syllabus exit standards as a generic criteria sheet for all tasks is not recommended. These exit criteria are an essential starting point for writing criteria sheets but not all aspects of all descriptors will be relevant to every instrument.

Subject support

Assessment workshops were conducted around the state this year concentrating on the development of assessment instruments to give students the opportunity to meet the requirements of the syllabus. Unfortunately, in some districts these were not as well attended as was expected.

Further support materials for Biology will be available from the QSA website in 2010 including annotated student responses to assessment instruments.

Panel training will be conducted in Semester 2, 2010 in all districts.

Keith Prideaux Colleen Palmer
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Business Communication and Technologies — B28

Syllabus

2009 was the final year of implementation of the 2002 syllabus. Monitoring and verification will take place with the first cohort of students on the 2008 syllabus during 2010 and schools should ensure that all judgments about students’ responses are made using the standards of the 2008 syllabus. All references in this report are to the 2002 syllabus.

Feedback from districts

All work programs for schools with students exiting in Year 12, 2009 were approved.

Statewide comparability

In 2009, the state review panel found comparability across most of the levels of achievement for all districts. When the state review panel found disagreement, it was usually as a result of task-specific criteria sheets not matching the syllabus standards descriptors or task design did not allow for extended written responses under supervised conditions for Knowledge and understanding.

Course coverage

Most schools are successfully implementing the requirements of the 2002 syllabus. It was apparent by the quality of the assessment and student responses that effective teaching and learning is taking place, and teachers should be congratulated for their commitment to the subject.

Quality of assessment

There was a variety of effective assessment instruments presented at the monitoring and verification meetings across the districts. In particular, Computer operations (word processing — advanced) instruments contained quality tasks. Valuable and detailed teacher feedback was evident on student scripts.

Schools should ensure that they provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to meet all aspects of the exit standards across the full range of standards in all criteria. The state panel identified a lack of complexity in Skills and procedures instruments assessing Computer operations (spreadsheets) and in some instruments assessing the Reasoning processes criterion.

It is important to ensure that tasks which assess the Knowledge and understanding criterion are developed across the course of study with greater emphasis on paragraph responses in Year 12. There were a number of schools which did not provide students with the opportunity to prepare an extended written response (minimum 400 words) under supervised conditions in the Knowledge and understanding criterion, which is a verification requirement (2002 syllabus). In addition, in a number of districts, the state panel identified a mismatch between the requirements of the question and the expected student response, resulting in inappropriate judgments being made about student responses.

The development of task-specific criteria sheets was commendable and schools are encouraged to further develop these ensuring they align with the syllabus standards descriptors. Schools are reminded that task-specific criteria sheets for each assessment instrument is a verification
requirement of the 2008 Business Communication and Technologies syllabus (Section 7.6, p. 45).

**Subject support**

Materials for the website are being developed by the state panel to support the 2008 syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to visit the QSA website regularly to view support materials and professional development opportunities. Panel training will be conducted in Semester 2, 2010.

Leigh Schuch  
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons  
Senior Education Officer
Business Organisation and Management — B25

Syllabus

The popularity of this subject continues to grow with 127 schools offering Business Organisation and Management (BOM) in 2009, with 2301 students exiting. 2009 was the first verification process for students exiting on the 2007 syllabus.


Feedback from districts

When preparing Forms R7, evidence for the proposed movement needs to be provided by the school to the district or state review panel chair so that a judgment can be made regarding these movements. It is recommended that the student profile, Form R6, latest assessment item and student response be faxed to the district or state review panel chair together with the Form R7.

Statewide comparability

The awarding of levels of achievement was consistent across the state. Evidence provided for the Knowledge and understanding (KU) criterion was strong and assessment instruments for the most part covered the general objectives well. A wide range of Knowledge and understanding (KU) instruments were sampled at a state level. Evidence provided for the Reflective process (RP) criterion across the state was not strong. Sample folios across all standards were lacking “evaluating interactions within business organisations and environments and deciding on strategies for further action” (General objective p. 3).

Course coverage

The evidence provided indicates that schools are implementing courses that satisfy syllabus requirements in terms of coverage of the course.

The continual growth in the number of students undertaking the BOM course illustrates the interest and demand that exists for the subject. The business plan continues to be a unique assessment instrument for this subject, and has provided a platform for a number of state- and district-level competition winners. The business plan provides a real-life experience and demonstrates to the student body the need to plan effectively prior to undertaking a business venture.

Quality of assessment

The variety of assessment items continues to be a major strength in this subject. Forming partnerships with business, community and industry, for example business mentoring and site visits, is a common thread coming out of assessment instruments.

The business plan is a mandatory piece of assessment in Year 12. Teachers should note that the Business plan must be supported with evidence when used to demonstrate the Action skills criterion. This evidence needs to be presented even if the Business plan is completed as an individual task. As outlined in the syllabus (p. 34) examples may include: an individual reflective essay, individual reflective journals, peer assessment, teacher observation checklists and individual critical incident reports (this is not an exhaustive list).
Conventions of communication (Section 8.1, p. 39) need more attention by schools, that is, assessment instruments need more variety to give students the opportunity to use a variety of genres. Currently reports are being used in most districts as the main assessment genre. This could be restricting students’ ability to demonstrate Reflection processes to “evaluate interactions” and provide in-depth responses. Report genre in the reflective processes instrument needs to place greater emphasis on “recommendations” as this component of the report provides opportunities for students to provide a range of responses or perspectives.

Action skills have been covered well and the use of “assessment logs” have enabled students to demonstrate various components such as planning, advocating, and negotiating (p. 26).

Assessment instruments that require a yes/no response do not provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate standards within the Reflection processes criterion. The Reflection processes criterion refers to the “student’s ability to evaluate interactions within business organisations and environments, and to decide upon strategies for action” (p. 36). Often, assessment instruments were lacking scaffolding to guide students to provide the detail needed to succeed across all standards.

The use of the “enabling components” (pp. 24–27) to clearly identify the assessable areas of Reflection processing or Action skills needs to occur to ensure students are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate all components by the end of the two-year course of study. The inclusion of enabling components within assessment instruments is very useful as a feed-forward strategy for guiding students as to the intention of the assessment instrument.

Consistent use of the report genre for extended written response assessment instruments should be constructed so that students are given the opportunity to demonstrate achievement across the Reflection processes standards. If report genre is used then the “examination alternative courses of action” should be evident throughout the report. The recommendations section of the report should allow for the development of appropriate strategies for further action.

The 2007 syllabus states that “each assessment instrument must be accompanied by a task-specific criteria sheet which provides evidence of how students meet standards associated with assessment criteria” (p. 36). Schools need to make judgments about student responses to assessment instruments by matching the qualities of student work with the relevant syllabus standards descriptors.

Subject support

The state review panel has acted on advice presented by stakeholders and has developed a “Frequently-asked questions” statement that will be placed on the QSA website to help answer those questions that have been raised through the moderation process. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Business and Economics > Business Organisation and Management (2007).

Brad Greene     Tammy Hope
State Review Panel Chair     Senior Education Officer
Chemistry — A04

Syllabus
In 2009, the last cohort of students studying the 1995 syllabus exited their schooling.

Feedback from districts
District review panel chairs generally reported that district submissions met syllabus requirements, but there remain some areas of concern, primarily in the lack of *rigour* in the Complex reasoning process questions and the absence of “Part A” in formal testing.

Statewide comparability
All but four submissions were resolved at district level. District panels look for evidence to substantiate the school’s judgments and offer advice to schools on the application of syllabus standards.

The state panel review of district samples generally confirmed the judgments made by the schools. There is a particular need for panels to have access to the criteria by which research assignments and complex reasoning processes assessment tasks are to be judged.

Course coverage
In general, the assessment packages verified by district panels and compared by the state panel demonstrated general alignment between the general objectives and the learning experiences to show the scope, depth and challenge of the learning experiences.

Quality of assessment
The state panel noted that a number of schools are trialling different forms of assessment in preparation for the implementation of the new syllabus. The increased use of task-specific criteria sheets for many non-exam items shows the commitment of Chemistry teachers to providing positive learning experiences for their students.

Schools are encouraged to think creatively when setting assessment tasks, and to use instrument-specific criteria and standards schema when making judgments.

Subject support
The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities.

The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Chemistry (1995).

Ian Buchan                                      Susan Scheiwe
State Review Panel Chair                       Senior Education Officer
Chemistry — A44

Syllabus

In 2009, all schools implemented the 2007 Chemistry senior syllabus with their Year 11 cohorts. The Year 12 cohort of 2009 represented the first cohort to exit on the 2007 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Chemistry (2007). All references in this section refer to the 2007 syllabus document.

Feedback from districts

There were a number of common issues that district panels noted at both monitoring and verification:

- criteria sheets were not task-specific
- there was a mismatch of general objectives, e.g. Evaluating and concluding (EC) said to be assessed but opportunities only provided to demonstrate Knowledge and conceptual understanding
- a lack of complex and challenging questions in supervised assessments
- a lack of opportunities for students to demonstrate ability in both Investigative processes (because it was being assessed through the Extended experimental investigation only), and Evaluating and concluding (mainly assessed through the Extended experimental investigation and a few supervised assessment questions)
- extended response tasks not relating to an issue, circumstance or a question, and the structure of the extended response task not allowing student responses to meet the requirement of the exit standards, in particular exploration, interpretation, analysis and evaluation
- insufficient annotation of student scripts and/or criteria sheets to provide feedback for students, particularly for Extended experimental investigations
- Extended experimental investigations being too directed, without providing opportunities for formulating questions and/or hypotheses
- a lack of evidence of the basis of teacher judgments about standards.

Statewide comparability

In general, the state review panel has found evidence in the district samples to support most decisions made by schools and the district review panels. In addition, it is evident that schools are gaining confidence about implementing the types of assessment instruments required by the syllabus and in teaching specified units of work in context.

Course coverage

In general most schools have ensured that the mandatory aspects of the syllabus have been covered in terms of key concepts, assessment task types and contextualisation of at least one unit in each of Years 11 and 12.

Schools should adhere to the QSA’s “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” when awarding levels of achievement.
Quality of assessment

Assessment tasks overall seemed to be well designed, but there is a need to provide more opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of aspects of all three general objectives, particularly for Investigative processes and Evaluating and concluding.

Many schools have included extended response tasks in their assessment programs and there have been some very good examples of student responses seen. There is still a need for schools to make sure that the central focus of extended response tasks is for students to respond to a chemical question, circumstance or issue, and that the chemistry involved is central to the task.

In many of the Extended experimental investigations there is a need for more direction to be given to students, in the instructions for the task, and through feedback on drafts, about the key elements that are expected in the discussion and conclusion of the report. This is to ensure that the analysis of primary and secondary data, the linking of the findings to the chemistry involved and evaluation and recommendations are addressed.

There were also some concerns in that extended response tasks and Extended experimental investigations did not always require students to analyse data to the levels and depth required for VHA (e.g. extended response tasks did not require a response to a question or issue, nor focus on secondary data analysis, while the Extended experimental investigations did not expect analysis of both primary and secondary data, evaluation of same, or hypothesising).

In a number of the Extended experimental investigation reports, it was apparent that students had not been given sufficiently clear direction about the genre/requirements of a scientific report. Specifically, the discussion needs to contain the following elements: analysis and interpretation of data, linking of findings to chemical concepts and principles, evaluation and recommendations, and justification of conclusions.

Schools should be careful that assigned tasks contain chemistry that requires students to work at the right level of complexity for secondary students (particularly in organic chemistry).

There were some concerns that supervised assessments did not always provide students with sufficient opportunities to demonstrate their ability in the complex and challenging aspects of Evaluating and concluding required for VHA levels. The practice of using items in supervised assessments, that under the previous syllabus were deemed to be challenging, needs to be checked by matching them carefully to the A and B standards criteria in the syllabus.

Schools are encouraged to think creatively when setting assessment tasks, and to use instrument-specific criteria and standards schema when making judgments.

Some schools had assessment tasks that would have allowed opportunities for the demonstration of the full range of standards but either the criteria sheets did not match the task or students were misled by other information provided that did not fit the task requirements.

Many schools are to be congratulated on the quality of their instrument-specific criteria sheets; however, there is a need to ensure that in doing this, words are not added or deleted that detracts from the meaning intended in the syllabus standard descriptors.

There is a need for more feedback in the form of annotations on student scripts and criteria sheets to assist students in evaluating their work and to show the links to the criteria sheet descriptors.

Exit levels of achievement should be determined by matching the evidence in the folio with the exit standards, rather than averaging of grades from the student profile.

The standard awarded should be informed by how the quality of work matches the syllabus exit descriptors overall as applied to the summative body of work, i.e. a single demonstration of a standard cannot demonstrate achievement across a range of topics (see 7.8 of the syllabus).
Schools and panellists should look for multiple demonstrations of student achievement against the exit standards rather than one demonstration, and not rely on only one demonstration.

**Subject support**

Support was available from the Senior Education Officer by phone, email, and fax. Many schools have visited this officer at the QSA office in Brisbane.

In Semester 1, Syllabus workshop 2 was repeated. This workshop focused on designing assessment, with emphasis on Extended experimental investigations and Extended response tasks. In Semester 2, Syllabus workshop 3, the final in the series was offered, focusing on different approaches to developing supervised assessment instruments, as well as strategies for making judgments on folios of student work and awarding levels of achievement.

In the second half of the year, panel training was conducted in all districts throughout the state.

Annotated sample assessment instruments are being developed for publication on the website in 2010. These annotated student responses should be used as a guide to help in the judgments made about the match between syllabus standards and the evidence provided by the student.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities.

Trevor Jones  Susan Scheiwe  
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Chinese — B23

Syllabus

This was the final year for the 2001 syllabus. In 2009, 511 Year 12 students exited from 43 schools having studied Chinese. Of these, five students studied under a shared campus arrangement and six through the School of Distance Education.

Feedback from districts

Monitoring and verification proceeded smoothly in 2009 with few concerns arising at monitoring and all schools achieving agreement to their proposed levels of achievement and relative achievement of sample folios by the end of verification.

Issues arising from verification include:

- Atypical folios must be submitted when they are a required sample. For example, folios that represent the work of a student who has completed only two semesters in Year 11 must be submitted if it is the only sample of a threshold LA.
- The QSA’s “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” must be adhered to.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across the state. The state panel was able to find evidence that there was comparability of judgments about levels of achievement in the sample submissions across the state.

Course coverage

The mandatory aspects of the syllabus were generally well covered.

Quality of assessment

Quality assessment should be designed to allow students opportunities to demonstrate the criteria and standards. One area of concern is that students are not being given enough opportunity to demonstrate the spontaneous use of language in spoken tasks. While a speech is a legitimate text type to use, there must be questions to follow allowing students to demonstrate their range of language in unrehearsed situations.

Attention to assessment planning and design is essential to ensure sufficient opportunities are provided to students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion. The following should be considered:

- Increasing complexity over the four-semester course of study. Students should demonstrate, through more complex tasks, and in their own spoken and written texts, an understanding and use of language that matches exit standards descriptors and meets syllabus requirements.
- A variety of text types over a range of topics to enable students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion.
- Assessment that allows responses from all students in a cohort to be matched to the syllabus standards. Where first-language (L1) speakers are studying with second-language (L2) learners, all student work should be judged using the L2 syllabus exit standards descriptors, and assessment instruments should be designed to allow both groups opportunities to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion.
Subject support

The QSA has continued support of the assessment and moderation of languages across the state with assessment workshops, development of materials on the website and specific school support.

Winnie Edwards-Davis  Kerri Furlong
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Dance — B19

Syllabus

In 2009, the fourth cohort of students exited under the senior Dance syllabus 2004. Once again, district review panel chairs and the state review panel would like to congratulate schools on their continuing successful implementation of the syllabus.

The Dance syllabus subcommittee has conducted a minor revision of the syllabus which is due for release in early 2010, and for general implementation with Year 11 in 2011.

All references in this report relate to the senior Dance syllabus 2004, available from the QSA website.

Feedback from districts

There was a high level of consistency of teacher judgments evident in district review submissions at both monitoring and verification.

Teachers are encouraged to familiarise themselves thoroughly with the exit standards statements and to ensure that all student responses reflect the standards awarded.

Please ensure that filmed documentation samples on DVD are formatted to be compatible for a standard DVD player and are easily navigable on generic hardware.

Please also ensure that folio omissions are explained in an accompanying letter. Please refer to the Moderation procedures for atypical sample folios (QSA website > Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures).

Statewide comparability

Overall, there was comparability across the state in the application of standards and differentiation between levels of achievement. This indicated that teachers have engaged well with the standards descriptors well and, for the most part, are making appropriate decisions about student achievement.

The state review panel noted a variety of good student responses in the district samples and an appropriate level of detail in teachers’ comments to support standards awarded.

To ensure statewide comparability, teachers need to apply standards in an on-balance way. To do this, teachers should take the entire work into consideration and apply the standard that best fits the whole response.

Course coverage

For the most part, sample folios demonstrated that the requirements for verification folios were well understood by schools. The state review panel congratulates teachers on their choices regarding sequencing of learning and units of work that allowed students to demonstrate a wide variety of high-quality responses.

Quality of assessment

Choreography

The syllabus states on p. 38 that “All Choreography tasks should require students to indicate their choreographic intent” (refer to Table 8 in Section 8.6.1). This requirement should enable students to:
inform the teacher of their intended focus by outlining a selection of the stimulus, theme, idea, inspiration, intended effect or impact

indicate an explanation of their manipulation of form and choreographic devices to support their intended focus.

The purpose of choreographic documentation is to help in the judgments being made about student achievement. This documentation should not exceed 300 words, and should be one succinct statement of choreographic intent (see syllabus Section 8.3, pages 38 and 45). Such documentation must be included, even if written by the teacher as a result of discussion with the student.

Journals and choreographic folios are not required for verification, but may be used as learning experiences.

Although not a syllabus requirement, opportunities should be considered to allow students, particularly in Year 12, to move towards developing their own personal style of choreography, rather than merely replicating existing choreographic styles.

**Performance**

The state review panel noted several outstanding performance responses in district samples.

The syllabus states on p. 39:

“For teacher-choreographed sequences teachers should provide a brief written statement of choreographic intent indicating stylistic and expressive requirements for performance”. The statement can be included as part of the task description and standards or as a separate document in the general folio.

For student-choreographed sequences students should provide a brief written statement of choreographic intent indicating stylistic and expressive requirements for performance. The performance task should give directions to students in how to complete this brief written statement, and it should be included in individual student folios.

Performance assessment instruments must include a brief statement outlining the choreographic intent. This statement assists students in understanding the expressive and stylistic aspects of the task, and clearly outlines the task requirements, parameters or intent for panellists in review folios (see also syllabus p. 45). It must be included either on task sheets or elsewhere in the submission.

**Appreciation**

The syllabus describes Appreciation on p. 4 as:

“...the communication of the student’s response to dance through the application of problem-solving and research skills. Students should be able to communicate their response to a variety of dances in context through analysis, interpretation and evaluation with justification.”

Teachers should ensure that Appreciation tasks and the associated dances allow students to demonstrate analysis, interpretation and evaluation, and the standards awarded to student work describe students’ achievement in evaluation, not only analysis. The state review panel noted some assessment instruments that did not allow students to demonstrate evaluation, but instead focused student responses on identification and description.

Appreciation tasks that focused on one succinct question demonstrated greater depth in student response. These allowed students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation with justification. Please refer to syllabus p. 40. As evaluation is an important aspect of the criterion and standards for Appreciation, teachers are encouraged to ensure that questions are suitably challenging to allow students to demonstrate the standards. Importantly, teachers should
ensure that, irrespective of the amount of evaluation, it is the quality of that evaluation that forms the basis of decisions on student standards.

When selecting sections of danceworks for Appreciation tasks, teachers should consider the extent to which that excerpt allows students to respond in depth, especially in terms of demonstrating their evaluation abilities. For example, highly complex danceworks, which include complex relationships between dance components and skills, may elicit deeper responses if studied across a shorter segment. In longer danceworks, students may not be able to discern and discuss the complex relationships in great depth, and the emphasis here may be on a few dance components and skills. This is of even greater significance if the task is to be completed under exam conditions.

One aspect of communicating ideas about dance includes using dance-specific terminology to describe and evaluate danceworks. The syllabus highlights the need for students to “use specialist terminology which refers to the components of dance” (Section 7.1, p. 33). These dance components are identified clearly on p. 6, and teachers should ensure that students become familiar with, and use this terminology in Choreography, Performance, and Appreciation.

When working in Indigenous dance styles and genres, teachers are encouraged to consult the QSA Indigenous perspectives resources, available from the QSA website > P–12 Approach > Indigenous perspectives.

**Subject support**

Support materials for Dance are now available from the QSA website, including Year 11 and 12 annotated sample assessment instruments for Choreography, Performance, and Appreciation.

Angela Pratt
State Review Panel Chair

Andrew Reid
Senior Education Officer
Drama — B22

Syllabus
In 2009, the first cohort of Year 12 students exited on the 2007 syllabus which went into its second year of implementation. All schools now have an approved work program and will have developed all units of work and assessment. After delivering the complete course, schools may reflect on the course and syllabus possibilities and requirements, and decide to make adjustments. If significant changes are made to the units or to the assessment program, an amendment needs to be submitted. The cover sheet for amendments is available on the website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Drama (2007).

Feedback from districts
Generally DVD quality was of a high standard; however, some were not clear and were not able to support the standards awarded. The DVD sent in a verification submission should show students presenting a published play text (syllabus, p. 37).

In general, documentation for Forming assessment, particularly practical Forming, requires attention. Documentation needs to chart the choices and selections being made. The process of creating should be revealed and include frameworks, contexts and the rationale behind decisions. For example, the syllabus requires a script with annotations for a practical directing task. The annotations need to be more than a few blocking notes to support the standards awarded. Relevant annotations may need to show how the student has explored ideas to create, shape, manage and apply dramatic languages.

Schools are required to collect and provide sufficient evidence to support judgments. Verification folios should contain closest to mid and threshold levels of achievement, irrespective of whether they are atypical folios. There were some incomplete folios. Schools need to develop procedures to collect evidence on or before the due date.

Statewide comparability
Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across the state. The state panel was able to find evidence that there was comparability of judgments of levels of achievement in the sample submissions across the state.

Course coverage
In the first year of verification for the Drama 2007 syllabus, schools have begun to take advantage of the opportunities provided and have developed programs to explore a range of dramatic languages and perspectives. Carefully constructed assessment programs and instruments have resulted in high-quality work from students. In this new environment, there needs to be careful and deep thinking about the four or five tasks that lead students to exit standards. Essentially, the reduced nature of assessment allows for greater depth in the exploration of the forms and styles in units. It is timely to review assessment instruments and ensure that they are substantial and complex. An assessment plan that supports students to meet exit standards, allows for investigations across a range of dramatic languages and perspectives leading to the creation of rich dramatic meaning. Poor task design will affect students' ability to achieve exit standards.

Balance is a key component of the syllabus and this applies to the exploration of the dramatic languages and perspectives. Many schools presented student work that required repetitive use of
Quality of assessment

Some attention is required in the wording for task design. To support students, the state panel suggests that the technique and the form/style be clearly identified. Tasks need to give students the opportunity to achieve the full range of standards and clearly identify what students are to do.

The syllabus states on p. 25 that “In developing assessment tasks for students, teachers need to ensure that:

- the techniques and instruments chosen allow for demonstration of achievement in the particular objective or objectives
- they are written in clear, unambiguous language, thereby ensuring that the teacher and the student have the same understanding of the task
- the selection of dramatic texts and contexts offers a suitable challenge to students, providing them with opportunities to show the full range of their abilities
- the tasks for assessment become more complex as the course progresses.”

When designing assessment instruments, schools need to ensure that task design, questions and conditions clearly align with guidelines for tasks (see Table 5, pp. 29–32), rather than requiring too many techniques and styles in one task. Some assessment instruments have been hybrid tasks and required a demonstration of more than one criterion in a single task. This occurred mostly in presenting tasks where students were required to write and then perform the student-devised script. Student-devised scripts need to be sufficiently challenging and may require teacher feedback or reworking to provide sufficient opportunity to show students’ abilities. The following statements are taken from the syllabus, Section 6.6.6, p. 28:

Assessment in more than one criterion

Example 1 “… It is essential that this occurs as two separate tasks, one with the Forming criterion and one with the Presenting criterion. This may occur on condition that the Forming assessment is completed with its own learning experiences and feedback given to students before they proceed to the Presenting assessment with its own learning experiences. Such an approach will allow students to rework material if necessary and help safeguard against poor quality material as the basis of their Presenting assessment …”

The devising of the script for performance may be a separate assessment instrument or it may be part of the course work or workshoped as a group prior to the Presenting assessment but is not part of the Presenting task. If a student-devised script is the basis for a Presenting assessment, this script needs to be recorded and a highlighted copy submitted as documentation for each sample folio. This requirement also applies to physical theatre styles.

It is pleasing to see teachers tackling the contemporary dramatic form of physical theatre. However, teachers need to ensure that the assessment instrument used to assess physical theatre requires complex aesthetic enquiry. The performance of physical theatre should always strive to make meaning and explore key questions and issues.

When there is only one responding task in Year 12, the assessment instrument needs to allow the students to achieve exit standards. Tasks that require and prompt retelling of plot and description will not elicit extended analytical skills or provide the opportunity for students to develop a position or evaluate and synthesise judgments.
### Subject support

Panel training was held in Semester 2, 2009 in 13 districts. Assessment workshops will be held in each district in Semester 1, 2010. These are half-day workshops and details will be available on the professional development section of the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select PD & events > Workshops > Years 10–12 > Drama.

The syllabus and support materials for the 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Drama (2007). Additional materials will become available in 2010.

Adrianne Jones    Shauna Bouel
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Earth Science — A07

Syllabus

Monitoring and verification
All schools offering Earth Science in Years 11 and 12 in 2009 have an approved work program. Given the maturity of courses at most schools, monitoring indicated that the implementation of intensive teacher-directed short laboratory or field-based (SLF) tasks and extended laboratory- or field-based (ELF) tasks effectively reduced opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevant scientific processes. While a degree of scaffolding is important, students need opportunities to design, implement and evaluate their own scientific investigations in Year 11.

At verification and exit negotiations, the modes of implementation of the mandatory assessment task types (syllabus, pp. 34–37) were generally appropriate. The most common problem related to R6 rung placements that were not supported by evidence in the package. Generally this was a result of task design limiting opportunities for students to demonstrate higher-order conceptual and scientific processes required by the A and B standards of the exit standards (syllabus, pp. 31–33). In a very limited number of cases, the standard of teacher judgment was inconsistent with the exit standards.

As Earth Science is a state-only panel, comparability was undertaken through verification processes. Consistency across the state is evident.

Course coverage
The state review panel noted that there was evidence that schools have incorporated current topical issues in their courses. As has been the case for some time, core and elective units have been developed by schools to harness their local environment as a resource for teaching and learning, and use teachers’ expertise and areas of special interest. The mandatory aspects of the syllabus — Major topics (syllabus, pp. 14–26), Field work (syllabus, pp. 12–13) and the four assessment task types (syllabus, pp 34–37) — have been met by schools.

Quality of assessment
Schools have implemented assessment in a manner consistent with the mandatory task types. In many schools, students were given opportunities to complete a range of quality assessment tasks that provided considerable opportunities for them to tackle the full range of the general objectives. As previously identified in this report, the effectiveness of SLF and ELF task types has been hindered in some instances by investigations that are too teacher-directed. Providing students with an investigation, either from a textbook or teacher-designed, prevents students from engaging in the “recognise the problem or situation” and “plan the investigation” learning outcomes of Working scientifically (syllabus, p. 7).
Subject support

Support materials for Earth Science will be available from the QSA website in 2010 including annotated student responses to assessment instruments.

Christopher Blundell  Colleen Palmer
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Economics — B29

Syllabus

The 2004 Economics syllabus is entering the sixth year of general implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12> Years 11–12 subjects > Business and Economics > Economics (2004).

The 2010 syllabus has been developed and should be finalised early 2010, with general implementation in 2011.

Feedback from districts

All Queensland schools offering Economics as a senior course of study are operating with an approved work program. Being at the end of the syllabus cycle, the number of new work programs for approval has reduced in comparison to previous years.

District panel feedback through the monitoring and verification processes indicates that most schools are effectively implementing the 2004 Economics Syllabus. While issues of the effectiveness of task design and provision of task authentication materials continue to be identified by district panels, it is evident that greater adherence to guidelines concerning use of instrument-specific criteria sheets is occurring across the state.

Task design will be addressed under the “Quality of assessment” section of this report. Schools are reminded that weighty submissions of students’ printed notes do not necessarily demonstrate adequate involvement in the Inquiry process. Demonstrating authenticity of student involvement in the Inquiry process is possible through the inclusion of student drafts, teacher comments, student reflection and referencing of sources.

In response to the discussions about the digital education revolution, online communication tools can be used to support authenticity of student work and so the inclusion of blogs, wikis and discussion boards/forums is acceptable in an Economics course.

Statewide comparability

Comparability enables the state review panel to consider the quality of work at each level of achievement, in and between all districts. District samples indicate that the schools’ application of standards is appropriate and consistent across the state.

The state panel recognises the diversity of economic learning contexts that are delivered across the state as a strength of the current Economics course. It is pertinent, however, to maintain a core essence of Economics in all inquiries and associated assessment tasks. The state panel recommends that schools ensure that student Inquiry processes elicit depth in investigation. While social, environmental and political perspectives are essential in economic inquiry, it is critical that economic rigour and economic criteria remain as the focus of learning experiences and assessment tasks.

Course coverage

Economics courses across the state are offering a flexible range of learning experiences, which effectively use current economic issues and information as their foundation. Schools are using the wealth of online economic information to develop individual, interesting economic learning experiences and assessment tasks. Many schools are enhancing the inquiry processes with the increased level of primary data used in their course.
Quality of assessment

The flexibility of the 2004 Economic syllabus enables schools to produce a range of topical and issue-based assessment items. On the whole, the nature of assessment tasks are interesting and motivate student involvement in the inquiry process; however, the state review panel has recognised a continuation of certain issues in the construction of some tasks. These continue to be the use of current stimulus information, task design with specific reference to the Decision-making criterion, and the use of scaffolding as guidance to the construction of student responses.

During 2009, the dynamic nature of learning contexts within the study of Economics has been evident. While the state review panel acknowledges the complexities in maintaining a topical focus within this area of study, it remains essential that assessment tasks draw on current information as stimulus (to ensure coverage of the third global aim from the syllabus — Maintain an interest in Australian and global economic issues). In order to do this, schools should ensure adequate perusal time for all stimulus materials. These details should be recorded within the conditions of assessment.

Precision in task design is critical in the study of Economics. While contextualising student tasks in current economic issues is a suitable approach to assessment design, it is essential to ensure that the task itself is clear and not hidden in the context statement. Ensure that task statements are explicit with regard to the Interpretation and decision-making criterion that is required, and that they are clearly identified in the task sheet. The state review panel advises the use of the syllabus general objectives and standards associated with exit criteria (syllabus, pp. 70–71) as a source of terms to use in the construction of assessment tasks. Use of decision-making terms, as the feature of a task, ensures that students are immediately focused on the complex components that are required within their response.

The inclusion of guidance to assessment responses is appropriate within the structure of the assessment task; however, oversimplified scaffolding that prescriptively directs student responses tend to limit the students’ abilities to perform across the standards for all criteria. In opposition to the step-by-step scaffolding that is provided in some schools, the state review panel recommends the use of the syllabus general objectives and standards associated with exit criteria (syllabus, pp. 70–71) as guiding structures for the inclusion of scaffolding. Schools are advised to consider sample tasks available from the QSA and QETA websites as models for the use of scaffolding.

Subject support

To support the general implementation of the 2010 syllabus, the QSA will be running syllabus orientation workshops in Term 2, 2010 across the state.

Annotated student responses for some assessment instruments will be available in 2010 from the QSA website. These annotated student responses should be used as a guide to aid in the judgments made about the match between syllabus standards and the evidence provided by the student.

Karen Swift       Tammy Hope
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Engineering Technology — A18

Syllabus

2009 was the fifth year of implementation for the 2004 Engineering Technology senior syllabus. The popularity of the subject continues to grow, with 34 schools offering Engineering Technology in 2009. In accordance with the current six-year cycle of review, a minor review of the 2004 syllabus was undertaken in 2009. The revised syllabus will be ready for general implementation with Year 11 students in 2011. Engineering Technology teachers are urged to continue to develop and refine work programs, assessment instruments and learning experiences for the 2004 syllabus as the final cohort of Year 12 students under that syllabus will not exit the course until November 2011.

The revised syllabus will be available from the QSA website, and teacher survey and other support materials are available from the website now. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > ICT and Design > Engineering Technology (2010).

Feedback from districts

School submissions for monitoring and verification in 2009 were generally well planned and presented. Organised submissions assist review meetings considerably, allowing panellists to devote time constructively to reviewing student folios and the relationship between student responses and the assessment instruments.

Panellists are instructed to look for evidence to support the placement of sample folios. The evidence of reasoning including hypothesising, synthesising and evaluating is most often identified by panellists in extended experimental project tasks.

Statewide comparability

The state panel generally found sufficient evidence of the match of the qualities of student work with the syllabus standards descriptors to support the judgments of the levels of achievements proposed in the sample submissions.

The comparability meeting also provides the opportunity to resolve submissions that have been left unresolved following verification. In 2009, no submissions were unresolved following verification. Panel chairs, panellists and staff at schools are congratulated for resolving not-agreed-to submissions in 2009.

Course coverage

Generally, schools are covering the four mandatory areas of study and their associated study topics to a satisfactory standard. There are varied depths of treatment of the areas of study with appropriate emphasis on materials and mechanics being maintained.

Quality of assessment

Assessment instruments still need to elicit from students an in-depth response to the Reasoning criterion and it was suggested that some tasks require additional scaffolding to support students’ understanding of task requirements. This may be in the form of a checklist.

The syllabus requires at least one in-depth project to be completed in the summative year and included in the verification submission. This technique should offer students challenging opportunities that require investigation and a demonstration of their ability to acquire and apply
knowledge to solve a problem. Some of the most effective types of tasks in this arena are those which require students to propose solutions to real-world engineering problems that result in the testing, analysis and evaluation of a model. This gives students the opportunity to clearly demonstrate their achievement in the Reasoning criterion. Hypothesis, synthesis and evaluation must be given adequate emphasis and the tasks set need to be suitably challenging to allow demonstration of the A and B standards.

Exams are used effectively by many schools particularly where they are used to evidence a range and depth of materials and mechanics content knowledge.

**Subject support**

Schools can expect to receive support through:

- the QSA website
- syllabus orientation workshops
- ongoing relationships with panel chairs and members.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of Engineering Technology.

Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Danny Arrow  Roy Barnes
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
English — B35

Syllabus

The English senior syllabus 2002 completed its seventh year of general implementation in 2009. The review of the syllabus in 2008 led to the development of the English (open trial) senior syllabus which was trialled with 145 schools in 2009, with 97 schools joining the trial in 2010. Some 160 schools will continue to offer the 2002 syllabus to its Year 11 students in 2010.

The syllabus in English Extension (Literature) 2003 is available for schools that have implemented the 2002 English syllabus and wish to offer the subject to their Year 12 students. Extension subjects are an extension of a parent syllabus and students must be concurrently enrolled in English 2002.

All current English syllabuses and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > English. All references in this report are to the 2002 English syllabus.

Feedback from districts

The state panel is pleased to report that 2009 monitoring and verification for schools under the 2002 syllabus demonstrated successful uptake of the syllabus. Verification proceeded smoothly with new panel chairs supported by members of the state review panel. State sampling across the districts confirmed standards and recognised the diversity and range of interesting and appropriate tasks; in most cases, these tasks provided sufficient challenge to allow students to demonstrate achievement in accordance with the stated criteria.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process whereby the state panel reviews agreed district samples from across the state. The state panel is pleased to report that there was general agreement with both the schools’ and the district panels’ application of syllabus standards to these sample folios.

Course coverage

Meeting verification requirements

Syllabus verification requirements in Section 6.6, p. 29 state that: “…verification folios presented in October must contain all summative assessment instruments and corresponding student responses upon which judgments about interim levels of achievement have been made up to that time.” In meeting the syllabus verification requirements, schools enable their students to demonstrate the three criteria in their verification folios. To not meet verification requirements would be to weaken the evidence on which a judgment can be made and this would have implications for awarding students’ levels of achievement.

Judgment of student achievement at exit from a two-year course of study must be derived from information gathered about student achievement in those aspects stated in the syllabus as being mandatory, namely the:

- general objectives
- mandated written and spoken/signed genre categories for the verification folio, as stated in section 6.6.
Minimum Sound requirement

Schools are reminded that to award Sound Achievement (SA) at exit, the student’s folio must meet the descriptors in both modes, i.e. in writing and in speaking/signing. Syllabus Section 6.7.4 “Minimum requirements for Sound Achievement” states: “The predominantly written responses, when taken together, must for the most part meet the minimum standard in Table 7; the predominantly spoken/signed responses, when taken together, must for the most part meet the minimum standard in Table 7. Higher achievement in spoken/signed responses cannot compensate for weaknesses in written responses or vice versa. Once the standard has been determined for each mode, the judgment for the folio follows.”

Folios in which a clear pattern of performance has not yet been established in either writing or speaking/signing should not be included in the verification submission as threshold SA folios. Students who have not yet achieved minimum SA requirements in both modes cannot be placed higher than LA10 on the verification Form R6.

Authorship of student work

Syllabus Section 6.6.2 “Authentication of ‘prepared’ tasks”, taken together with QSA Memo 047/05 (Information statement on strategies for authenticating student work for learning and assessment), recommends procedures which allow teachers to affirm that a response to a task is genuinely that of the student. Schools need to develop guidelines and proformas for students in relation to print and electronic source materials and resources, and to other types of assistance (including human) that have been used.

Quality of assessment

Task design

Tasks should be of sufficient depth and complexity to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the exit criteria. Syllabus section 6.3 “Characteristics of assessment tasks” makes it clear that well-designed assessment tasks also provide:

- clear and realistic contexts, including purpose and audience
- sufficient challenge for students, taking account of the need for increasing complexity of challenge and increasing independence
- a description of the task written in a manner that is accessible to students
- a task-specific criteria and standards sheet
- a statement of the conditions involved.

Schools are reminded that Section 6.3.1 of the syllabus, “Task descriptors”, makes clear that task descriptions are to:

- state relevant contextual factors, especially those relating to discourse, purpose, genre, register and textual features
- specify textual features relevant to the written or spoken/signed language of the task
- state all task requirements, including the length of the task and the conditions under which the task is completed; this includes the nature and extent of access to material and human resources
- be congruent with the general objectives of the syllabus, the standards associated with the exit criteria and the school work program.

All assessment instruments should provide opportunities for students to engage with the syllabus general objectives and criteria and standards. The state panel noted that the analytical exposition in response to literature did not always provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full
range of standards in Criterion 1, in particular, Analysing and evaluating information, ideas, argument and images, in great depth.

**Subject support**

In 2009, panel training was provided to all district review panels. This provided ongoing support of the important role panels play in moderation, assessment, and relationships with schools.

Annotated student responses for some assessment instruments will be available in 2010 from the QSA website. These annotated student responses should be used as a guide to aid in the judgments made about the match between syllabus standards and the evidence provided by the student. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > English.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities. Teachers should contact their QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form.

Kerry Baumanis       Jo Genders
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
English Extension (Literature) — B37

Syllabus

The current English Extension (Literature) syllabus completed its sixth year of general implementation in 2009. The syllabus in English Extension (Literature) 2003 is available for schools that have implemented the 2002 English syllabus and wish to offer the subject to their Year 12 students. The 2003 English Extension (Literature) syllabus is being revised. The revised syllabus (to be dated 2010) will proceed to trial-pilot in 2011.

All current English syllabuses and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > English. All references in this section refer to the English Extension (Literature) 2003 syllabus.

Feedback from districts

The state panel is pleased to report that 2009 monitoring and verification for 61 schools in Queensland under the 2003 syllabus continues to demonstrate successful uptake of the syllabus across a range of sites. Verification proceeded smoothly, with state sampling across the five districts generally confirming standards and noting the diversity and range of appropriate and interesting assessment instruments with sufficient challenge to allow students to demonstrate achievement in accordance with the stated criteria.

Statewide comparability

The state panel examined student folios at threshold levels of achievement from across the state, and is pleased to report that there was general agreement with both the schools' and the district panels’ application of the syllabus standards to these folios.

Course coverage

The syllabus is, in the great majority of cases being implemented by teachers in ways that are congruent with its underpinning principles and that conform to its mandated aspects. However, teachers should note the following issues arising from the work program approval process, verification and comparability meetings.

Need to problematise reading approaches to demonstrate self-reflexivity in reading.

The 2003 syllabus requires students to engage with and problematise reading practices by means of a range of theories. This means students need to understand why older concepts, for example, of text-centred reading practices, are inadequate, given subsequent theoretical insights. And they need ultimately to grasp the point that all theorised readings are both illuminating and partial. This is central to the governing rationale of the syllabus, that literature, however defined, “is dependent on how, when, where, by whom, and for what purposes, it is read” (p. 1). In their responses to all three tasks, students need to show they are alert to the implications of this focus on reading practices when discussing and applying theoretical understandings to their selected texts. By so doing, students will be able to demonstrate the critical self-reflexivity that is at the heart of the syllabus, and meet Criterion 2, Descriptor 4, which requires students to reflect critically on the reading practices they have used, and how these have produced different readings (Tables 5 to 8 in Section 8.5.2: “Mid-range standards associated with exit criteria”). See also below, “Framing and responding to Task 3”.

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Need to demonstrate understanding of the interrelatedness of theories

By the end of the course, in Task 3, students should be exploring bodies of theory that offer more sophisticated understandings of texts and reading than do the four approaches to reading practices outlined in the syllabus. Those four approaches should be seen as an organisational tool that is useful earlier in the course as the basis for developing a deeper and more precise focus on the usefulness and application of particular theories and clusters of theories.

Across the course, students’ investigations of such theories need to be founded on a knowledge and understanding of “the four approaches to reading practices and how they overlap, and the relationships between contemporary and historical approaches”, and “the range of culturally produced reading practices that are generated by the reading approaches” (syllabus Section 4.1, p. 5). That is, students need to show their understanding of the family and generational relationships among theories. This will enable students to avoid merely listing a series of theorists (in a “Cooks tour” approach) without showing they understand how a theorist/theory reacts against, or derives from, or supplements, a previous body of theory. When students do develop such understanding, they are more likely to be able to situate their own theorised understandings and reading practices relative to those of others, and to enter into a “conversation” with those understandings and practices. In so doing, students will be more likely to show their achievement against Criterion 1, Descriptor 1, VHA level, “…recognises and explains subtle similarities and differences across and within the four approaches” (Section 8.5.2, p. 52).

Need to integrate theoretical understandings of reading practices and their application

The syllabus specifies that “the focus of this subject is on student understanding and application of reading strategies or practices that are informed by a range of literary theories” (Section 1, p. 1). Teachers are advised to be alert to any inaccuracies and misrepresentations of theorists or inappropriate applications in students’ work, in accordance with Criterion 1, descriptors 1, 2 and 3.

Students need to have opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria through application of a knowledge and understanding of reading practices in analysis of a range of selected texts. See in particular Criterion 1, Descriptor 4, which requires students to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of “a wide range of canonical and popular texts … and the contexts in which they were produced” and Criterion 2, Descriptor 3 which requires that students, in analysing, interpreting and constructing texts “demonstrate how different generic conventions, structures and textual features of texts support different readings”. Throughout the course, the emphasis is on integrating the theory and its application, whether across the parts of a task (Tasks 1 and 2) or in the one demonstration (Task 3). It should be noted that students are unlikely to demonstrate “application” in Task 3 by simply explicating the selected theorists’ ideas in Part 3 (a), then having them only implicitly inform discussion in Part 3 (b).

Need for appropriate text selection and examination.

Teachers are reminded of the advice in the syllabus, Section 6.2.4, p. 30, concerning the appropriate level of demand of the texts selected for close study. In particular, it should be noted that “resources are to be generally more complex … than those used for the parent syllabus” (p. 30). The suggestions listed under the Approaches framework for activities appropriate for earlier and later in the course offer examples of a range of challenging texts and focuses for examination. It is evident from some schools’ submissions of folios that a more narrow choice of “safe” and sometimes undemanding texts is being encouraged. This is sometimes compounded by task designs that circumscribe students rather narrowly. These can limit opportunities for students to demonstrate the assessment criteria in their readings and interventions.

For Task 1, the text chosen should not overwhelm the focus on the readings and defenses. Some schools have found it useful in applying a contemporary author-centred approach for students to
study a body of work by an author in order to demonstrate their grasp of, for example, Foucault’s theories of classification and attribution. For Task 2, again, the base text should neither be too complex nor too simple. The text serves its purpose when it provides a sufficient springboard for an effective intervention, which in turn provides evidence for the defense, the culmination of the task. While there is no provision in the course for students to study decontextualised extracts of texts, for Task 2, it may be useful to focus on a particular aspect and/or section of a text, provided that the form of the whole and the functions of the constituent elements are taken into account.

For Task 3, the text or texts students select may derive from the issue or problematic being addressed, or may generate the issue. Schools are reminded that by Task 3, students should be choosing their own texts, identifying the issue in that text or text they wish to investigate, and selecting the theoretical emphases/understandings that can best help them carry out their focused reading. For all three tasks, the selection of texts should be guided by the task focus and the exit criteria students need to demonstrate.

Quality of assessment

All assessment tasks need to be explicitly framed for students in a way that gives them opportunities to demonstrate the exit criteria. Teachers are referred to the task descriptions in the syllabus, Sections 8.2.2, 8.2.3, 8.2.4 and 8.4, and to the advice in Section 8.2.4 about the particular aspects of the exit criteria that are specific to each task.

Framing and responding to Task 1

In order for student responses to Task 1 to demonstrate relevant aspects of the criteria, each of the readings needs to be more than a mere synopsis, and it is unlikely that a reading in the form of a book review will be useful in allowing students to develop a reading that is a demonstration of the application of the selected reading practices. In some students’ responses to Task 1 the distinction between reading and defense is blurred. As the syllabus makes clear (Section 8.2.2, Task 1: Readings and defenses, pp. 39–40), for each of the approaches the reading and the defense are both interrelated and distinct. While both are forms of application of theory, the reading is a demonstration that may reveal theoretical assumptions without explicating them. By contrast, the defense is a theorised analysis of the reading. That is, the defense needs to go beyond a description of the reading to offer an analysis of it if the student’s response to the task is to demonstrate syllabus criteria. Teachers are advised to consider the limitations of a simple formulaic approach to assessment tasks in this subject. Students may similarly be limited in their responses if the task specifications identify a “shopping list” of theorists who must be mentioned.

Framing and responding to Task 2

In preparing students for this task, teachers should be mindful of the advice in the syllabus (Section 8.2.2, Task 2: Complex Transformation and defense, pp. 41–42) particularly the sequence of processes outlined on p. 41. It is crucial that students examine the textual features and language details of the base text through which the invited reading is generated (exit Criterion 2.3), since it is by identifying and interrogating these that students can find their motivation for their intervention. The consequent complex transformation provides evidence that is then explicated, justified and theorised in the defense. In order for student responses to demonstrate relevant aspects of the criteria it is important to note that the bulk of the defense should not be taken up with an exploration of the invited reading of the base text itself, or with the transformation itself.

Students should be advised that a complex transformation entails a discursive shift that makes possible a change in the invited reading. The point of the creative writing exercise is to open up a new reading of the text, not simply confirm (even by reversing) its existing assumptions. Mere transpositions, such as reversals of gender or plot outcome, or simple transformations, such as modernisations, do not themselves amount to complex transformations. Among other possibilities, a shift of genre can reframe the base text and introduce new discourses.
This advice should be read in relation to the comments above about text selection. Some simple texts may be inherently limiting in the range or complexity of interventions they encourage.

**Framing and responding to Task 3 (a) and (b)**

Schools are strongly advised to refer closely to the syllabus both in framing the task description for 3 (a) and (b) and in guiding students in the choices they might make about topics, texts and theoretical emphases as tools of exploration. The syllabus provides extensive support for teachers and students in:

- Task Descriptions, Task 3: Exploration and Application (Section 8.2.2, pp. 42–43)
- Activities suitable for later in the course — parts of Section 5.3.3 (p. 13), Section 5.4.3 (p. 17), Section 5.5.3 (p. 21), and Section 5.6.3 (pp. 24–25)
- selected specific learning experiences generated from reading practices, (Section 7.2, pp. 32–35).

**Topic focus for Task 3 (a) and (b)**

Task 3 requires students to choose a closely focused topic for investigation. In many cases, the text or texts students select will generate the problematic — sometimes this might be by means of a focus on the reading which the text does not invite, or by the identification of an issue neglected in critics’ discussions of the text. This problematic will be explored by means of an appropriate theory or set of theories. Selection of the most appropriate theories should be guided by the problematic. In other cases, students might begin with a theoretical issue, and then select the text or texts that will enable them to investigate this issue.

A thematic linking of texts is insufficient as a problematic, since it does not focus on reading practices as such or lend itself to a theorised inquiry, and it tends to gloss over the specifics of each text. Teachers are reminded that topics need to be specific, substantial and very well focused, and students will need guidance in framing a topic that is manageable. Topics should be framed in a way that encourages a critical self-reflexivity. Students will need guidance in defining and refining their investigation and ensuring that the topic is not confused or contradictory. Some topics, for example an exploration of “literariness”, are too broad. A well-framed inquiry will implicitly address that wider question of literariness by demonstrating very precisely some of the ways in which the selected theories “generate different sets of culturally produced reading practices” (Criterion 1, Descriptor 2, p. 52).

Equally over-broad is a survey coverage of the syllabus framework of approaches or a diffuse exposition of an eclectic array of theorists. The relevance of the selected theorists to the student’s chosen problematic and text(s) should be argued for in Task 3 (a). The syllabus notes on p. 42 (Task 3: Exploration and application) that reference to the four approaches is only necessary “in so far as these complement or contrast with the chosen focus” [emphasis added]. By Task 3 it is expected that students will have advanced beyond the four approaches into more sophisticated theoretical understandings if they are to demonstrate their achievement against Criterion 1, Descriptor 1 which requires students to recognise and explain similarities and differences across and within the four approaches.

On the other hand, teachers need to help students ensure that the task focus is not determined too narrowly. The choice of texts, topic and theories for Task 3 is crucial if it is to provide students with sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the criteria at syllabus standards for higher levels of achievement. That is, teachers need to encourage students to recognise and explain “subtle similarities and differences across and within” the selected theoretical approaches in constructing “multiple readings across and within a range of texts” in order to demonstrate “subtle and discriminating analysis, evaluation and application” of relevant theory. The selected theories need to be appropriate to the student’s focus and offer a coherent approach to investigation. To this
end students need to undertake their own in-depth research into their chosen theories/theoretical understandings.

**Close reading of texts in applying theoretical understanding in 3 (b)**

In Part B of Task 3 students need to demonstrate that they can apply theoretical understandings about reading practices to their selected texts by producing close readings which necessarily include quotations from the text(s), if they are to demonstrate the criterion Application of knowledge and understanding of reading practices. The syllabus is very clear that in order for students to achieve an A standard they must construct multiple readings of texts by “thoroughly and systematically analysing, interpreting and applying appropriate contemporary interpretations of the reading approaches … [and that they must] … demonstrate through subtle and discriminating analysis, evaluation and application, their detailed understanding of reading practices …[and that they must] … thoroughly analyse and explicitly evaluate how different generic conventions, structures and textual features of texts support different readings” [emphasis added] (Section 8.5.2, p. 52). That is, the student’s response to Task 3 (b) needs to keep the balance between theory and its application in an illuminating reading of the text(s). Such application is very different from a conventional literary-critical analysis. The crucial distinction lies in the student’s self-reflexive awareness of reading practices. The student needs to show an understanding that there is no reading that does not assume or explicitly demonstrate a theory (Criterion 2, descriptor 4).

**Increasing complexity of challenge**

The syllabus explains this as “the increasing conceptual demands made on the student over the one-year course through learning experiences and task requirements” (Section 6.1, “Organising principles”). Schools are reminded that students should be given opportunities to demonstrate more complex development of their understanding and application of theories of reading as they advance from Tasks 1 and 2 to Task 3. This entails, among other things, students’ building on and moving beyond the broad outlines of the four approaches of the syllabus. By the final task students should be reading more substantial and complex texts than at the outset of the course. As noted above, each of the texts should be selected to enable students to demonstrate their achievement against the task-specific criteria.

**Increasing independence**

Review panels expect to see evidence that a school is meeting the syllabus requirement of increasing independence. The syllabus specifies: “This refers to opportunities for students to be increasingly self-directed and independent in their choice of resources, particular areas of interest, modes of response and evaluative expertise in relation to their own and others’ texts” (Section 6.1, p. 26). Schools need to ensure that students are given opportunities and encouragement to explore their own areas of interest in all tasks, and particularly in Task 3. It is vital that students be given sufficient opportunities to make genuinely independent choices in responding to Task 3. Task 3 (a) and (b) should be framed to allow for student independence in selecting their own texts, their focus of investigation and the theorist(s) whose perspectives will most illuminate their readings of those texts and assist them in their focused inquiry.

Teachers have an important mentoring role here, in providing constructive advice to the student. District and state review panels have noted that many students are showing great initiative and responsibility in framing and developing their responses to Task 3. However, it is still apparent from the close similarity of texts, topics and theorists selected by students in the same cohort that some schools are promoting a narrow range of preferred theories, while others are encouraging their students into standardised or formulaic responses that replicate existing sample responses without students providing evidence of a sufficiently developed grasp of the theoretical understandings at work and how to apply these.
Task length

The importance of ensuring that task length is consistent with syllabus requirements still remains an issue that schools are asked to address (Section 8.2.4, p 44). Where students' work is over-long, teachers are strongly advised to counsel them in how to limit the scope of their inquiries. It is particularly important that Parts (a) and (b) of Task 3 are framed in ways that encourage coherence and concentration of focus rather than diffuse discussion, and that are properly selective in the range of theorists brought to bear on the inquiry.

In-text referencing, bibliographies and plagiarism

An academic discourse is required of students in Task 1 defenses, Task 2 defense, and Task 3 (a) and (b). This entails acknowledging all resources used (Section 8.4.2 Authentication of "prepared" tasks, dot-point 3, p. 49). It is recommended that the purpose of such referencing be explained to students: it is to enable readers to identify the sources referred to in the students’ “conversations” with writers and to follow such conversations themselves if they choose, by being able to trace those sources through their publication details. Students should be taught to apply precisely and consistently any recognised academic system of referencing.

A bibliography should be presented for the written form of Part (a) of Task 3. Referencing also entails attributing theoretical concepts to the originating theorist. District and state panels have observed that some students are still inaccurately naming the editor of a collection or the author of an overview of theories as the one who has developed a theory or endorses it. Teachers are advised to show students how to present in-text referencing in order to avoid this inaccuracy. So too students should be shown how to incorporate quotations from theorists and commentators into their own developing discussion. Bald, decontextualised or irrelevant quotations should not be used as a substitute for the student’s own argument.

Teachers’ feedback on students’ responses needs to comment on matters of theory and argumentation

Students’ attention should be drawn to their performance against each of the three criteria. In particular, students need to be directed to focus on applying their knowledge and understanding of reading practices to analysis and interpretation of texts. While by the end of the course students should be exhibiting independence in their writing, teachers’ feedback should be directed towards ensuring breadth and depth of theoretical understandings, choice of theoretical emphases and theorists, and sufficient application of this theoretical knowledge and understanding of reading practices to the texts being analysed. It is important that feedback draws attention to any flaws in the student’s argumentation — for instance, between theories cited, or between a theoretical point and the use that the student makes of it.

Addressing Criterion 3

Criterion 3 relates to selection of subject matter and its sequencing, control of language features, and the appropriately academic forms of address. As this subject requires that students engage with complex concepts and present their arguments logically and clearly, Criterion 3 (Control of language choices according to cultural contexts, social situations and purposes) is an important means by which students demonstrate Criterion 1 and Criterion 2. It is recommended that students be reminded of the ways that Criterion 3 features contribute to the successful communication of their knowledge and understanding, and application of reading practices.

Subject support

In 2009, panel training was provided to all district review panels. This provided ongoing support of the important role panels play in moderation, assessment, and relationships with schools.
The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of the teaching of English Extension (Literature) under the 2003 syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form.


Wendy Morgan
State Review Panel Chair

Ellen Connolly
Senior Education Officer
Film, Television and New Media — B40

Syllabus

Now in its fourth year of implementation, the syllabus has a significant amount of support material and guidance for delivering the course and assessment, as well as possible contexts and use for design, production and critique. Pages 8–19 of the syllabus detail features and learning experiences that support the key concepts and coverage of these features will help students understand the significance of the key concepts in design, production and critique. Many of the features or suggestions for learning experiences could be developed into challenging and well-aligned assessment instruments. In addition, there are descriptions on pages 30–33 of how to identify the evidence to determine students’ understanding of the key concepts.

Feedback from districts

Work program approvals have continued this year as more schools offer the subject. One hundred and thirty-two schools across the state offer Film, Television and New Media. For work program approval, and delivering the course, schools need to ensure that they focus the teaching, learning and assessment around the general objectives of the 2005 syllabus. The general objectives of Design, Production, and Critiques relate directly to the students’ knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, skills and techniques of formats, practices, and analysis and evaluation. The syllabus standards are used to make judgments about how well students demonstrate these general objectives. Schools should refer to the conditions tables in the syllabus, pp. 37–43, as these tables define parameters which aim for a reasonable expectation for conditions that are comparable for students across the state.

Good practice occurs when schools model the type of assessment tasks for Year 11 as will be used in Year 12.

A “Values and beliefs” statement was developed by the Film, TV and New Media state panel and district panel chairs at the moderation conference in July 2009. The statement says, in effect, that the FTVNM district and state panels are committed to best practice review processes founded upon a positive culture, quality relationships and responsible decision making.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across Queensland. At verification, three agreed samples (one as a reserve) were selected from each district and sent to comparability to demonstrate district panel judgments. The state panel reviewed threshold samples and found evidence to support the judgments made by panels in all 13 districts.

Course coverage

After four years, some schools are reflecting on their programs, resources and teachers, and are making amendments to their original approved work programs. The syllabus provides an opportunity for schools to explore new media and embrace the rapid advances in the nature and use of technology and media in today’s society.

At this stage of the syllabus, schools could look at the relevance of stated learning experiences in the work program and consider their relatedness and support for learning, not only the topic of the unit, format and techniques, but to the key concepts and objective(s) areas.
Consider setting frameworks of stimulus, in preference to student choice, that may direct students to more thoughtful contexts or narratives.

**Quality of assessment**

Most schools are designing challenging assessment instruments which provide an opportunity for students to respond across the range of standards. Schools should continue to teach and assess a balance of the key concepts in their assessment across the two years. In the early years of the syllabus, assessment instruments referred to three or four key concepts, but where schools are now referring to only one or two key concepts in any task, students have had better opportunities to display a depth of knowledge about the key concepts through their work.

Key concepts are assessed using the criteria of Design, Production, and Critique. Suggested formats and conditions for tasks are outlined in the syllabus in pp. 37–43. There are some formats that are more suitable for some tasks than others, and students should be expected to use the conventions of the formats stated in their responses. For example, in a documentary design, teachers would specify a three-column script, not a screenplay. Incompatible design formats, such as shooting script and three-column script, are also noted in the format and condition tables.

It is mandatory for a group production task to specify whether students complete one-third of the production or in the formal role of cinematographer, editor, or sound technician. In setting assessment, teachers should ensure that this decision will give equal opportunity for students. For example, in the case of music videos, the role of the sound technician would be very limited.

Critique tasks should enable students to display their knowledge about moving-image media. In assessment, students should have the opportunity to display their depth of knowledge in film, new media, contexts of production and use, analysis and evaluation, as well as the relevant key concept(s). Questions that limit the breadth of the topic may give students more focus.

Judgments about a level of achievement at the end of the course are made “on balance”. These decisions are about the evidence in each student’s folio, using the assessment principles collectively. Page 48 of the syllabus explains this more fully. “Fullest” is information gained across the general objectives, and “latest” is the summative assessment that you have planned in your assessment program when writing the work program.

**Subject support**

The syllabus is available from the QSA website, which also includes advice for moderation, including the evidence for moderation purposes and providing evidence in CD or DVD format and support materials. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Film, Television and New Media.

Chris Hayward    Susan Hollindale
State Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
French and French Extension — B02

Syllabus

In 2009, the 2001 syllabus was used for the last time with Year 12, and the 2008 syllabus was used for the first time with Year 11. This provided challenges for teachers of composite classes who were juggling two year levels, each on a separate syllabus with differently worded standards and assessment requirements.

While reducing the number (but not increasing the length) of assessment instruments in their programs, teachers need to ensure that various text types are used across the course. This is an opportunity to match the macroskill being assessed with a topic that most suits it, giving students the best opportunities to demonstrate their command of the language.

The new syllabus’s criterion Comprehension is divided into Knowing and understanding, and Reasoning and responding. Listening and Reading tasks thus need to elicit the following from students:

- information, meaning, purpose, perspective, intention, subtleties
- analysis, evaluation, interpretation of unfamiliar language, conclusions, decisions, and cultural meanings.

In 2009, 716 Year 12 students exited from 87 schools having studied French. Of these, 51 students from 33 schools studied French through the Brisbane School of Distance Education. Additionally, 63 students in five schools studied French Extension.

Feedback from schools

Work programs

- In 2009 schools prepared new work programs, and district and state panels reviewed them.
- The reduction in work program requirements is accompanied by the expectation that teachers will have reference to the syllabus at all times. As working documents in schools, work programs will become more detailed as each unit is developed and as schools reflect on their practices and assessment. Learning experiences and assessment items, for example, will be adapted to ensure that appropriate focus is placed on higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.
- As new resources appear, and for topics where currency is important, the sample assessment plan (submitted in the work program as Years 11 and 12 profiles) can be adapted while maintaining requirements such as number of instruments and range of text types.
- It is encouraging to see the integration of ICTs and topics that are current and of interest to students.

Monitoring and verification submissions

- Annotations on criteria sheets help review panels understand how decisions have been made about the standards of student work.
- Apart from the usual contents of a submission, schools are encouraged to provide any additional information that would help the panel as it seeks evidence that student work matches the standards.
• Conditions of assessment need to be included on the assessment instruments given to students.
• The speaking sample to be submitted is a teacher–student interaction (see syllabus 8.9.1). Recordings should be checked to ensure they are clear and audible.

Statewide comparability

Four combined district panels are responsible for the verification of school judgments across the state. The folios of work sent to the state panel for comparability indicated that there was variety and challenge in assessment given to students. In general, standards were applied correctly, though there were some difficulties in the application of writing standards. Decisions about threshold students are difficult to make and it is necessary to carefully match the student’s work against the standards for macroskills at exit in the syllabus.

Course coverage

While topics in many schools’ new work programs are similar to those in their old programs, it is important that learning experiences develop the skills required for Reasoning and responding, and Creating and responding.

A common difficulty in Writing is finding the balance between preparation and spontaneity. Students will demonstrate original and flexible language when they appropriately adapt rehearsed language to an unfamiliar purpose, context or audience.

Audio recordings should expose students to a variety of voices and speaking styles. While it is appropriate at times for a teacher to read texts, the teacher’s voice should not be the only voice heard by students.

Classroom emphasis should be on language proficiency, the theme being a means to that end. Likewise, cultural understanding is important in a thinking classroom, but does not overshadow language learning.

Contemporary and suitable audio, visual and written texts are available on the internet. Some media players allow audio files to be played at a slower rate without distortion or loss of authenticity.

Quality of assessment

The following points may help teachers as they prepare assessment and evaluate student work:

• Stimulus material in French is acceptable in writing tasks if it neither helps nor hinders the students in completing the tasks successfully.
• Excessive teacher input during speaking tasks reduces students’ opportunity to initiate and sustain a conversation and demonstrate spontaneous language. In a prepared talk it is a student’s response to the teacher’s impromptu question that demonstrates spontaneous language.
• Notes made during the 10-minute preparation time may be used during the speaking task, but students who just read from their notes do not demonstrate the use of spontaneous language.
• When responding to a reading or listening text, students need to justify their responses based on relevant information found in the text. As students are expected to analyse, evaluate, come to conclusions and make decisions, it is better to design tasks or questions on a whole-of-text level, rather than asking many questions that deconstruct the text and so provide excessive scaffolding. Responses in dot-point format are acceptable and would allow answers to be succinct while still providing the necessary detail.
• It is important to carefully choose the text type and task design for instruments set at the end of Year 12 to not only give students the opportunity to use complex language, but to actually prompt them to do so. Formal text types such as job applications may not allow for spontaneity (flexibility and originality) and may also disadvantage students who have difficulty with register.

School support

Assessment workshops focusing on the new syllabus were conducted in all districts in 2009, and material is being developed and placed on the website. Panel training will occur in 2010.

Philip Smith                  Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair      Senior Education Officer
Geography — B34

Syllabus

2009 was the first year of verification for the 2007 Geography syllabus. Two major changes were made with the implementation of this syllabus. The first of these was a reduction in the minimum number of units that schools are required to implement, thus giving schools more time to develop the key ideas which are defined in the syllabus for each focus unit studied. The second major change was in the description of the standards associated with exit. These are based on the same four exit criteria as in the previous syllabus but the standards for each criterion are defined in much more detail. The internalisation of these standards by teachers and recalibration of judgments is a challenge which may take a little time.

Feedback from districts

All schools presently offering Geography have approved work programs. Generally, monitoring occurred quite smoothly with constructive advice given to schools, especially on the implementation of the general objectives. While verification also went smoothly, a number of unresolved submissions were referred to the state review panel, where negotiations yielded agreement.

Statewide comparability

The state panel examined the threshold students in each level of achievement of each district sample. Generally the state panel supported district panel decisions and was able to match qualities of work in folio samples to the syllabus standards. Schools should ensure that assessment instruments enable students to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards. For an A standard in Criterion 1, students’ responses must show thorough and comprehensive rather than detailed coverage of geographical information. Also in Criterion 2, complex rather than simple relationships must be identified and explained thoroughly. For Criterion 3 justification of decisions should be supported by insightful application of criteria and well-reasoned and logical arguments, and in Criterion 4 maps, diagrams, statistics and referencing should adhere to geographic conventions.

Course coverage

Managing the Natural Environment

The focus and elective units that schools chose to undertake in this theme are similar to those undertaken in the previous syllabus. The case studies identified in work programs are appropriate and enable schools to build units around the key ideas in the syllabus.

Social Environments

This theme continues to be challenging for schools as often the resource materials or textbooks that the school units are based on have limited alignment with the key ideas in the syllabus. The panel encourages schools to closely examine the sample units of work for each of the focus units in the syllabus. Sustaining Communities is a focus unit in which schools should promote the development of geographic skills by accessing local council and state government data on community profiles. The mapping and analysis of a variety of local data needs to be fundamental to this unit.
Resources and the Environment

This theme has changed significantly from the previous syllabus. In both of the focus units, schools need to ensure that a geographical approach is taken. It is exciting to see the emergence of case studies based on Europe and North America in this theme as these regions have previously not been included in many courses. Schools are encouraged to map the case studies that they undertake over the two-year course with the aim of ensuring some global regional balance.

People and Development

One of the focus units in this theme, Feeding the World’s People, has remained largely unchanged, but Geography of Disease is a new unit of study. The student responses to tasks on this unit have been very interesting and shown that schools are taking advantage of the wealth of mapped data on this topic that is available on the internet.

Key ideas

To cover the course adequately, schools need to ensure that their unit planning is based on the key ideas, as described in the syllabus, for each of the focus units. These key ideas, which include geographical concepts, processes and explanations, should form the skeleton for the unit which is then fleshed out by the manifestations of these ideas in particular locations in the form of case studies. In this way schools are able to ensure that they provide depth and rigour in their curriculum. The key ideas for the focus units in the 2007 syllabus have been revised from the previous syllabus and need to be monitored by teachers as they implement each unit. This same breadth and depth of concepts and explanations, needs to apply to the design of elective units to ensure that they are of a Year 11-12 standard.

Case studies

Case studies for focus and elective units enable schools to exemplify concepts, and they provide a platform for substantive analytical and decision-making skills. These skills are difficult for students to demonstrate when their study has been of a broad and superficial nature such as a study based only at a global level. This was evident where schools had studied Sustaining Biodiversity with the major focus being on broad world biomes. While the biomes are a sound starting point, the implementation of the key ideas for this unit require that some smaller-scale case study is undertaken that enables students to examine the impact of elements such as topography, slope and possibly micro-climate in the development of the biogeographical area. By studying an area such as the Australian High Country, Coastal wallum landscape or other similar small-scale case studies, students are more easily able to demonstrate their understanding of the complex relationships that exist between these elements in assessment situations.

Quality of assessment

Many schools appeared to have used assessment tasks that were designed for the previous syllabus. While these may be appropriate for some units, the tasks need to be reviewed in light of their capacity to reflect the key ideas of the 2007 syllabus and to provide evidence for the new exit standards. Schools should refer to Section 8.4 of the syllabus (p. 67) to aid in their understanding of the exit standards particularly analytical processes and decision-making processes.

- Short response tests were the most problematic assessment techniques in terms of their coverage of the key ideas as defined in the 2007 syllabus. Schools need to ensure that tests provide opportunities for students to show “thorough and comprehensive coverage of geographical facts, concepts, key ideas, processes and explanations". Panels will be looking
to support school judgments by examining the evidence in the student folio. Schools need to consider the standards for knowledge as defined in the syllabus when assigning grades.

- The identification of **spatial information** is another new element of the exit standards. To provide evidence for this component, schools need to include tasks that require recall of spatial patterns, such as details of maps, plans, cross-sections and diagrams, from case studies. Students can then be asked to recall learned explanations of the relationships that underpin these patterns in one or more paragraphs. In this way the knowledge of spatial information can be **thorough** and **detailed**.

- **Data response tests** were a new technique with the 2007 syllabus. The panel saw very few examples of schools using this technique. This may change with time.

- **Practical exercises** continue to provide challenges to the review panel with the new syllabus. The major concern is with the judgments teachers make about students’ use of geographic conventions. This is particularly apparent as the new syllabus states that “the communication criterion applies only to the manipulation and presentation of data”. Teachers need to ensure that they are aware of the geographic conventions associated with various types of map and graph construction and presentation. The QSA website (www.qsa.qld.edu.au) and professional association publications can provide advice in this area. The panel encourages schools to set tasks requiring at least paragraph-length responses for analytical and decision-making components of practical exercises. Questions that elicit only sentence-length responses will not be able to provide evidence of higher-order thinking.

- **Stimulus response essays** were of a more consistent quality, but the quantity of the stimulus varied. The panel encourages schools to use a variety of data particularly incorporating maps, graphs, diagrams and tables, and limiting text material. Tasks with extensive text material often encouraged students to do no more than just rephrase the information whereas spatial and tabular stimulus material generated more authentic and higher-level analytical processes. The examples of stimulus response essays from the recent Geography external exams are excellent models in terms of the type and quantity of stimulus they provide and the structure of the question. These are accessible from the QSA website.

- In terms of decision-making processes in essays and reports, schools are advised to limit the viable alternatives to be evaluated to no more than three and to encourage the use of task-specific criteria. Schools are encouraged to direct students to use focused criteria specifically relevant to the task as opposed to the broad criteria of economic, social and environmental considerations.

- **Reports** for some units, such as Managing Catchments, were of a high quality as they were based on primary data collected in the field. However, reports in units such as Climate Change and Sustaining Communities were often too big in terms of what was being asked of the students and in these cases evidence of the use of primary data was poor. Many of these tasks would have benefited greatly if the scale of the area that students were asked to investigate had been reduced. Schools are encouraged to consider report structures that are small scale, where students can collect data by constructing surveys, counts, measuring data, taking photographs, or sketches and interviewing. The analysis of this material will generate authentic and rigorous evidence for analytical processes and by its very nature will include anomalies and variations that students can then account for. These types of reports will also be manageable within the prescribed word limit in the syllabus of 800–1000 words. Student responses above this word length often indicate tasks that are too broad.

- **Non-written response** requirements have changed in the 2007 syllabus in that they require the use of both primary and secondary data. Tasks based only on secondary data will not provide valid evidence for the exit criteria. Students should also be undertaking “individually negotiated topics” (syllabus, p. 70) so that each student is able to undertake a different task. Schools are again encouraged to avoid topics that are too broad as they do not allow students
to provide high-level evidence of analytical and decision-making processes. The use of individually differentiated case studies for these tasks is recommended.

Subject support

In 2009, panel training was provided and support materials, including the nature and use of geographic conventions and guidelines for the development of stimulus response essays and reports, were made available from the QSA website. Further support material will be provided in 2010.

Assessment workshops are planned for Semester 2, 2010. Dates and venues will be advertised on the QSA website and through QSA Focus.

Jo MacDonald
State Review Panel Chair

Jackie Dunk
Senior Education Officer
German and German Extension — B03

Syllabus
In 2009, the 2001 syllabus was used for the last time with Year 12, and the 2008 syllabus was used for the first time with Year 11. This provided challenges for teachers of composite classes who were juggling two year levels, each on a separate syllabus with differently worded standards and assessment requirements.

While reducing the number (but not increasing the length) of assessment instruments in their programs, teachers need to ensure that various text types are used across the course. This is an opportunity to match the macroskill being assessed with a topic that most suits it, giving students the best opportunities to demonstrate their command of the language.

The new syllabus’s criterion Comprehension is divided into Knowing and understanding, and Reasoning and responding. Listening and Reading tasks thus need to elicit from students:

- information, meaning, purpose, perspective, intention, subtleties
- analysis, evaluation, interpretation of unfamiliar language, conclusions, decisions, cultural meanings.

In 2009, 460 Year 12 students exited from 81 schools having studied German. Of these, 40 students from 27 schools studied German through the Brisbane School of Distance Education, which also provided the Visual Schooling Service. Additionally, 36 students in three schools studied German Extension.

Feedback from districts

Work programs
- In 2009, schools prepared new work programs, and district and state panels reviewed them.
- The reduction in work program requirements is accompanied by the expectation that teachers will have reference to the syllabus at all times. As working documents in schools, work programs will become more detailed as each unit is developed and as schools reflect on their practices and assessment. Learning experiences and assessment items, for example, will be adapted to ensure that appropriate focus is placed on higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.
- As new resources appear, and for topics where currency is important, the sample assessment plan (submitted in the work program as Years 11 and 12 profiles) can be adapted while maintaining requirements such as number of instruments and range of text types.
- It is encouraging to see the integration of ICTs and topics that are current and of interest to students.

Monitoring and verification submissions
- Annotations on criteria sheets help review panels understand how decisions have been made about the standards of student work.
- Apart from the usual contents of a submission, schools are encouraged to provide any additional information that would help the panel as it seeks evidence that student work matches the standards.
- Conditions of assessment need to be included on the assessment instruments given to students.
The speaking sample to be submitted is a teacher–student interaction (see syllabus 8.9.1). Recordings should be checked to ensure they are clear and audible.

Statewide comparability

Three combined district panels are responsible for the verification of school judgments across the state. The folios of work sent to the state panel for comparability indicated that there was variety and challenge in assessment given to students. In general, standards were applied correctly, though there were some difficulties in the application of writing standards. Decisions about threshold students are difficult to make and it is necessary to carefully match the student’s work against the standards for macroskills at exit in the syllabus. Students need to understand the need to demonstrate accuracy in vocabulary and grammar as well as complexity of language structures.

Course coverage

While topics in many schools’ new work programs are similar to those in their old programs, it is important that learning experiences develop the skills required for Reasoning and Responding, and Creating and responding.

A common difficulty in Writing is finding the balance between preparation and spontaneity. Students will demonstrate original and flexible language when they appropriately adapt rehearsed language to an unfamiliar purpose, context or audience.

Audio recordings should expose students to a variety of voices and speaking styles. While it is appropriate at times for a teacher to read texts, the teacher’s voice should not be the only voice heard by students.

Classroom emphasis should be on language proficiency, the theme being a means to that end. Likewise, cultural understanding is important in a thinking classroom, but does not overshadow language learning.

Contemporary and suitable audio, visual and written texts are available on the internet. Some media players allow audio files to be played at a slower rate without distortion or loss of authenticity.

Quality of assessment

The following points may help teachers as they prepare assessment and evaluate student work.

- Stimulus material in German is acceptable in writing tasks if it neither helps nor hinders the students in completing the tasks successfully.
- Excessive teacher input during speaking tasks reduces students’ opportunity to initiate and sustain a conversation and demonstrate spontaneous language. In a prepared talk it is a student’s response to the teacher’s impromptu question that demonstrates spontaneous language.
- Notes made during the 10-minute preparation time may be used during the speaking task, but students who just read from their notes do not demonstrate the use of spontaneous language.
- When responding to a reading or listening text, students need to justify their responses based on relevant information found in the text. As students are expected to analyse, evaluate, come to conclusions and make decisions, it is better to design tasks or questions on a whole-of-text level, rather than asking many questions that deconstruct the text and so provide excessive scaffolding. Responses in dot-point format are acceptable and would allow answers to be succinct while still providing the necessary detail.
• It is important to carefully choose the text type and task design for instruments set at the end of Year 12 to not only give students the opportunity to use complex language, but to actually prompt them to do so. Formal text types such as job applications may not allow for spontaneity (flexibility and originality) and may also disadvantage students who have difficulty with register.

**Subject support**

Assessment workshops focusing on the new syllabus were conducted in all districts in 2009, and material is being developed and placed on the website. Panel training will occur in 2010.

John Barker  
State Review Panel Chair

Lester Ford  
Senior Education Officer
Graphics — A13

Syllabus
The first cohort of Year 12 Graphics students has now completed the full two-year course based on the 2007 syllabus. This was the second year of implementation.

The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > ICT and Design > Graphics (2007). All syllabus references in this section refer to the 2007 syllabus.

Feedback from districts
School submissions for both monitoring and verification in 2009 were generally well presented and more schools are choosing to submit folios electronically. Organised submissions assist review meetings considerably, allowing panellists to devote time constructively to reviewing student folios and the relationship between student responses and the assessment instruments. Panellists are instructed to look for evidence to support the placement of students.

Trending of ticks or dot points on student profiles is not a valid method of determining an overall standard in a criterion. The judgment of a student’s achievement in a criterion should be based on the match between the quality of the student’s responses to the full range of summative assessment instruments, and the descriptions of the standards associated with exit in that particular criterion in the syllabus.

When preparing monitoring and verification submissions, it is essential that schools follow the QSA procedures to ensure that sample students from each level of achievement (mid-range and threshold) are included where possible. The purpose of verification is to verify the school’s decision making about each level of achievement that will be awarded. In 2009, there were instances in the Limited Achievement and Sound Achievement bands where some schools did not submit a sample, even though R6 documents indicated that non-sample students were exiting at these levels of achievement.

Statewide comparability
The comparability meeting provides advice to the QSA and district panel chairs about the match between the verified levels of achievement in the district samples across the state and the syllabus standards. There was a general consensus that school judgments in awarding levels of achievement matched syllabus standards in most districts.

The most significant issue identified through the comparability processes with the implementation of the 2007 Graphics syllabus is the approach by schools to direct students to use the cognitive processes embedded in the implementation model to resolve a building design brief or a product design brief. Many of the context-based folios viewed at the state comparability meeting showed student responses that demonstrated the objectives of the Graphics syllabus as a by-product of the assessment response. Often the most significant student cognition was evidenced in their building/product design decisions. The major area of concern with this type of assessment instrument is that students are not being given sufficient opportunities to demonstrate the full range of standards required for a High or Very High Achievement in Graphics despite the fact that they have may be producing a significant folio of work. In order to match the evidence in the folios to the syllabus standards awarded, state panellists at the comparability meeting had to search for graphical evidence in folios that contained a large volume of student work that was unrelated to the objectives of the graphics syllabus.
Course coverage

The new syllabus has helped teachers to continue the development of the subject of Graphics. The contextual nature of the curriculum provides opportunities for students to experience industry-related learning. Students should be genuinely investigating, refining, evaluating and producing quality graphical solutions that are related to real-life situations. The emphasis of student work should be directed towards creating graphical communication for an identified target audience.

Schools need to ensure that the approved work program is followed. Should the school wish to alter its direction, the correct procedure for amending work programs must be followed. The QSA district coordinator can assist with this process.

The course of study must include coverage of all mandatory topics. These are: Constructions and plane geometrical drawing, Orthogonal projection, Developments, Pictorials, Shadows, and Reflections. Evidence of these should be clearly displayed in a complete folio of summative student work.

Quality of assessment

Schools need to ensure that context-based folios use the implementation model and are not a collection of structured class work tasks (syllabus Section 7.61). The primary focus of a context-based folio should be on investigating, planning and refining how to best represent information graphically and to produce the graphical representations that meet the target audience needs. The assigned task or situation should be flexible enough to allow and promote the higher-order reasoning processes in solving it. Simple artefacts/tasks which do not challenge the graphical expertise of the higher-achieving students should not be evident (used summatively) in folios of those proposed as mid- and above-High Achievement. Very High Achievement folios should include thorough investigation, refinement and production of graphical solutions which were of significant challenge. Task sheets (especially in Year 12) should not provide excess scaffolding, which does no more than give the student a list of expected responses, rather than asking students to make choices and justify them.

In a folio based on a production graphics context, an example of an approach could be to require students to produce a set of graphical instructions in the form of a fold-out brochure that can be used by a consumer to assemble the product. Students would need to consider the target audience and their needs, plan, refine and produce a range of required drawings (e.g. working drawings and pictorials) and then plan, refine and produce the final product. They should be given the opportunity to investigate and analyse existing imagery and conventions when planning their responses, and to make use of this information to then refine the way they present their intended response.

In a folio based on a business graphics context, an example of an approach could be to require students to create a corporate identity for a particular corporation or event. Students could be involved in researching the graphical needs, identifying and analysing existing logos, stationary packages, websites etc. The emphasis could be to critique the elements of presentation (e.g. colours, font styles, shape, balance, imagery) and then apply and refine this information when addressing the design elements of their presentations. Similarly, students could investigate the best methods of presenting their finished graphical product to the consumer. Examples include a spiral bound set of drawings, an electronic (PowerPoint) presentation, a hard copy presentational portfolio or a static display board. Each of these methods has numerous elements which the students can investigate, analyse, plan and refine.

Creating graphical representations as described in the two examples above for an identified audience requires students to use the implementation model (planning, refinement and production) and provides opportunities for responses to demonstrate the dimensions of the criteria required for A-standard responses.
When planning formal assessment tasks, schools need to ensure that challenging and unfamiliar/unrehearsed contexts are developed to justify achievement at the VHA level. This is to allow students at such levels to demonstrate their higher-order reasoning across all facets of the course. Regardless of difficulty, formal testing which is the same or similar to rehearsed classwork, is not beneficial to students at this level, and is often the cause for non-agreement at verification.

The following points should also be considered when developing assessment tasks:

- Each of the three contextual areas must be summatively assessed.
- Between three and five pieces of assessment are submitted for verification.
- All three criteria must be assessed at least twice before verification.
- Ensure that the final piece of assessment post-verification assesses all three criteria.
- Criteria and standards used on instrument-specific criteria sheets should be selected or drawn from the standards descriptors associated with the exit criteria.
- Generally, the criterion of Presentation is not normally assessed in formal testing; however, with the use of computer-generated drafting the assessment of presentation techniques is acceptable.

**Subject support**

Schools can expect to receive support through:

- the QSA website
- syllabus assessment workshops
- ongoing relationships with panel chairs and members.

During 2009, a number of Graphics networking meetings were held in districts throughout the state. These were well attended and supported, and provided opportunities for teachers to network and discuss aspects of the Graphics syllabus and its delivery.

Additional support and resources can be found through the Queensland Senior Graphics Syllabus 2007 group on the edna website <www.edna.edu.au>. Teachers are encouraged to use and share examples of assessment through the group.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of Graphics. Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form. (From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.)

Larry Scaroni     Roy Barnes
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
Health Education — A19

Syllabus

The 2004 Health Education syllabus is now in its fifth year of implementation. This year a committee of practising teachers and academics met to revise the syllabus. A draft of the revised syllabus was made available for comment on the QSA website during July and August 2009 and minimal feedback was received from schools. The revised syllabus will be published early in 2010 and is to be implemented for the first time with the Year 11 cohort in 2011.

The 2004 syllabus will remain in place until 2012 when the final cohort of students using that syllabus will exit Year 12. Schools are encouraged to use the syllabus as a reference document in conjunction with their current work program.

The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Health and Physical Education > Health Education (2004). All syllabus references in this section refer to the 2004 syllabus.

Feedback from districts

Over 5000 students from 88 schools studied Health Education in 2009. Health Education is moderated by six district panels at monitoring and verification meetings. Moderation proceeded smoothly in 2009 with few issues arising at monitoring and schools achieving agreement to their proposed levels of achievement and relative achievement of sample folios by the end of verification.

Two main issues arising from verification were:

- task structure limiting students’ capacity to demonstrate depth in their responses
- application of standards in the Application and analysis, and Synthesis and evaluation criteria, particularly at A and B standard.

Statewide comparability

District review panel chairs are to be congratulated for resolving with schools any disagreed submissions in 2009. This allowed the state review panel to focus on the process of comparability, which is comparing district samples to the syllabus standards. Sample folios from threshold levels of achievement were used at comparability.

Course coverage

The health issues selected need to be current and based on feasible solutions and strategies. A selected health issue must meet the requirements of the health unit as specified in the syllabus. Schools should regularly review the selected health issues of their course to enhance relevance to the local community, cohort and teaching staff available. This will enable students to explore interesting health-related issues that students are able to solve.

Assessment should be refined each year due to the changing nature of policies, governments and recently released data that influence the issues studied and tasks completed. Changes to issues and/or assessment may require schools to make minor amendments to their work program. Any changes to work programs should be amended through the QSA website and amended work programs must meet syllabus requirements.
Quality of assessment

To assist students to better understand the requirements of an assessment item, tasks should include the issue statement from the work program, one main task requirement, the genre and conditions. Tasks must match the syllabus requirements. Tasks should be driven by the Synthesis and evaluation criterion and require students to provide justification for their arguments. Referencing as citable evidence continues to be a concern especially when identifying evidence in the VHA and HA standard.

Language in the task needs to relate to the population of the unit as expanded in the syllabus.

Tasks still require refinement so that students are able to solve, evaluate or implement a focused slice of the health issue. Some tasks continue to be global, general and non-specific which can lead to difficulty in generating primary and secondary data. Selected genres, that meet syllabus conditions, also need to reflect a real-life health task that encompasses “best-practice” in the health industry.

Criteria descriptors need to be consistent with the syllabus while still ensuring that the criteria sheet is task-specific across the folio of assessment instruments.

Subject support

Syllabus implementation workshops for the 2010 Health Education syllabus will be conducted in most districts in 2010. These workshops will be advertised on the QSA website. Panel training will also occur in each of the six districts for Health Education in 2010.

Pam Ruddell
State Review Panel Chair

Kim Lavin
Principal Education Officer
Home Economics — A25

Syllabus

The Home Economics senior syllabus 2001 is in its eighth year of implementation. The revised syllabus will be available from the QSA website during 2010 for implementation with Year 11 cohorts in 2011. Syllabus implementation workshops will be held in Semester 2 and teachers are encouraged to attend.


Feedback from districts

Monitoring and verification ran smoothly in 2009. Assessment instruments generally provided opportunities for students to match the higher standards of the syllabus.

Schools are advised to check their approved work programs to ensure that their current teaching and learning, assessment, criteria sheets and profiles match what is stated. As teachers adopt more varied and innovative approaches in lesson design and assessment techniques, amendments may be required. Schools must ensure that any revision to the assessment program considers and meets syllabus and verification folio requirements. Profiles should also match assessment programs.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across the state. In 2009, panels found evidence that judgments about standards were comparable across most districts.

Some schools are still using criteria sheets developed in 2001 and have unnecessary details which do not match the standard descriptors of the syllabus. Some assessment tasks are using images and data that are outdated and not relevant to today’s students.

Course coverage

Overall, the mandatory aspects, subject matter and treatment of electives have been productively developed in courses by schools. The mandatory requirements of the Home Economics syllabus are all three areas of study in summative assessment. Some schools are making summative judgments based upon only two areas of study and are therefore not meeting the mandatory requirements of the syllabus.

Two areas that schools may need to look at are Practical performance and the combining of criteria. The syllabus says that assessment task requirements may be combined (Section 8.8, p. 61). Some possibilities for this may be combining:

- an extended written response (Criterion 2) and a Practical performance task (Criterion 3)
- a task representative of Knowledge and understanding (Criterion 1) and a Practical performance task (Criterion 3)
- a task representative of Knowledge and understanding (Criterion 1) and an extended written response (Criterion 2).
It is important when combining assessment opportunities that a task-specific criteria sheet be developed and that the exit standards descriptors be clearly evident and reflected on the criteria sheet.

In this syllabus, the key concepts outlined for core and elective units encourage practical performance in relation to textiles and food preparation rather than house plans.

Quality of assessment

Good assessment opportunities come from varied and quality assessment instruments that cover a range of topics and issues suitable for adolescents. There is room for improvement in assessment instrument development, and the concerns noted from this year’s moderation process of monitoring, verification and comparability are outlined below:

Criterion 1: Knowledge and understanding

To demonstrate “thorough understanding”, a question needs to be developed so that it allows students to demonstrate the syllabus standards. Multiple understanding questions do not necessarily mean a quality assessment instrument or demonstration of thorough understanding. One or two high-quality questions that encompass a number of key concepts, principles, processes and practices can be more effective in giving students the opportunity to demonstrate standards descriptors.

Knowledge and understanding requires students to recall previously learned factual information and to demonstrate understanding of that information (syllabus p. 5). Assessment tasks such as pamphlets or oral presentations can be developed to assess Criterion 1 and students can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding by interpreting and applying, in familiar situations, the key concepts, principles, processes and practices related to the wellbeing of individuals and their families, not just finding and copying. Orals with structured question-and-answer sections can be used to validly assess recall of information. Task-specific criteria sheets, developed from the exit standards for Knowledge and understanding, and teacher feedback is essential to these types of assessment tasks.

Criterion 2: Reasoning process

Students’ responses to researching an issue can be presented in a variety of forms. An issue is a matter which has particular importance or significance to the wellbeing of individuals or families. Issues should not be so complex or sophisticated that students cannot develop logically reasoned arguments and sustain them with evidence within the word limit.

Some material in sample student folios was simply downloaded and pasted into their assignments. The information should be used to “investigate, inquire, debate, argue and develop an opinion, rather than merely describe”. Ensure data is relevant and updated. American data, especially nutritional data, is usually not relevant to the issues presented.

Students need to be taught how to reference correctly and provide reference lists using common formats and an acceptable, consistent system. A range of sources is necessary to match the standards descriptors and students need direction on valid and relevant sources. It is not a requirement for students to include copies of articles used as reference material in appendixes. Appendixes should only contain collated statistics or primary data gathered by the student to support their arguments.

Word length, as stated in the syllabus (Section 8.5, Reports, p. 55), should be a minimum of 800 words and a maximum of 1000 words in Year 12. Some issues set are too broad and difficult to cover within the word limits.

It is preferable for teachers to outline the issues rather than have students develop their own, as this is not a requirement of the standards descriptors. Teachers may choose to set a choice of
more than one issue to provide students with options to provide sufficient challenge to match the needs of the cohort. Genre requirements should be clearly identified on tasks and learning experiences need to support skill development in this genre.

**Criterion 3: Practical performance**

Photographic evidence must include comments describing the “quality” of the technique. The evidence must be photographs of student work from the current cohort (Section 8.5, p. 59).

It must be clear what the student has decided to produce for the final product. This product should be evident in the process journal and supported by teacher feedback and comments on the task-specific criteria sheet. If possible, a photograph or visual documentation could be included to assist panels.

The Practical performance model (Section 6.3, p. 17) does not mandate that a number of alternatives must be analysed and documented in a process journal. It is acceptable for a student to nominate one plausible solution and justify it in relation to the factors and their interrelationships. Modifications to an option may also be made so that the option becomes a suitable solution.

The higher standards require students to perform a comprehensive range of practical skills and schools need to ensure that students perform food preparation skills, not just food assembly. Practical textiles tasks need to ensure that students are using fabric and textile skills, not making “jewellery”.

Evaluations need to address the process, planning, product and recommendations to match the A-standard descriptors. An evaluation completed on a set template may not provide the opportunity for students to match the A-standard descriptors.

**Subject support**

To support the general implementation of the 2010 syllabus, the QSA will be running syllabus orientation workshops in Semester 2, 2010 in all districts.

In 2009, support was available from the senior education officer by phone, email, fax and the website. Annotated sample assessment instruments and sample work programs are available on the website (www.qsa.qld.edu.au).

M Meredith Gleadhill Shauna Bouel
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Hospitality Studies — A22

Syllabus

Hospitality Studies is offered at 78 schools across the state. The publication of the training package SIT07 Tourism, Hospitality and Events (replacing THH02 Hospitality) required all schools to be registered for the new training package for 2009 for Year 11 students. Some schools found that if their module selection had changed they needed to submit an amendment to their work program, particularly if the change was from one certificate to another.

The Hospitality Studies 2009 syllabus will be implemented with all Year 11 students in 2010, and all schools need to submit a work program by the end of Term 1, 2010.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Health and Physical Education > Hospitality Studies (2001). All syllabus references in this section refer to this document.

Feedback from districts

As the subject is about to enter a new syllabus phase, all work programs for the 2001 syllabus will run for one final year in 2010. Year 12 students in 2010 are to continue their course of study on the Hospitality Studies 2001 syllabus.

Any amendments for the current syllabus should be approved by the district panel.

Approval of new work programs for the 2009 syllabus has begun with schools already submitting their work programs. Examples of work program documents are available on the website.

Schools are required to collect and provide sufficient evidence to support judgments. Verification folios should contain closest to mid- and threshold-levels of achievement, irrespective of whether they are atypical folios.

DVD documentation needs to be accessible to panellists at panel meetings and playable on a standard DVD player.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across the state. The state panel was able to find evidence that there was comparability of judgments about levels of achievement in the sample submissions across the state.

Course coverage

Schools across Queensland are providing acceptable course coverage including the mandatory aspects of the course as outlined on p. 37 of the syllabus, which is in the final stages of a syllabus cycle.

Quality of assessment

Assessment across the state is of high quality, but in the development of Criterion 2, Reasoning process, research tasks need to be clearly defined, related to the semester topic area, and match the general objectives of the syllabus to avoid unrelated topics with a non-hospitality focus. Assessment instruments must clearly require students to develop an argument and, to match the exit standards rather than just selecting relevant resources, students’ responses should develop the argument supported by evidence.
In Criterion 3, Practical performance, schools need to ensure that assessment instruments request the clarification of the task at the commencement of the written component to give students the opportunity to justify decision making in a more structured manner. If students are unable to establish the dimensions of the task, they will not have the opportunity to justify them. Students should be guided through the process at Year 11 and gradually allowed to work independently in Semester 4, Year 12.

Schools need to ensure that the level of challenge in understanding questions is greater in Semester 4, Year 12, to ensure students are able to demonstrate the syllabus standards by completion of the course.

Subject support

The introduction of the 2009 Hospitality Studies syllabus was supported through syllabus orientation workshops in Term 2, 2009. These workshops were conducted across the state. Panel training was conducted in districts in 2009 to prepare panellists for the process of reviewing work programs.

Assessment workshops will be offered in a number of districts in Term 2, 2010. Information about these workshops can be found on the QSA website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>. Select Years 10–12 > PD and events > Workshops > Year 11–12 > Hospitality.

Further information and support is available on the website or through the Senior Education Officer by phone, email or fax.

Penny Braithwaite Shauna Bouel
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Indonesian and Indonesian Extension — B06

Syllabus

This was the final year for the 2001 syllabus. In 2009, 73 Year 12 students exited from 13 schools having studied Indonesian.

Monitoring and verification

During 2009 monitoring and verification, school submissions were generally comprehensive in achieving syllabus requirements.

Issues arising from verification include:

- Where the recorded evidence did not substantiate the school’s decisions about the application of standards to speaking performances, and evidence in the folio of student work did not match the standards awarded, the panel could not support school decisions. Subsequent consultation sometimes involves the requirement for recordings specific to student folios. In such cases, it is beneficial if all speaking tasks are recorded and are available for consultation and negotiation.

- Standard A Writing is characterised by flexibility in sentence structure, some originality, a range of complex sentences incorporating aspects of time, mood and intention, and a high degree of accuracy in familiar language across a variety of topics and genres. Where both tasks submitted are the same genre, balance and variety will not be demonstrated.

- If a folio is incomplete, please provide information to the panel in the submission to explain how syllabus requirements were met.

- A student who attains, for example, an A on the final assessment is not necessarily a VHA in that skill at exit. If all other results where of a B standard the student has not consistently demonstrated the A standard across a range of topics and genres. Evidence in a folio must match standards descriptors. This decision must represent the performance across the folio.

- Schools sometimes change the sequence of topics in their work programs, or substitute one unit for another. A permanent change requires an official amendment to the program; however, for a one-off change, an explanation included with the submission to panel will suffice.

Course coverage

The mandatory aspects of the syllabus are generally well covered.

Quality of assessment

Quality assessment should be designed to give students opportunities to demonstrate the criteria and standards.

Attention to assessment planning and design is essential to ensure sufficient opportunities are provided to students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion. The following should be considered:

- Increasing complexity over the four-semester course of study. Students should demonstrate, through more complex tasks, and in their own spoken and written texts, an understanding and use of language that matches exit standards descriptors and meets syllabus requirements
• A variety of text types over a range of topics to enable students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion.
• Developing Speaking tasks which give students an opportunity to demonstrate the spontaneous use of language.
• Ensuring that Speaking and Writing tasks allow students to perform in realistic contexts and draw on personal interests and experiences of the learners.

Subject support
The QSA has continued support of the assessment and moderation of languages across the state with assessment workshops, development of materials on the website and specific school support.

Kath Symmons
State Review Panel Chair

Kerri Furlong
Senior Education Officer
Information Processing and Technology — A16

Syllabus

The 2004 IPT syllabus is entering its sixth year of general implementation.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12> Years 11–12 subjects > ICT and Design > Information Processing and Technology (2004).

The 2010 syllabus has been developed and should be finalised in early 2010, with general implementation in 2011.

Feedback from districts

Monitoring and verification were conducted successfully across the 13 districts. To assist the district review panels in supporting school judgments, schools should include in all sample folios complete evidence of assessment items completed collaboratively. Individual sample folios should “stand alone” by including both the collaborative and individual components of all assessment items.

Statewide comparability

The state review panel found sufficient evidence of the match of the qualities of student work with the syllabus standards descriptors to support the judgments of the interim levels of achievements as proposed in the sample submissions from the 13 districts.

However, the state review panel identified issues that relate to the comparability of the Research and Development criterion, in particular, the design, development and evaluation of solutions to problems using information technology. Some of the evidence provided in the sample submissions showed some inconsistent application of the standards associated with exit levels of achievement. Information and Intelligent Systems, major projects in particular, did not always contain evidence of the “design and development of solutions” that matched the syllabus standards.

Course coverage

The reviewed submissions all demonstrated sufficient course coverage, but some of the issues reported previously still persist.

The inaccurate assessment of conceptual schema diagrams in the Information and Intelligent Systems (IIS) topic of study is a persistent concern. Feedback provided to students throughout the conceptual schema diagrams learning experiences may improve student achievement in this area.

Some of the reviewed submissions lacked evidence of the full “information systems design” process. There needs to be greater emphasis on teaching students a fact-oriented design method, which is part of the “core subject matter” within the topic Information and Intelligent Systems (IIS). Learning experiences to work through all the stages of the fact-oriented design method are not being provided, and this limits students’ opportunities to meet syllabus standards.
Quality of assessment

The reviewed submissions included a wide range of assessment items. These were generally appropriate and met the demands of the syllabus.

The state review panel was, however, concerned that overuse of the examinations assessment technique does not allow students to demonstrate the full range of standards across the criteria. A large number of questions on the examinations have been incorrectly classified as Research and development when they assess “procedural knowledge”.

A concern raised in previous years, and again noted in 2009, was that group work was awarded universal results, not individual results, for the evidence provided, thus preventing differentiation between individuals. As stated in the syllabus (p. 9) “objective and subjective measures of group participation, including self- and peer-assessment, should be used when apportioning individual credit”.

The quality of instrument-specific criteria sheets continues to improve. Schools are reminded that the A–E syllabus standards should be used to make judgments about student achievement. Some assessment instruments still use standard descriptors (S1–S5) from the old syllabus.

Reviewed submissions show that teachers are beginning to scaffold “evaluation” in assessment instruments, allowing students to produce responses that are critical and analytic rather than simple and subjective as noted in past reports. This practice is encouraged as it allows students’ responses to demonstrate the full range of standards.

Subject support

To support the general implementation of the 2010 syllabus, the QSA will be running syllabus orientation workshops in Term 2, 2010 across the state.

Ross Jardine     Tammy Hope
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
Information Technology Systems — A26

Syllabus

Through their work programs schools have demonstrated a better understanding of the Contexts, Inputs, Processes, Products (CIPP) model in the Evaluation dimension of the Problem-solving criterion. However, there continues to be a gap between the planning of CIPP in the work program and the implementation of the CIPP model in assessment. Schools are advised to plan and implement the CIPP model, as described on p. 38 of the 2006 syllabus and p. 41 of the amended 2008 syllabus. The recommendation from the state review panel is for schools to plan for and implement the CIPP model as the method of evaluation in project-based work.

Schools are advised to demonstrate in the course outline and in the unit of study of the school work program, how the subject matter is organised using the five interwoven threads. The state review panel recommends that schools refer to the descriptions of the five interwoven threads, as described in Section 6 of the 2008 amended syllabus, when planning a course of study.

Feedback from districts

During 2009, there were a number of amendments made to work programs, all of which were approved.

There continues to be a misinterpretation by some schools of the 2006 syllabus requirement regarding percentages for core and extension. Schools are reminded that 70 per cent of the ITS course is core (mandatory) and 30 per cent is extension, and that the five threads are to be interwoven throughout the entire course. Schools are advised to work with the district review panel chair to ensure that the misinterpretation is worked through and work programs are approved early in the course of study.

Also highlighted was the limited implementation of the CIPP model in project-based student work. District and state review panels recommend that teachers plan for and implement the CIPP model as the method of evaluation from the beginning of Year 11, enabling students to implement the CIPP model confidently in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, throughout the course of study.

District review panel chairs emphasised the importance of the electronic student folios being fully operational. They highlighted difficulties when reviewing student folios at verification due to electronic submissions being corrupted, files disorganised and not “user friendly” to access.

It was noted that the sample folios demonstrated an improvement in students’ documentation process which has resulted in a better balance between documentation and product. In addition, the inclusion of selected screen shots in the documentation provided further supporting evidence when the digital product was not provided by the school.

Statewide comparability

The state review panel found that the judgments made in schools across Queensland matched the syllabus exit standards.

The comparability process highlighted some notable trends in 2009. The following actions are recommended for implementation by schools in 2010:

- Schools should place an emphasis on implementing a course of study that demonstrates an increasing level of depth and complexity in the Problem-solving criterion. It is recommended that assessment instruments and criteria sheets reflect an increasing level of depth and complexity, enabling students to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the three dimensions of the Problem-solving criterion: analysis, synthesis and evaluation, in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
• Schools should become familiar with QSA policies relating to Special provisions and Variable progression rate (VPR) both of which are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Course coverage

The 2009 comparability highlighted for the state review panel some notable concerns that relate to the mandatory aspects of the syllabus: Social and ethical issues thread; Project development model; and Contexts, inputs, processes and products (CIPP).

Social and ethical issues thread

It was evident that the planning and implementation of the Social and ethical issues thread throughout the course of study is limited across all districts. It is recommended that schools review their course of study to ensure that the core and extension material is defined under the five threads, with equal representation of each thread throughout the course.

Project development model

The 2006 syllabus on p. 32 states in Section 7.4, Projects: “It is essential that a project is documented through all of its phases, as outlined in the project development model (see Table 2)”. Therefore, projects and the full implementation of all phases of the project development model should be adhered to in school assessment plans.

If the project development model (e.g. D-D-E cycle) of the major project is divided into two or more separate assessment instruments, it is recommended that another opportunity be provided to students to demonstrate all phases of the project development model (p. 33).

Contexts, inputs, processes and products (CIPP) in the Problem-solving criterion

Schools need to become fully aware of the importance of implementing the Contexts, inputs, processes and products (CIPP) model in the Evaluation dimension of the Problem-solving criterion. The state review panel advises all schools to refer to the ITS syllabus 2006 (amended November 2008) for practical advice on the model and to visit the ITS edna online-community site <edna.edu.au> for examples of good practice and student responses, using the CIPP model.

Quality of assessment

The 2009 comparability meeting confirmed that schools are continually evaluating their assessment practices ensuring that the underlying principles of assessment are applied. The state review panel viewed a range of effective assessment instruments. It was noted that some writing tasks were almost identical to minor project tasks. It is recommended that schools refer to Section 7.5, Assessment techniques (pp. 34–38) of the 2006 (amended November 2008) syllabus to gain a clear understanding of each assessment technique.

The state review panel encourages schools to continue to develop instrument-specific criteria sheets ensuring that they match the assessment instrument and align with the syllabus standards descriptors (pp. 44–45) of the amended syllabus.

Subject support

Materials for the website are being developed by the state review panel to support the 2006 (amended November 2008) syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to visit the QSA website regularly.
to view support materials and professional development opportunities. Panel training will also be conducted in Semester 1, 2010.

The state review panel also encourages teachers to continue to use the ITS edna online community <edna.edu.au> for support, particularly with sharing and developing assessment and resources, and at the same time allowing important professional discussions to occur.

In addition, the district review panel chairs (DRPCs) have indicated interest in establishing professional networks. Schools are encouraged to contact their DRPC if they are interested in participating in email discussion groups.

Lee-Ann Barton     Robyn Bergmansons  
State Review Panel Chair     Senior Education Officer
Italian — B04

Syllabus

In 2009, the 2001 syllabus was used for the last time with Year 12 and the 2008 syllabus was used for the first time with Year 11. This provided challenges for teachers of composite classes who were juggling two year levels, each on a separate syllabus with differently worded standards and assessment requirements.

While reducing the number (but not increasing the length) of assessment instruments in their programs, teachers need to ensure that various text types are used across the course. This is an opportunity to match the macroskill being assessed with a topic that most suits it, giving students the best opportunities to demonstrate their command of the language.

The new syllabus’s criterion Comprehension is divided into Knowing and understanding, and Reasoning and responding. Listening and Reading tasks thus need to elicit from students:

- information, meaning, purpose, perspective, intention, subtleties
- analysis, evaluation, interpretation of unfamiliar language, conclusions, decisions, cultural meanings.

In 2009, 182 Year 12 students exited from 27 schools having studied Italian. Of these, 12 students from eight schools studied Italian through the Cairns School of Distance Education.

Statewide comparability

Work programs

- In 2009 schools prepared new work programs and district and state panels reviewed them.
- The reduction in work program requirements is accompanied by the expectation that teachers will have reference to the syllabus at all times. As working documents in schools, work programs will become more detailed as each unit is developed and as schools reflect on their practices and assessment. Learning experiences and assessment items, for example, will be adapted to ensure that appropriate focus is placed on higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.

- As new resources appear, and for topics where currency is important, the sample assessment plan (submitted in the work program as Years 11 and 12 profiles) can be adapted while maintaining requirements such as number of instruments and range of text types.

- It is encouraging to see the integration of ICTs and topics that are current and of interest to students.

Monitoring and verification submissions

- Annotations on criteria sheets help the review panel understand how decisions have been made about the standards of student work.

- Apart from the usual contents of a submission, schools are encouraged to provide any additional information that would help the panel as it seeks evidence that student work matches the standards.

- Conditions of assessment need to be included on the assessment instruments given to students.

- The Speaking sample to be submitted is a teacher–student interaction (see syllabus Section 8.9.1). Recordings should be checked to ensure they are clear and audible.
• Submissions indicated that there was variety and challenge in assessment given to students.
• In general, standards were applied appropriately, although there were some difficulties in the application of writing standards. Decisions about threshold students are difficult to make and it is necessary to carefully match the student’s work against the standards for macroskills at exit in the syllabus. Students need to understand the need to demonstrate accuracy in vocabulary and grammar as well as complexity of language structures.

Course coverage

While topics in many schools’ new work programs are similar to those in their old programs, it is important that learning experiences develop the skills required for Reasoning and responding, and Creating and responding.

A common difficulty in Writing is finding the balance between preparation and spontaneity. Students will demonstrate original and flexible language when they appropriately adapt rehearsed language to an unfamiliar purpose, context or audience.

Audio recordings should expose students to a variety of voices and speaking styles. While it is appropriate at times for a teacher to read texts, the teacher’s voice should not be the only voice heard by students.

Classroom emphasis should be on language proficiency, the theme being a means to that end. Likewise, cultural understanding is important in a thinking classroom, but does not overshadow language learning.

Contemporary and suitable audio, visual and written texts are available on the internet. Some media players allow audio files to be played at a slower rate without distortion or loss of authenticity.

Quality of assessment

The following points may help teachers as they prepare assessment and evaluate student work.

• Stimulus material in Italian is acceptable in writing tasks if it neither helps nor hinders the students in completing the tasks successfully.
• Excessive teacher input during speaking tasks reduces students’ opportunity to initiate and sustain a conversation and demonstrate spontaneous language. In a prepared talk it is a student’s response to the teacher’s impromptu question that demonstrates spontaneous language.
• Notes made during the 10-minute preparation time may be used during the speaking task, but students who just read from their notes do not demonstrate the use of spontaneous language.
• When responding to a reading or listening text, students need to justify their responses based on relevant information found in the text. As students are expected to analyse, evaluate, come to conclusions and make decisions, it is better to design tasks or questions on a whole-of-text level, rather than asking many questions that deconstruct the text and so provide excessive scaffolding. Responses in dot-point format are acceptable and would allow answers to be succinct while still providing the necessary detail.
• It is important to carefully choose the text type and task design for instruments set at the end of Year 12 to not only give students the opportunity to use complex language, but to actually prompt them to do so. Formal text types such as job applications may not allow for spontaneity (flexibility and originality) and may also disadvantage students who have difficulty with register.
Subject support

Assessment workshops focusing on the new syllabus were conducted in all districts in 2009, and material is being developed and placed on the website. Panel training will occur in 2010.

Sarina Kearney    Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Japanese — B05

Syllabus

This is the final year of the 2001 Syllabus. In 2009, 1348 Year 12 students exited from 154 schools having studied Japanese. Of these, 51 students studied under a shared campus arrangement and 31 through the School of Distance Education and 10 through Virtual Schooling.

Feedback from districts

Moderation proceeded smoothly in 2009 with few concerns arising at monitoring and all schools achieving agreement to their proposed levels of achievement and relative achievement of sample folios by the end of verification.

Issues arising from verification include:

- Atypical folios must be submitted when they are a required sample. Therefore, folios that represent the work of a student who has completed only two semesters in Year 11 must be submitted if it is the only sample of a threshold LA.
- The QSA’s “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” must be adhered to.

Information on atypical folios and the “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” can be found on the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across the state. The state panel was able to find evidence that there was comparability of judgments about levels of achievement in the district samples.

Course coverage

The mandatory aspects of the syllabus are generally well covered. The accuracy and range of kanji required have been overlooked in some cases.

Quality of assessment

Quality assessment should be designed to allow students opportunities to demonstrate the criteria and standards. Assessment items need to be carefully designed so that they provide adequate context and purpose for students, yet do not provide leading or prescriptive assistance in completing the task. For example, the knowledge of a particular text type (diary, blogs) would dictate certain requirements which students should be aware of without requiring teacher guidance.

There continues to be a range of assessment instruments which do not offer a significant level of complexity in the summative part of the four-semester course. Assessment items should provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievement and provide differentiation across and within the VHA and HA bands.

While a certain amount of scaffolding is permitted, this should not interfere with the students’ ability to be creative and demonstrate originality or spontaneity. For example, students would not normally receive teacher questions prior to an oral assessment, nor would they complete written drafts or practice oral tasks that relate directly to the content of assessment. Full details
concerning the conditions surrounding assessment should be made clear on the assessment instrument.

Check assessment instruments, particularly in the productive skills, for realistic language use.

**Subject support**

The QSA has continued to support the assessment and moderation of languages across the state with assessment workshops, development of materials on the website and individual school support.

Greg Dabelstein  
State Review Panel Chair

Kerri Furlong  
Senior Education Officer
Legal Studies — B21

Syllabus

The Legal Studies senior syllabus 2007 is in its second year of general implementation. In 2009, the first cohort of students reached exit. As the first cohort has now exited, schools may wish to consider whether their work programs have met the needs of their cohorts. Amendments can be made to existing programs. Schools intending to submit changes should add an amendment cover page before sending it to the QSA using the electronic work program submission tool WPOnline.

Feedback from districts

School submissions for monitoring and verification in 2009 were generally well planned and presented. Organised submissions assist review meetings considerably, allowing panellists to devote time to look constructively for evidence to support the school’s placement of students. Advice offered to schools at monitoring was well received and most schools acted upon this advice as evidenced by their verification submissions.

In some submissions the use of outdated criteria and standards matrixes was problematic. A mandatory aspect of the syllabus is that the exit criteria and standards stated in Section 8.4 must be used to make the judgment of student achievement at exit. Additionally the syllabus requires each assessment instrument to be accompanied by an instrument-specific criteria sheet. Therefore all assessment items used in this subject must be accompanied by instrument-specific criteria sheets which are derived from and align with the 2007 syllabus standards. The use of instrument-specific criteria sheets provides evidence of how well aspects of the syllabus standards have been demonstrated and how a decision to award a grade has been made.

Inconsistencies with syllabus criteria also appeared on many instrument-specific criteria sheets. Schools are reminded that in constructing instrument-specific criteria, they should consider the following guidelines:

- Word length or time limits, should be identified as conditions on the instrument sheet rather than in the assessment criteria.
- It is not appropriate to make up standards or add additional elements where none exist.
- The specific sections of the standards matrix that can be adapted to suit the instrument relate primarily to the topic areas under study and the genre detail of expected response.

Statewide comparability

The comparability strategy requires each state review panellist to review a single level of achievement across all samples and districts. For example, one state panellist reviewed all the threshold Very High Achievement samples across all districts.

There was general consensus that school judgments in awarding levels of achievement matched syllabus standards in all districts. It should be noted that samples sent by district panels to the comparability meeting are not selected as exemplars, but are representative submissions that were agreed to at verification within a district. Information collected through the comparability process is primarily used by the manager of the Quality Assurance Unit. The state review panel chair also writes a letter to each district review panel chair that contains advice regarding their panel’s judgments.
Course coverage

It is important that if schools construct two assessment items from the same topic of study the instruments should focus on different aspects of the topic. The syllabus indicates that the independent study must be a written response. If a school requires students to complete this instrument in a nonwritten form, syllabus requirements will not be met.

Quality of assessment

The state panel found some of the most effective instruments required students to respond to a specific issue rather than broad general topics. In these instruments evaluation was an integral component. The context for these instruments was often set with an appropriately cited stimulus, such as a quote which highlighted the issue under consideration. The modelling of good practice by referencing all stimulus material was noted in many high-quality assessment instruments.

Conversely, instruments that merely required students to gather large quantities of information, without directing students to investigate and evaluate the information constructively, failed to provide adequate opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievement in the investigation and evaluation criterion. Without a specific issue to address, responses were often well over the syllabus recommendations for word lengths. Instrument design should also consider the balance between legal and social issues as some assessment items are not allowing students to consider the legal issues. A question that asks students to comment on the social relevance of the legal outcomes may not be sufficient for students to satisfy the evaluation criterion. Rather students should be directed to consider the suitability of a legal outcome and its social implication.

Responding to case studies adequately directs students to demonstrate their ability in the Investigation criterion. There are very limited opportunities in this style of assessment for students to demonstrate in-depth evaluation. Consideration should also be given to the stem of the question when designing assessment instruments as using the word “evaluate” is not a sufficient explanation of what is required when students are responding.

Instruments also need to be suitably challenging to support level of achievement decisions, particularly at Very High Achievement and High Achievement. The rigour of short responses must be comparable to all other assessment techniques. The syllabus recommends that only Knowledge and understanding, and Investigation can adequately be assessed by this technique. True-and-false-type questions are not challenging and rigorous enough.

Combining short-response with extended-response questions is also problematic. Asking students to write a 500–700 word evaluative essay at the end of a lengthy Knowledge and understanding or Investigation supervised instrument does not give them adequate time to reach a conclusion which is supported by a logical, justified argument.

Subject support

Panel training occurred across most districts to support the first year of verification under the 2007 syllabus.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities as well as a greater understanding of the syllabus in the continued development of Legal Studies. Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Karyl Young     Bernadette Stacey
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Marine Studies — A27

Syllabus
The Marine Studies senior syllabus 2004 (amended 2006) enters its sixth year of implementation in 2010 and will undergo periodic revision.

The current syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Marine Studies (2004). All references in this section refer to this document.

Feedback from districts
Marine Studies continues to attract students who value the incorporation of mariner skills with the more theoretical aspects of the syllabus. A small number of new schools or schools taking up Marine Studies for the first time submitted work programs for approval this year. A number of schools have taken the opportunity to submit amendments to existing work programs. Many of these amendments reflect changes to school staff, the availability of new resources and the changing demographics of the coastal communities which contain many of the schools offering this subject. This process allows schools to ensure that the program being offered optimises the learning experiences for the students and continues to be relevant to the cohort. Schools wishing to submit amendments to their work programs should add the amendment cover page (available from the QSA website, select Assessment > Senior assessment > Forms and procedures) before sending it to the QSA using the electronic work program submission tool WPOnline.

In 2009, monitoring and verification submissions generally reflected syllabus requirements and, in most cases, the folios included the required items described in the syllabus (Section 7.7, pp. 62–63). Verification proceeded smoothly with only minor concerns identified. The common themes in advice provided to schools related to task design and the construction of instrument-specific criteria sheets. Feedback to schools highlighted the positive aspects of school judgments. Where concerns were identified, comments were directed at how to rectify these issues.

The state panel received two unresolved submissions in Marine Studies this year.

Statewide comparability
The state panel found sufficient evidence of the match of the qualities of student work with the syllabus standards descriptors to support the judgments of the interim levels of achievement as proposed in the sample district submissions across most districts. In some districts, issues related to the opportunities provided by assessment tasks to allow students to demonstrate exit standards in Knowledge and understanding (K&U) and Information processing and reasoning (IP&R) were identified. These issues did not, however, compromise comparability across the state. Schools are reminded that tasks in the K&U dimension should be complex and challenging to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter at different levels.

Course coverage
The Marine Studies submissions examined at comparability demonstrated that schools have effectively covered the mandatory aspects of the syllabus, while at the same time using unique features of their local environment to develop engaging and appropriate elective units. Manipulative skills are being successfully developed using diverse features of the local marine environment, with schools in most cases recognising the importance of field trips to develop skills. Work programs and the learning experiences detailed in them reflect the value that schools place on using aspects of the marine environment to interest and extend students, effectively developing the general objectives contained in the syllabus.
Quality of assessment

A wide variety of original, interesting and cognitively demanding tasks continue to be developed by a number of schools to ensure that assessment remains relevant and aligned to syllabus standards. There are some concerns that while most schools are developing criteria to inform decisions that are made against student work, the criteria in some cases are not sufficiently aligned to the syllabus standards to allow these interim decisions to appropriately support exit decisions. It is imperative that schools use the exit standards to develop the instrument-specific criteria, ensuring that the instruments provide opportunities for students’ responses to demonstrate the critical attributes of the exit standards.

In Knowledge and understanding, concerns remain with some instruments that lack the requirement for students to apply learned procedures and concepts to find solutions across a range of complex and challenging tasks. In these situations students are unable to demonstrate a Standard A in Knowledge and understanding. In the Information processing and reasoning criterion, submissions provided some excellent examples of tasks that allowed students to demonstrate "interpreting and evaluating information and ideas". The Planning and conducting investigations area is, for some schools, proving more challenging to craft tasks that adequately provide opportunities for student responses that reflect appropriate standards when compared to those in the syllabus. Submissions provided some effective integrated tasks, generally accompanied by criteria that are both task-specific, and closely aligned to the syllabus standards. A number of schools are extensively annotating these to provide further evidence of the standard of the student responses. This practice is to be encouraged as it provides further evidence connecting the observed performance to the standards described in the syllabus.

Subject support

In 2010 Year 6 panel training will be conducted across the six combined districts for Marine Studies. There were no workshops or panel training for this subject in 2009.

Kathy Steggles    Satu Cooper
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Mathematics A — A36

Syllabus
In 2009, the seventh and last cohort of Year 12 students exited under the 2001 syllabus. The revised syllabus was implemented for the first time with the Year 11 cohort in 2009.

Feedback from districts
Verification submissions need to have a significant amount of evidence of performance in the electives to inform decisions at the Very High Achievement and High Achievement levels of achievement.

Schools are reminded of the requirements for the verification submission requiring a minimum of nine folios to cover the top of the cohort, the middle and threshold of each level of achievement. A large number of schools are not identifying and/or supplying these sample folios.

Some schools need to be reminded that for a level of achievement to be verified by the district review panel, and school decisions fully endorsed, a sample folio must be submitted. Some schools do not submit these, citing atypical folios of discontinuing students. Typical or atypical samples need to be supplied to fulfil all verification submission requirements. Information on atypical folios is found on the QSA website.

Statewide comparability
Comparability of school decisions continues to be good with consistent interpretation and application of syllabus standards within the three criteria in reaching agreement on awarding levels of achievement.

Course coverage
• Coverage of mandatory aspects of the syllabus continues to be in line with syllabus requirements with subject matter/topic coverage being of sufficient depth and breadth to allow fully informed decisions that reflect the standards of the syllabus in awarding levels of achievement.
• Some schools need to be reminded to have a significant amount of evidence of performance in the electives to inform decisions at the Very High Achievement and High Achievement levels of achievement at verification.

Quality of assessment
• Task design and the development of criteria and standards rubrics continue to improve with tasks reflecting the intended collection of evidence in the three criteria. The openness of a range of tasks provides good opportunities for students to demonstrate initiative and to show their ability to handle the required range of complexity across topics.
• The panel reminds schools that all three criteria need to be used to inform decisions on level of achievement, not just KAPS and MAPS. C&J is an equally weighted criterion and must be applied as such.
• When Semester 2 of Year 11 forms part of the summative assessment, schools need to closely monitor the fullest and latest evidence obtained through Year 12 using selective updating to ensure students are not disadvantaged as they mature intellectually.
Subject support

A series of assessment workshops were presented in Semester 2 and were attended by approximately 750 teachers over the three Mathematics subjects. The workshops concentrated on assessment design, with an emphasis placed on the linkage between general objectives, standards descriptors and the various aspects of the assessment task. 2010 will see Year 2 panel training which has an emphasis on the role of the panellist at verification. This will be beneficial with 2010 being the first year a cohort has completed the revised syllabus.

Andrew Foster  
State Review Panel Chair

Wayne Stevens  
Senior Education Officer
Mathematics B — A37

Syllabus

In 2009, the seventh and last cohort of Year 12 students exited under the 2001 syllabus. The revised syllabus was implemented for the first time with the Year 11 cohort in 2009.

Feedback from districts

With the new syllabus in full implementation, there are still a significant number of school work programs that are yet to be confirmed at state level. It was noted that more than one-half of the schools have had their programs approved and most that have yet to be done are well into their negotiations. Monitoring at the beginning of the year went well as the last with the old syllabus. At verification, we had reports of panel difficulties but it was also noted that the chairs were able to deal with most not-agreed submissions before comparability. There were six submissions that were unresolved and, in the main, were dealt with satisfactorily by the end of the panel deliberations. It was pleasing to note that the advice supplied at district level matched the findings made by state panellists.

Statewide comparability

It is important that when awarding levels of achievement, decisions about student achievement are based on the match between the qualities of the student folios and the syllabus standards descriptors, rather than considerations such as comparison between students. Syllabus descriptors need to be met. The submission samples had a high degree of comparability with the position of High Achievement students. This was also true about the threshold Sound Achievement samples.

Course coverage

As the end of the 2002 syllabus is completed, the course coverage has been well done and mandatory aspects of the course have been provided for students in a variety of assessment instruments. There were excellent examples of instruments other than tests that provided opportunities to address higher-order attributes and some samples have been collected to share. This will form a basis for schools to look at the revised syllabus and how the items can be used with the new guidelines.

Quality of assessment

It was noted that submissions need to have sufficient opportunities for attributes such as “extending and generalising” and justification. It was noted that some assessment other than tests were too scaffolded and directed. There was a lot of variety in Knowledge and procedures, and Modelling and problem-solving questions, and tasks that give students a lot of opportunities at the High Achievement level when comparing against the syllabus descriptors.
Subject support

A series of assessment workshops were presented in Semester 2 and were attended by approximately 750 teachers over the three Mathematics subjects. The workshops concentrated on assessment design, with an emphasis placed on the linkage between general objectives, standards descriptors and the various aspects of the assessment task. 2010 will see Year 2 panel training which has an emphasis on the role of the panellist at verification. This will be beneficial with 2010 being the first year a cohort has completed the revised syllabus.

Peter Antrobus     Wayne Stevens
State Review Panel Chair     Senior Education Officer
Mathematics C — A38

Syllabus
In 2009, the seventh and last cohort of Year 12 students exited under the 2001 syllabus. The revised syllabus was implemented for the first time with the Year 11 cohort in 2009.

Feedback from districts
The few programs from the 2001 syllabus that required amendments were approved without any concerns.

Verification submissions
- Schools are reminded of the requirements for the verification submission requiring a minimum of nine folios to cover the top of the cohort, the middle and threshold of each level of achievement. A large number of schools are not identifying and/or supplying these sample folios.
- Some schools need to be reminded that for a level of achievement to be verified by the district review panel, and school decisions fully endorsed, a sample folio must be submitted. Some schools do not submit these, citing atypical folios of discontinuing students. Typical or atypical samples need to be supplied to fulfil all verification submission requirements. Information on atypical folios is found on the QSA website.

Statewide comparability
The state panel found sufficient evidence to be confident that, overall, there was a high degree of comparability statewide. It was noted that some Low Achievement threshold samples provided evidence to justify low Sound Achievement.

Course coverage
The state review panel found evidence of some schools still delivering the Dynamics option without sufficient reference to a Vector calculus approach. The balanced assessment package required was not found in all samples. This can put potential Very High Achievement students at risk of not achieving the “across topics” requirements. Schools that leave large amounts of assessment until after verification can also put their students in this position. See syllabus p. 45.

Quality of assessment
The state review panel had concerns that the criterion of Communication and justification was not graded with respect to the syllabus standards in some instances. Sample folios demonstrating a C standard in Modelling and problem solving were, in some cases, awarded an A standard in Communication and justification, with little evidence to justify these grades. While there is not a one-to-one link between the two criteria, there is definitely a strong link between them. Given the syllabus requirements for an A standard in Communication and justification, it is very unlikely for a student demonstrating C standard in Modelling and problem solving to demonstrate the higher-order attributes for an A standard in Communication and justification.

Subject support
A series of assessment workshops were presented in Semester 2 and were attended by approximately 750 teachers over the three Mathematics subjects. The workshops concentrated
on assessment design, with an emphasis placed on the linkage between general objectives, standards descriptors and the various aspects of the assessment task. 2010 will see Year 2 panel training which has an emphasis on the role of the panellist at verification. This will be beneficial with 2010 being the first year a cohort has completed the revised syllabus.

Bevan Penrose
State Review Panel Chair

Wayne Stevens
Senior Education Officer
Modern History — B39

Syllabus

2009 was the fifth year of implementation of the 2004 syllabus. In 2009, there was a minor revision of the syllabus in line with the cyclic revision schedule.

In light of the development of the Australian Curriculum in History, the revision of the syllabus has been put on hold as a way to minimise impact on schools in their preparation of work programs. After the Australian History curriculum document becomes available, we will start to put it in place, and it will replace the current 2004 Queensland syllabus.

Feedback from districts

All work programs for schools with students exiting in Year 12, 2009 are approved. Approvals are ongoing for work programs for schools with student cohorts exiting in 2010. Work programs continue to provide range and scope when it comes to themes and inquiry topics, and the elements of historical literacy evident in work programs are enabling students to make the connection between content and concept, understanding and explanation, and empathy and judgment. However, the state panel strongly discourages schools from selecting “contemporary social studies” as inquiry topics, as an historical approach may be lost.

In 2009, monitoring revealed that most schools were implementing the syllabus effectively but a number of issues emerged that will be dealt with in detail in this report. Verification of sample folios in 2009 revealed a high level of agreement between schools’ judgments, syllabus standards and panel observations. A small number of submissions were negotiated at state panel level in November during comparability.

Statewide comparability

The level of agreement at comparability was again high. The broadest agreement was apparent in HA and LA, with some variation occurring in VHA and SA. As a quality assurance exercise, the comparability meeting revealed high levels of consistency by schools and district panels in making judgments about students’ standards and levels of achievement across the state. However, a number of important issues were discerned by the state panel and these will be addressed in the next two sections.

Schools are requested to take notice of the state panel’s advice on these issues.

Course coverage

As with 2008, a key issue to emerge through the review was the need for schools to fully implement the Aspects of inquiry. The Aspects of inquiry are a mandatory part of the syllabus. They are referred to in Section 6, Learning experiences (pp. 9–20), Section 7 Themes and inquiry topics (pp. 26–43) and Section 8 Assessment and standards, (pp. 57–59). Schools are required to provide evidence in student folios of the Aspects of inquiry the students engaged with, and to apply the standard descriptors relating to the Aspects of inquiry when assessing student work, especially in the HA and SA levels. District panels are required to advise on this at monitoring and to provide feedback for it at verification.

A second issue to emerge from the review was the tendency of some schools to amend or alter the standards descriptors. Schools should not amend, delete or alter the core language of the standards descriptors. It is also hoped that schools will apply the full range of descriptors when assessing Year 12 work. Failure to adhere to this may result in proposed levels of achievement not being supported at district or state panel level.
A third issue identified by the state panel concerns teacher feedback during the research process, as outlined on pages 50–51 of the syllabus. Such feedback is required to diminish over the two years of the course.

Quality of assessment

The state panel provides the following advice on each of the categories of assessment.

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence

The state panel was encouraged by the quality of student responses to this category of assessment. However, it noted that in some cases, the scope and scale of the questions being asked were unreasonable, as were the number of sources the students were expected to deal with. Schools are asked to consider carefully the design of this instrument, especially avoiding broad, philosophical questions in favour of specific historical issues that allow for contention and argument. Schools are reminded that the answer to a Category 1 test is derived mainly from the sources. It is also imperative that schools indicate which sources are seen for the test and which are unseen.

Categories 2 and 3: Research tasks

The state panel and district panels were concerned about the number of VHA and HA research assignments that were narrative, descriptive, or based on contemporary social issues with little or no historical context. Close application of the Aspects of inquiry, with sub-questions derived from aspects 3 and 4, will ensure that responses fulfil the stated standards. Evidence of reflection during the research process can be provided by students synthesising each sub-question and rough drafting.

The state panel also directs schools to pp. 50–51 of the syllabus, Section 5, where students are required to provide a “rationale” for their research work as a means to authenticate the origins of their topic.

Category 4: Additional test formats

The state panel again reminds schools that all essay tests in category 4 are “unseen” and “without notes or sources.” When an unseen essay is chosen as a technique, it is important that students will have an opportunity to make definite reference to significant sources that have been studied. Otherwise it becomes difficult to assess Criterion 2 and fulfil the descriptors. It is acceptable for a school to set an unseen essay that assesses Criterion 3 only, but this may not be a post-verification assessment instrument.

Application of standards

This year, the state panel reminds schools of the necessity to fully apply the sub-criteria for each broad standard. Students should be made fully aware of these sub-criteria and should become familiar with the language of the syllabus (use the Glossary on pages 70–71). The panel points especially to the following sub-criteria:

- Very High Achievement students are required to demonstrate evidence of “corroboration and evaluation of sources.” Evidence of this should be identifiable in the student’s research notes and/or annotated bibliography; but a Very High Achievement student is required to provide evidence in text, as per Criterion 3.
- SA students are required to “maintain a record of research that demonstrates a basic understanding of the aspects of inquiry”, “respond to obvious issues that emerge in the research process”, “analyse to identify obvious themes and patterns” and “detect bias in sources. Note the qualitative words for this standard.
Subject support

Subject workshops are planned to occur in Semester 2, 2010. Please check the QSA website (Professional development and events) for details at the beginning of Term 2, 2010. Panel training will occur at this time also.

Kevin McAlinden
State Review Panel Chair

Mary-Anne Vale
Senior Education Officer
Multi-Strand Science — A08

Syllabus

In 2009 it was announced to all schools (memo 041/09) that the Multi-Strand Science syllabus would be phased out in 2011. No student in Year 12 will be able to record semester units of the Authority subject Multi-Strand Science 1998 in a learning account after 2011.

Schools offering Multi-Strand Science have three options:

- continue to offer Multi-Strand Science in 2010 with a final year in 2011
- begin offering Science21 with Year 11 students in 2011
- begin offering the Science SAS with Year 11 students by 2012.

Feedback from districts

A small number of new schools, or schools taking up Multi-strand Science for the first time submitted work programs for approval this year.

In 2009, the Brisbane Ipswich and Brisbane East districts were amalgamated.

Statewide comparability

A high degree of comparability of judgments was noted across the state. There were no unresolved submissions received in this comparability review.

There was some evidence of inconsistency in the application of the QSA “Late and non-submission of student responses policy”, with samples containing examples of non-submitted work being graded 0 or an E standard. Information on the policy is found on the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Course coverage

The samples forwarded for comparability typically demonstrate schools that have well-established programs of study. Generally, there is good coverage of the core topics and some variety in the implementation of electives. Mandatory aspects of the syllabus are evident in program design.

There is evidence of a wide variety of assessment instruments, but schools might consider reducing the number of instruments used in summative assessment to be consistent with the syllabus requirement of 4–10 summative instruments.

Quality of assessment

Many schools demonstrated novel assessment tasks that provided for the full range of student responses. Evidence was found of good teacher feedback and application of well-written criteria and standards descriptors.

There are several concerns consistent across most district samples. These are:

- Complex reasoning process results that do not reflect the quality of the response — inconsistent with standards descriptors.
- Many CRP tasks do not allow the full range of higher-order processing and frequently are more consistent with Knowledge and/or Scientific process. It would be better for schools to
audit their CRP tasks for their capacity to demonstrate the full range of CRP general objectives (syllabus Section 4).

- Issues with student ownership were evident, with several instances of plagiarism from the internet compromising student equity.

**Subject support**

Year 4 Panel Training was delivered to the 12 districts in 2009. Panel training was offered to all district panellists, district panel chairs and state panellists.

Terry Rudder                     Satu Cooper  
State Review Panel Chair         Senior Education Officer
Music — B26

Syllabus

In 2009, the third cohort of Year 12 students exited under the Senior Music syllabus 2004. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Music (2004).

Feedback from districts

Following verification, there were some queries regarding the role of the post-verification task in arriving at an exit level of achievement.

As stated in previous reports, section 6.6.1 of the syllabus outlines the nature of the post-verification task. The sample course overviews at the end of the syllabus have called this task a “selective update”. This is not an accurate use of the terminology, and the task should provide “subsequent summative assessment” to further inform the student’s overall achievement, as stated on p. 29:

"In addition to the contents of the verification folio, there must be subsequent summative assessment in the exit folio. In music, this should consist of one task in any of the criteria. This task:

- can be student choice with teacher consultation
- reflects the conditions set out in Table 2 (Section 6.5)
- is not to be a task used in Music Extension."

Students should complete one task after verification in any one of the dimensions. The student’s achievement in this task will contribute to their overall achievement in that one dimension and it does not replace previous information provided at verification.

Teachers should make an on-balance judgment about the student’s overall achievement within the one dimension of the selected task, considering the “Underlying principles of exit assessment” (Section 6.1, pp. 18–20). Teachers should then consider how this impacts upon students’ exit placements, along with achievement in the other criteria, again considering the underlying principles of exit assessment. It is the student’s work, not the profile in isolation that forms the basis of decisions about exit levels of achievement.

At exit, there were several instances of Forms R7 being forwarded to chairs when not required, especially for minor changes in large groups. Any significant changes between the agreed verification placements and exit placements for all students should be negotiated with the panel chair using the procedures of the Fax Form R7. Please refer to the Form R7 guidelines for further information, available from <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Statewide comparability

Overall, there was comparability across the state in the application of standards and differentiation between levels of achievement. This indicated that teachers have engaged the standards descriptors well, and for the most part are making good decisions about student achievement.

However, the state review panel noted some concerns in the awarding of standard C to work which did not fully support that standard. This was particularly evident in Composing samples, for
which a C standard had been awarded, but a D standard sufficiently described the evidence in the folios.

**Course coverage**

Generally speaking, apart from issues surrounding the post-verification task discussed earlier in this report, schools are effectively implementing the mandatory aspects of the syllabus and providing depth, breadth and variety in course content and assessment tasks, providing opportunities for students to show their ability in each of the three dimensions.

**Quality of assessment**

*Analysing repertoire*

The state review panel noted a greater number of formal tests in the district samples than in recent years. Where there are a number of questions in examinations, for Analysing repertoire, teachers should ensure that overall, the student response matches the descriptors in the standards statements. The most effectively designed Analysing repertoire tasks clearly asked students to deconstruct and evaluate repertoire and apply their understanding to unstudied repertoire. Tasks also clearly stated the requirements for students. (See syllabus Section 6.4.1, p. 22).

District and state panellists noted that some schools misunderstood the meaning of the terms “deconstruction” and “evaluation”, leading to concerns in the development of effective assessment instruments and the application of standards. The following common definitions of these words may be helpful to teachers’ understanding of them and their role in Analysing repertoire:

- **Deconstruction** is the process of breaking a complex topic into smaller parts to gain a better understanding of it. This is similar to “analysis” and poses the question: “what” is in a piece of music?

- **Evaluation** involves presenting and defending opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work, usually from the information gained through deconstruction. When students evaluate repertoire, they make judgments about “why” and “how” musical elements, compositional devices and aspects of context, style and genre interrelate and are manipulated within pieces of music. (To portray a particular style/mood, for example.)

The syllabus states that student responses to Analysing repertoire tasks are to be accompanied by the score(s) and/or sound recording(s) (p. 23) and that sound sources or scores that accompany Analysing repertoire tasks should be included in student folios (p. 29). If the response is multimedia, a record of the presentation should be made and submitted (pp. 23, 29).

*Composing*

In Composing, there was an interesting variety of compositional styles, genres and presentation formats, indicating a thorough understanding and effective implementation of syllabus requirements. The broader scope of composing possibilities under the revised syllabus has elicited a high quality of compositional work from a larger number of students.

*Performing*

The state review panel noted several excellent performances in the district samples across a wide variety of styles and genres.
The most effective performances were those in which the students presented in a polished manner, irrespective of the style presented. Video evidence of these polished performances more fully demonstrated the standards, in particular standard A, in convincingly communicating the music to audiences in a way that fits the style and genre of the music. Please refer to syllabus pages 24 and 25 for further information.

**Performing tasks**

In providing a context for students to undertake assessment in Performing, teachers are urged to ensure that the context is authentic, allowing students to present their work in a convincing mode. For example, to perform in front of others and perform on a stage if possible, while considering aspects of performance presentation.

If a student elects to perform on more than one instrument, for example, a singer accompanying themself, both parts may be marked as a unified performance. Alternatively, in this situation the student may nominate the instrument that they will be assessed on.

The conditions for assessment in all dimensions stipulate minimum and approximate lengths. Teachers should ensure that these conditions are met in the students’ responses. The standards make no reference to the length of responses; therefore, the quality of the students’ response should be the basis for awarding a standard. Grade penalties for long or short student responses do not fit current QSA policies. Irrespective of the length, it is the quality of work that should be the basis of awarding standards.

Teachers are reminded that audiovisual recordings of presentations and performances should be clearly annotated and easily navigable on generic hardware.

**Subject support**

Support materials for Music are now available from the QSA website, including Year 11 and 12 annotated sample assessment instruments for Analysing repertoire, Composing, and Performing. Support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Music (2004).

Assessment workshops for Music will be offered in all districts in Semester 2, 2010.

Helen O’Neill     Andrew Reid
State Review Panel chair     Senior Education Officer
Music Extension — B36

Syllabus

In 2009, the Senior Music Extension 2008 syllabus moved to general implementation with Year 12 students. This syllabus replaced the 2006 trial-pilot document. The revised syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Arts > Music Extension (2008). All syllabus references in this report refer to the 2008 syllabus.

Feedback from districts

All schools offering the 2008 Senior Music Extension syllabus now have approved work programs. Where work programs were initially not approved and returned to schools for editing and resubmission, the main concerns included general objectives and criteria being taken from the trial-pilot syllabus rather than the current one, failure to include a statement noting the requirement for the teacher to be present at all performances and oral presentations, requirements (such as obligatory membership of a school ensemble) which are not a syllabus requirement, and incorrect statements being included concerning the role of the second Investigating task. Some schools did not appear to have engaged with the work program requirements and submitted unnecessarily long work programs which included extraneous material.

For the most part, schools are offering students the opportunity to engage with all three specialisations, but the number of students presenting as performers is larger than for composition or musicology; although the state review panel noted some outstanding work in these two areas.

While most schools responded to Form R3 advice following monitoring, particularly regarding the application of standards to the Investigating tasks, some chose not to offer students, whose Investigating task was of a poor standard, the opportunity to selectively update with a new task. This disadvantaged some students at verification. Overall, the standard of Realising tasks was much higher than Investigating tasks.

Teachers are reminded of the importance, when assigning levels of achievement for small groups, of differentiating at the top end. The table in the syllabus on p. 28 was overlooked by some teachers when assigning levels of achievement.

As the relative placement of students may change between monitoring and verification, care should be taken that DVDs submitted at verification are correctly annotated so that panellists can readily identify sample folios.

Statewide comparability

The state review panel found a very high degree of comparability across all districts and within district samples at comparability. This was very impressive in the first year of the revised syllabus. On the whole, standards were well applied to the Realisation of the work. However, the Investigating task is an area of concern (see below).

Feedback to schools from district panels was helpful and in line with QSA protocols.
Quality of assessment

Investigation of music sources

The Investigating task, 7.5.2 of the syllabus (p. 21) states that

The Investigating task asks students to research, explore, analyse and synthesise (emphasis added) evidence from a range of music sources such as scores, audio and visual recordings, live performances, case studies, essays, lectures, journals or musicology surveys, and present their findings.

Although there were some impressive responses to Investigating tasks seen at comparability, it is clear that some teachers have not yet engaged with the purpose or parameters of the task, or the application of standards. Teachers are encouraged to become thoroughly familiar with Section 7.5.2 of the syllabus, and to note the key terms of “explore”, “research”, “analyse” and “synthesize” which apply to the Investigating tasks.

While it is not an expectation that students argue a hypothesis or point of view, responses to Investigating tasks that are simply descriptive and do not engage with the four activities listed cannot fulfil the criteria above an E standard. (Note that the term “analyse” refers to the dissection of any primary or secondary musical data and does not necessarily include the analysis of scores or musical performances).

Analytical comparisons of two or more musical works, while acceptable within an Investigating task, are not a syllabus requirement. For further information about possible assessment techniques for investigation of music sources, refer to syllabus p. 22. (Table 1: Assessment techniques and conditions of assessment for the Investigation of music sources criterion (for all specialisations)).

In Investigating tasks, teachers are advised to consider the following:

- The task itself must allow students to demonstrate a response at any standard. Some tasks did not allow a student to demonstrate the criteria at an A or B standard.
- Constant reference to the wording of the standards must be made when assigning standards to the responses to ensure the work matches the standards descriptors.
- The skills necessary to successfully respond to this task should be explicitly taught, not assumed (refer to Learning experiences in syllabus Section 6, pages 10–16).
- Some students would benefit from the opportunity to produce more drafts for the teacher’s feedback.
- The Investigating task is a substantial syllabus requirement and the amount of time allocated to its preparation and presentation should be carefully considered.
- The syllabus p. 20, Section 7.4 should be read in conjunction with expectations of referencing.

Teachers are reminded that if a student chooses to update the Investigating task, the second task must be entirely new and not a reworking of the first. The verification submission should include only one Investigating task. However, both Realising tasks 1 and 2 must be included in verification submissions. The summary below is from the syllabus p. 26:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring (July)</th>
<th>Verification (October)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigating task and Realising task 1</td>
<td>Investigating task*, Realising tasks 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This may be the same task and the student response submitted at monitoring, or a different task, and the student response completed post-monitoring, following the principles of selective updating.
The state review panel noted that some task sheets included criteria or other language from the trial-pilot syllabus, not the current one. Teachers must ensure that students are completing the requirements of the current 2008 syllabus.

**Realisation of the work**

Both criteria of Realisation of the work should be assessed together; that is, both Demonstration of technique and skills and Expression of music ideas should be assessed within “the work”, as per the syllabus statement on p. 22, Section 7.5.3:

Compositions should not be judged with reference to the quality of any performance of them. For compositions, a score and recording together is not necessary. However, should a student submit a composition as a score, the conventions of scoring should be followed.

The syllabus statements on pp. 5–6 further clarify this requirement:

**4.2.1 Composition**

The emphasis in this specialisation should be on how students manipulate musical elements to create works that demonstrate cohesion and a secure understanding of the capabilities of their selected sound sources.

Compositions can be documented as a score or as recorded sound. Some genres and styles of music favour specific formats in presentation. In selecting a format, students are encouraged to consider whether traditional notation, contemporary notation, sound recording, or combinations of these, best captures their creative intent.

The standards descriptors for Realising tasks need careful application, especially to performances. Page 6 of the syllabus references the differences between the gloss and polish of a “performance” versus “playing”:

**4.2.3 Performance**

Performance is more than just singing, playing or conducting music — it evolves from the performer’s cognitive, physical and emotional engagement with music. Integral to “performance” is the intention to connect and communicate with an audience.

In this syllabus, it is expected that all performances be presented in front of a live audience.

A student may perform as a soloist, as a member of an ensemble, as an accompanist, as a conductor, or any combination of these. A student may perform on more than one instrument and may accompany themselves.

The syllabus requirement of 15 minutes for a performance in response to Realising task 2 was not met by a number of students. The fact that this second task is more substantial than the first was not reflected in the “on-balance” judgment of some teachers in allocating overall grades.

**Subject support**

Assessment workshops and panel training for Music Extension will be offered in most districts in 2010. Please refer to the QSA website for workshop details, venues and registration. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select PD and events > Workshops > Years 11–12 > Music Extension.

Lois Kavanagh     Andrew Reid
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Other Languages — B32

Syllabus
This was the final year for the 2001 syllabus. All syllabus references in this report refer to this syllabus.

Syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Languages.

Statewide comparability
Moderation proceeded smoothly in 2009 with few issues arising at monitoring and all schools achieving agreement to their proposed levels of achievement and relative achievement of sample folios by the end of verification.

Course coverage
The mandatory aspects of the syllabus were generally well covered.

Quality of assessment
Quality assessment should be designed to allow students opportunities to demonstrate the criteria and standards. One area of concern is the lack of opportunity to allow students to demonstrate the spontaneous use of language in spoken tasks. While a speech is a legitimate text type to use, there must be questions to follow allowing students to demonstrate their range of language in unrehearsed situations.

Attention to assessment planning and design is essential to ensure sufficient opportunities are provided to students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion. The following should be considered:

- Increasing complexity over the four-semester course of study. Students should demonstrate, through more complex tasks, and in their own spoken and written texts, an understanding and use of language that matches exit standards descriptors and meets syllabus requirements.
- A variety of text types over a range of topics to enable students to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion.
- Assessment that allows all students in a cohort to be matched to the syllabus standards. Where first-language (L1) speakers are studying with second-language (L2) learners, all student work should be judged using the L2 syllabus exit standards descriptors, and assessment instruments should be designed to allow both groups opportunities to demonstrate all aspects of the criterion.

Subject support
The QSA has continued its support of the assessment and moderation of languages across the state with assessment workshops, development of materials on the website and specific school support.

Support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Languages.

George Orfanos  Kerri Furlong
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Philosophy and Reason — A14

Syllabus

The Philosophy and Reason senior syllabus 2004 completed its fifth year of general implementation in 2009, with 232 students across 11 schools completing the subject.

The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Humanities and Social Sciences > Philosophy and Reason (2004).

Monitoring and verification

The state panel is pleased to report that 2009 monitoring and verification meetings demonstrated successful uptake of the syllabus. Schools are demonstrating good understandings of the opportunities the syllabus provides in courses of study and assessment programs.

Course coverage

Course coverage was generally very good, although some schools might consider the breadth and depth of treatment in the Deductive logic strand. The Philosophy strand continues to make up the bulk of the elective sections of the course. Schools are reminded that the organisation of the course should provide opportunities for students to revise, consolidate and improve their ability to reason and philosophise.

Quality of assessment

Assessment was of a very high quality, with most schools developing assessment instruments which provided many opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence of syllabus standards. Some schools had difficulty developing Deductive logic assessment instruments. Careful consideration should be given to how the construction of an assessment instrument enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the three criteria. Schools should ensure that assessment instruments in each strand provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards.

Subject support

Annotated student responses for some assessment instruments will be available in 2010 from the QSA website. These annotated student responses should be used as a guide to aid in the judgments made about the match between syllabus standards and the evidence provided by the student. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Social and Environmental Studies > Philosophy and Reason (2004)).

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of Philosophy and Reason.

Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Peter Ellerton     Jo Genders
State Review Panel Chair     Senior Education Officer
Physical Education — A24

Syllabus
The Physical Education senior syllabus 2004 is now in its fifth year of implementation. In accordance with the current six-year cycle of review, a minor review of the 2004 syllabus was undertaken in 2009. The revised syllabus will be ready for general implementation with Year 11 students in 2011. Physical Education teachers are urged to continue to develop and refine work programs, assessment instruments and learning experiences for the 2004 syllabus as the final cohort of Year 12 students under that syllabus will not exit the course until November 2011.

The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Health and Physical Education > Physical Education (2004).

Feedback from districts
All schools have achieved approval for their work programs or are seeking approval for minor amendments to their programs to cater for the occasional shift in the direction of courses within schools.

District panel chairs reported on issues arising from monitoring at the July conference. The feedback identified that some schools need to refine their judgments regarding the application of standards in the Evaluating criterion. It was also noted that panellists were concerned about the quality of physical responses as demonstrated by video verification.

Verification recommendations to schools were negotiated and most were resolved by district panel chairs.

District panel chairs’ post-verification feedback indicated that it is important that all parties involved in the moderation process focus on the continual improvement of their understanding of syllabus standards and the match with student responses.

Statewide comparability
The state panel identified at the comparability meeting that improvement is still required in schools’ ability to demonstrate standards using video verification. The main concerns were with the general length of the videos and their focus on Acquiring and Applying rather than Criterion 3, Evaluating in complex performance environments. Secondly, the voiceovers used in video verification lacked syllabus language, and this reduced the schools’ ability to match video evidence to the syllabus standards.

The comparability overall, however, was strong with excellent comparisons between the districts. Where anomalies existed, they were relayed back to the district panel chairs.

Course coverage
Schools are maintaining high-quality programs and adequate course coverage with the 2004 syllabus now in its fifth year. Schools continue to improve the implementation of Integration and Personalisation and their interpretation in both physical and written/oral tasks and responses. Progress made in these areas is as a result of schools acting on panel feedback. Of the mandatory objectives, Criterion 3, Evaluating, remains the strongest indicator of performance in physical responses and written/oral responses.
Quality of assessment

Schools’ assessment instruments are generally of a high standard and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the range of standards across the criteria. At this stage of the syllabus cycle, the assessment plans are stable and maintained with only minor revisions, with schools preferring to use tried and tested genres that have been successful in the past.

An emerging issue is that students are submitting extra-long written responses to tasks set by schools. Often, the lack of clarity and conciseness is related to the nature of the task being set by teachers. These longer responses tend to focus on C1 and C2 criteria and neglect C3. A strategy for resolving this may be for schools to set upper limits for word lengths. Some schools may also resolve this situation by not attempting to build-in too much of a given focus area into a single assessment item; it may be better to target just one specified and concise area of content and address it more thoroughly.

Subject support

Schools can expect to receive support through:

- the QSA website
- syllabus orientation workshops
- ongoing relationships with panel chairs and members.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of Physical Education under the 2004 syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Michael Kiss     Roy Barnes
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Physics — A05

Syllabus
The 1995 Physics senior syllabus is in its fourteenth and final year of implementation. In 2009, all schools implemented the A45 syllabus for Year 11 students. 2009 saw the last cohort of Year 12 students exit their schooling studying the A05 syllabus. As expected no work program amendments were received during 2009.

Feedback from districts
Feedback from district panels indicated there were no major issues evident at either monitoring or verification. There were no unresolved submissions for state panel consideration following verification this year.

Statewide comparability
In November, the annual comparability exercise was undertaken by the state review panel who generally agreed with decisions about levels of achievement made by district review panels. Where differences were apparent the problems identified by the state panel were as follows:

- A lack of a wide range of challenge in Complex reasoning process (CRP). Some CRP questions would better have been classified as Knowledge of subject matter or Scientific processes.
- Judgments made about student responses in CRP did not always match the syllabus standards.
- Incorrect application of allowable trade-offs. The syllabus only allows one of two trade-offs that can be applied in any situation (Section 8.7).
- Transcription errors between assessment instruments and student profiles.

Teachers are reminded that the comparability exercise has no direct bearing on the agreement reached between the school and the district panel. It is a process of reviewing the standards employed across the state to ensure consistency of judgments between district panels. Over 110 folios were examined over the two days of the meeting and comparability across the state was excellent. Physics district panels, under the guidance of dedicated and experienced chairs, have done an outstanding job of accurately interpreting the standards and requirements of the course.

Course coverage
Generally, all mandatory aspects of the 1995 syllabus are being correctly implemented in all districts and all core topics are represented to an appropriate breadth and depth. While supervised assessments and practical reports still predominate, the range and style of assessment is widening, with criteria sheets being developed, perhaps with the new syllabus in mind.

Quality of assessment
Assessment is the basis upon which school and panel decisions regarding student levels of achievement are based. It is essential that schools provide students with a broad range of authentic and relevant assessment tasks.

Discussions between state and district panels this year have provided the following important points for consideration:
• Schools need to be more discriminating in assessing practical reports. As with all forms of assessment, practical reports need to have sufficient challenge to allow students to demonstrate the full range of standards.

• Following from the previous point it was sometimes found that, by including non-discriminating practical reports in Scientific processes, judgments about this assessment dimension did not always match syllabus standards.

• Consistently schools were challenging Very High Achievement students with assessment items that gave these students sufficient opportunities to fully demonstrate their ability, although these tasks were of a similar type.

• Formula sheets attached to tests should carry formulas from the whole course in an ungrouped way. This is particularly important on CRP tests. In particular, specific formulas should not be included as a hint in a question unless it is a previously unseen formula presented in a relevant and new context.

Schools are encouraged to think creatively when setting assessment tasks and to use task-specific criteria and standards sheets when making judgments.

**Subject support**

Support was available from the Senior Education Officer by phone, email, fax and the website. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page [www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au) select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Chemistry (1995).

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities. From the home page [www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au) select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Chris Pingel  
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Scheiwe  
Senior Education Officer
Physics — A45

Syllabus

In 2009, all schools implemented the 2007 Physics senior syllabus with their Year 11 cohorts. The Year 12 cohort of 2009 represented the first cohort to exit on the 2007 syllabus.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Sciences > Physics (2007). All references in this section refer to this syllabus.

Feedback from districts

Most schools implementing the 2007 syllabus for the first time with their Year 12 cohorts had work programs approved before verification, and those not approved at that stage required only minor changes before this could happen.

The most frequent advice to schools related to the need to:

- explicitly describe with sufficient depth and scope the connection between the general objectives and learning experiences in the two contextualised units
- provide sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence of all aspects of the three general objectives, in particular that of Investigative processes
- avoid mismatches between course overviews and unit expectations and student profiles
- ensure that syllabus requirements for the verification folio were met; (syllabus Section 7.8).

Some issues noted at monitoring and verification were:

- a lack of complex and challenging questions in supervised assessments
- a mismatch of general objectives, e.g. Knowledge and conceptual understanding being incorrectly assigned as Evaluating and concluding
- extended response tasks not relating to an issue, circumstance or a question, and the structure of the task not allowing student responses to meet the requirement of the exit standards (in particular exploration, interpretation, analysis and evaluation)
- extended experimental investigations being too directed, without providing opportunities for formulating questions and/or hypotheses
- syllabus criteria not being used and criteria sheets not being instrument-specific
- a lack of opportunities for students to demonstrate ability in both Investigative processes (due to it being assessed through the extended experimental investigation only), and Evaluating and concluding (mainly assessed through extended experimental investigations and few supervised assessment questions)
- insufficient annotation of student scripts and/or criteria sheets to provide feedback for students, particularly for extended experimental investigations
- extended experimental investigations not expecting students to provide evidence of primary and secondary data collection and selection, as asked for in syllabus Section 7.4.1
- lack of evidence of the basis of teacher judgments about standards.
Statewide comparability

Generally, the state panel found evidence in the district samples to support the vast majority of school decisions and panel recommendations.

There were some concerns in that both extended response tasks, when used, and extended experimental investigations did not always require students to analyse data to the levels and depth required for Very High Achievement (e.g. extended response tasks did not require a response to a question or issue, nor focus on secondary data analysis, while the extended experimental investigations did not expect analysis of both primary and secondary data, evaluation of same or hypothesising).

Schools are reminded to read sections 7.4.1 to 7.4.3 of the syllabus, relating to the three assessment task types, as well as Section 7.7, which states that: “...the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of work match the exit descriptors overall ... the exit standards are applied to the summative body of work selected for exit”, i.e. not one individual item/task. “A verification folio is a collection of work ... the variety of assessment instruments is necessary to provide a range of opportunities from which students may demonstrate achievement” (over the range of topics and tasks).

Verification folios should include responses to 4–6 assessment instruments. Note that the post-verification assessment instrument adds to the verification folio, and does not replace items within it.

Exit grades should be obtained by matching the body of work against the exit standards, rather than averaging grades from the student profile.

The standard awarded should be influenced by how the quality of responses match the syllabus exit descriptors overall as applied to the summative body of work. Schools and panellists should look for multiple demonstrations of student achievement against the exit standards rather than one, and not rely on only one to determine the exit standard in a criterion.

Course coverage

Most schools have ensured that they have covered the mandatory aspects of the syllabus in terms of key concepts, assessment task types and subject matter. A few schools included students on the R6 who had not completed either all mandated assessment tasks or one whole semester of work; this is not in line with QSA procedures.

Schools should adhere to the QSA’s “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” when awarding levels of achievement. Information on this policy is found on the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Forms and procedures.

Quality of assessment

Tasks seem to be well designed, but more opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of aspects of all three general objectives needs to be provided, in particular Investigative procedures and Evaluating and concluding. Some schools had tasks that would have allowed opportunities for the full range of levels of achievements but either the criteria sheets did not match the task or students were misled by other information provided that did not fit the task requirements.

There is a need for more feedback in the form of annotations on student scripts and criteria sheets to help students evaluate their work and to show the links to the criteria sheet descriptors.

Criteria sheets need to be more instrument-specific, and be derived from the exit criteria.
Extended experimental investigations must adhere to the syllabus guidelines, Section 7.4.1, which expects planning of the extended experimental investigation, descriptions of the experiment, evidence of primary and secondary data collection and selection, analysis of primary data generated through experimentation by the student, as well as evaluation and justification of conclusions.

Schools are encouraged to think creatively when setting assessment tasks, and to use instrument-specific criteria and standards schema when making judgments.

**Subject support**

Support was available from the Senior Education Officer by phone, email, and fax.

Annotated sample assessment instruments are being developed for addition to the website in 2010. These annotated student responses should be used as a guide to aid in the judgments made about the match between syllabus standards and the evidence provided by the student.

In Semester 1, Syllabus workshop 2 was repeated. This workshop focused on designing assessment, with emphasis on extended experimental investigations and extended response tasks.

In Semester 2, Syllabus workshop 3, the final in the series was offered, focusing on different approaches to developing supervised assessment instruments, as well as strategies for making judgments on folios of student work and awarding levels of achievement.

In the second half of the year, panel training was conducted in all districts as this was the second year of the implementation of the syllabus.

The state review panel encourages Physics teachers not on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Megg Kennedy  
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Scheiwe  
Senior Education Officer
Study of Religion — B20

Syllabus

In 2009, the last cohort of Year 12 students exited under the Study of Religion 2001 syllabus. The revised Study of Religion 2008 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students in 2009.

Feedback from districts

As 2009 was the final year of implementation of the Study of Religion 2001 syllabus, monitoring and verification went smoothly. Verification of sample folios revealed a high level of agreement between schools’ judgments, syllabus standards and panel observations. Only two submissions were negotiated at state panel level in November during comparability.

Work program approvals for the revised 2008 syllabus have been progressing well, but district review panel chairs and state panellists have had to deal with a few concerns associated with this syllabus. Ensuring a common understanding of the changes in the syllabus has been a common thread and has meant that a number of schools have had to resubmit work programs. The 2008 syllabus has significant changes to the description of the standards associated with exit. The internalisation of these standards by teachers and recalibration of judgments is a challenge that may take a little time.

Schools need to ensure that each teacher of Study of Religion has a copy of the 2008 syllabus and that this document is read by the teachers so that they gain an understanding of its intent.

Statewide comparability

The comparability meeting revealed consistency of decisions by schools and district panels. Schools have been able to provide students with sufficient opportunities to demonstrate their ability across the range of criteria. Students have been able to respond to this, exiting across the range of achievement levels, most especially demonstrating their ability across the Very High Achievement range.

Course coverage

There were no difficulties with the mandatory aspects of the syllabus. Schools have ensured they have adequate coverage of the topics and other requirements. Panels have noted the high quality and extensive range of assessment tasks used by schools. 2009 also saw some development of topics and subject matter that will align more readily with the spirit of the 2008 syllabus. This development will make the transition to the 2008 syllabus more streamlined. Electives continue to be developed and treated in a variety of ways. Schools have ensured that through the electives they cover the mandatory aspects of the course. Continued innovation has been seen and was again noted by the state panel at comparability.

Quality of assessment

With the end of the 2001 syllabus, it has been noted that schools need to ensure that students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate the full range of general objectives. A case in point is that hypothesising alone gives students only one opportunity to demonstrate a skill, and so is not sufficient. This will be an important consideration, for example as part of the development of instrument-specific criteria sheets with the 2008 syllabus. Instrument design has continued to show innovation due to greater access to reliable internet sources. The scaffolding and structure
of instruments such as reports and research assignments continues to be appropriate given the developmental nature of the course.

Subject support

Panel training is planned for Semester 2, 2010. The state panel will provide ongoing support for teachers and advice will be published on the QSA website.

John Thomas          Jackie Dunk
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
Study of Society — B11

Syllabus

The Study of Society senior syllabus 2001 was first implemented in 2002. All schools offering Study of Society have approved work programs based on the 2001 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Social and Environmental Studies> Study of Society (2001).

Feedback from districts

School submissions for monitoring and verification were generally well planned and presented. Organised submissions assist review meetings considerably, allowing panellists to devote time to constructively looking for evidence to support the school’s placement of students.

One issue that was identified through moderation was a lack of evidence to support school decisions on the Research criterion. Evidence of research must be provided to allow school assessment decisions to be supported. The Research general objective requires students to identify issues or problems, frame research questions and/or hypotheses, locate and summarise data from a variety of sources, implement an inquiry process and reflect on the research process. Consideration must be given to the collection of the evidence to support standards awarded for the Research criterion. The syllabus, p.15 and 16, provides a model for conducting research. Schools must ensure that they collect evidence of each of the five aspects of the research criterion over the two-year course of study. Evidence from just two of the elements does not demonstrate the range of elements required by the syllabus.

Another issue highlighted through moderation was the lack of any social theory in assessment tasks. Students should be provided with the opportunity to apply social theories to explain, analyse and justify social trends. The Critical processes general objective which is one of the mandatory aspects of the syllabus requires students to:

- determine and examine the elements of the social theories, to establish trends, patterns, relationships or contrasts, among and within theories
- test hypotheses against available evidence or against social theories.

Students should be encouraged to take some facet of society and discuss it from the viewpoint of as many theoretical perspectives as possible, historical and contemporary. This must be evident in the assessment instruments in order to demonstrate that the mandatory aspects of the course have been covered.

Course coverage

Generally, schools are covering the selected units of study to a satisfactory standard. Despite the age of the syllabus, the units of study continue to be relevant, while also allowing for the integration of emerging issues in the subject area.

Instrument-specific standards schemas were typically consistent with the exit standards. It should be noted that while it is appropriate to select those elements of the criteria and standards which apply to particular tasks, it is essential that over the two-year course all aspects of the criteria and standards matrix are covered formatively and summatively. In research, for example, requiring students to only “systematically gather and organise information” and “employ a wide range of research and investigative techniques” does not meet the syllabus requirements.
Quality of assessment

Analysis of submissions indicated that evidence of the Critical processes criterion was lacking in some submissions. The Critical processes criterion requires students to collect, analyse and organise information, and to demonstrate the processes and skills of problem solving and decision making. Analysis involves breaking down material into its component parts so that its organisational structure may be understood. Evaluation and decision making involve developing and critically appraising criteria and evidence to decide the extent to which alternative ideas, proposals or solutions to a problem are appropriate, effective or satisfying. Assessment instruments which require students to research a topic without directing them to demonstrate analysis, evaluation and decision making do not meet the syllabus requirements of Critical processes.

Some assessment instruments such as a field report that investigate social stratification are also problematic. Instruments which have students rely only on ABS statistics and field trip observations to write a report, do not provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate gathering of information from a wide variety of sources required by the standards. Students should be challenged to use as many resources as possible, for example real estate and rental prices, NAPLAN results and OPs to assess life chances in any given suburb. They should also be encouraged to apply a theory, for example, a functionalist or conflict approach, to explain why social stratification exists and will continue to exist in Australian society.

The state panel found that the best responses to Study of Society assessment tasks occurred when students were provided with challenging opportunities that required investigation and application of acquired knowledge to problem-solving situations. Some of the most effective tasks required students to investigate, analyse, synthesise, hypothesise and then evaluate the hypothesis and propose a solution. This has given students the opportunity to clearly demonstrate their achievement in the Critical processes criterion. Conversely, tasks that merely require students to gather large quantities of data, without directing students to investigate and analyse constructively, failed to provide adequate opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievement in the Critical processes criterion.

Continued care should be exercised to ensure that students receive clear direction about the processes they are to perform, the content to cover, and the criteria they must satisfy. Hypothesis, synthesis and evaluation must be given adequate emphasis and tasks need to be suitably challenging to support level-of-achievement decisions, particularly at VHA and HA. Scaffolding helps students understand the task components and will lead to an in-depth response to the Critical processes criterion.

Subject support

No workshops are expected for Study of Society in 2009.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities. To apply, start at the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>, select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel.

Subject support materials are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > Social and Environmental Studies> Study of Society (2001).

John Langer     Bernadette Stacey
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Technology Studies — A23

Syllabus

The first cohort of Year 12 Technology Studies students has now completed the full two-year course based on the 2007 syllabus. The syllabus document must be used as the basis for the course delivered and as a support document in delivering the new Technology Studies course material and assessment.

Technology Studies teachers are urged to continue to develop and refine work programs, assessment instruments and learning experiences. The following information regarding the syllabus may assist schools when developing amendments to their work program.

- All aspects of the work program and the assessment package including descriptions in the course organisation, assessment instruments, criteria sheets, profiles, etc. must be relevant to the 2007 syllabus. Syllabus terms that now need to be used include Project proposal and development, Investigative analysis, Logbook, Knowledge and application, Production. Old terms that do not relate to the new syllabus and should not be used include Major and minor folio, Research report, Related research report, and Knowledge and understanding.

- Safety must be covered sufficiently throughout the course. In particular, Section 5.2 states that "Safety of the product and its uses should be considered in all design tasks".

- Schools should ensure that their work programs reflect the intent of the new syllabus in regard to the conditions associated with assessment of the Year 12 design projects. A balanced assessment plan should provide similar opportunities for students to demonstrate criteria and standards across the two projects. This means that approaches which use a major and minor folio may disadvantage students by limiting their opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards in the minor project. Schools are also encouraged to submit their second Project proposal and development for verification purposes, as this provides a fuller body of evidence against which the standards can be verified.

Work program requirements, and support materials including instructions for an amendment to a work program, are available from the QSA website. From the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Years 11–12 subjects > ICT and Design > Technology Studies (2007). To amend a work program, complete the form “Amendment to approved work program” and insert it at the front of the work program before uploading to the QSA website.

Feedback from districts

The district review panel chairs and state review panellists’ conference in July provided an opportunity for collegial sharing and professional development. The district chairs shared their experiences and perspectives from throughout the state. A common issue reported was that, despite task sheets, criteria sheets and organisation of school programs that did not reflect the terminology and approach of the 2007 syllabus, student responses to design tasks were meeting the syllabus requirements.

All work programs based on the 2007 syllabus have now been approved for schools throughout the state and currently 138 schools offer Technology Studies.

Statewide comparability

Generally, the state panel found sufficient evidence of the match of the qualities of student work with the syllabus standards descriptors to support the judgments of the levels of achievements as proposed by the district panels. District panel chairs have been told in writing about the outcomes from the comparability process. Feedback on the following issues related to comparability:
• Where the level of achievement awarded did not match the syllabus standards, the main area of deficiency was the quality of evidence matched to the standards “effective and discriminating application of knowledge …” and “thorough and perceptive investigation …” associated with Criterion 1.

• Research demonstrated was often of a general nature without being specifically related to the solution being developed or decisions being justified.

• The QSA “Late and non-submission of student responses policy” states that an E standard cannot be awarded when there is no evidence provided by the student.

• The standards awarded in each criterion by schools must be based on the match between the evidence in the student responses and the 2007 syllabus standards associated with the exit criteria in the syllabus. Criteria sheets must describe standards selected or drawn from the syllabus standards associated with the exit criteria.

The comparability meeting also provides the opportunity to resolve submissions that were unresolved at verification. Three submissions were unresolved after verification. State panellists reviewed these submissions and agreements were negotiated to the satisfaction of schools and the QSA.

Course coverage
Generally throughout the state, the mandatory aspects of the course were covered. The mandatory subject matter is identified in Section 7.1 of the syllabus. Safety, the interrelationship of technology, industry and society and sustainability are areas where improvement in course coverage is encouraged.

Quality of assessment
Throughout the state there was evidence of schools refining and developing existing assessment to match the 2007 syllabus objectives. Continual improvement in the quality of assessment throughout the lifecycle of the syllabus is necessary and schools should consider the following issues when refining existing and developing future assessment instruments:

• An Investigative analysis must exhibit:
  – a primary focus on a social, ethical or environmental issue specifically related to past, present and likely future technologies
  – evidence of investigation, communication and evaluation including relevant conclusions and or recommendations.

• An Investigative analysis is not:
  – an essay that is restricted to the demonstration of knowledge of a particular manufacturing resource
  – a renamed related research report, and does not have to be “related” to the Project proposal and development of one of the Design projects

• A Project proposal and development should commence with a statement describing the design situation. Refer to Section 7.5.1 of the syllabus.

• Downloaded information from electronic sources or information copied from written texts must be relevant to the project and related by the students to the project decisions.

• Students should be made aware of the syllabus’s word-count policy.

• Justifications, conclusions and recommendations should be evident throughout all stages of the design project.
• The Project proposal and development must contain production plans. Please refer to Section 7.5.2, p. 24, for a description of the contents of a typical Project proposal and development.

• Logbooks are not a separate assessment instrument. They are supporting evidence provided by students to be used by teachers when awarding standards to the Project (design) realisation stage of the Design project. Other evidence used by teachers to assess a Project (design) realisation may include the physical realised product, photographic evidence taken by the teacher, indirect evidence collected by the teacher such as an annotated criteria sheet indicating what the teacher has observed that matches the standards awarded in a particular aspect of the criteria, peer assessment criteria sheet.

• The logbook should be a working document, developed by the student during production in the workshop that records the evidence of student decision making regarding the key stages of production. This can be achieved by the use of a journal format that uses photographs with notes, annotation and justifications of the key stages of production, especially where modifications were made to the original Project proposal and development.

• Scaffolding is encouraged, especially in the formative year. Schools are encouraged to review the quality of the scaffolding provided in the areas of production planning, materials lists, logbooks, Investigative analysis, and the Project appraisal. Consult the edna website for some examples and adapt to suit your school.

• Annotated freehand sketching is strongly encouraged as it shows design evolution leading to a synthesised design solution. Where pre-existing design evaluation is important, it cannot stand on its own as ideation, due to the syllabus General objective (Section 3) that requires students to “synthesise and communicate ideas that contribute to the planning and development of their products”.

**Subject support**

Schools can expect to receive support through:

• the QSA website

• syllabus assessment workshops

• ongoing relationships with panel chairs and members.

During 2009, a number of Technology Studies subject networking meetings were held in districts throughout the state. These were well attended and supported, and provided opportunities for teachers to network and discuss aspects of the Technology Studies syllabus and its delivery.

Additional support and resources can be found through the Queensland Senior Technology Studies Syllabus 2007 group on the edna website <www.edna.edu.au>. Teachers are encouraged to use and share examples of assessment through the group.

The state review panel encourages teachers not currently on a panel to consider joining, as participation provides invaluable professional development and networking opportunities in the continued development of Technology Studies. Teachers are encouraged to contact their local QSA district coordinator or visit the QSA website for an application form (from the home page <www.qsa.qld.edu.au> select Years 10–12 > Moderation and quality assurance > Information for panellists > Application form for membership of state or district review panel).

Tim Osborne  Roy Barnes
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Visual Art — B14

Syllabus

This year sees the first year 12 cohort exit on the 2007 syllabus. Generally, schools have embraced the changes and authentically implemented their approved work programs. Some minor amendments to work programs may develop as schools become more familiar with the possibilities of the syllabus, reflect on the success of the selected concepts and the significant place of contexts in teaching, learning and assessment. Reference to the syllabus will clarify understandings of the requirements and possibilities of Visual Art.

At the end of 2009, each school’s work program will have each unit developed in detail, across the two-year course. As a school working document, this program will enable teachers to build on the hard work and experiences of the two previous years, using collected references and resources that may enrich the teaching and learning for continuing classes and new teachers. Sample assessment instruments in the approved program are designed to show that the school can provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the characteristics of the criteria across the full range of standards, and that judgments are being made using the syllabus criteria and standards. Assessment instruments may be rewritten every year.

Feedback from districts

The state review panel chair, members and district panel chairs have been supporting panel members as a way to generate a positive culture of reviewing.

QSA panels are committed to best practice review processes founded on a positive culture, quality relationships and responsible decision making.

For moderation purposes, school submissions are portable and mostly well signposted to support teachers’ awarding of standards. Some schools are photographing each stage of the student making the work but this is not sufficient evidence of research and development, and may not necessarily be evidence of the particular characteristics of the awarded standard.

Signposting identifies the significant points that show the characteristics of the awarded standard. These characteristics will reveal the quality of a student’s knowledge and understanding, decision making, personal aesthetic (style and expression), the construction and communication of meaning, the use of visual language and expression, creative thinking, critical analysis, problem solving, and viewpoint to match the syllabus standards that have been awarded. The evidence in a verification submission may differ in quantity as well as characteristics, depending on the level of achievement.

Annotations on photography in submissions will help reviewers identify the work of students and the research they are doing, which photographs are sourced and which photos have been taken by the teacher as opposed to the student. Photographs or images that are resolved works in media areas of photographic art and electronic imaging should be clearly annotated to distinguish these from images that may be evidence of processes or details of resolved work in other media areas.

At this point, only images or evidence of electronic responses can be provided on CD or DVD; all other aspects of a submission should be provided in hard copy. To ensure that a reviewer has a clear understanding of the evidence which demonstrates teacher judgments, please ensure that electronic evidence has:

- a folder or folders that match the submissions
- is well labelled (including medium, scale indicator or measurements resolved or developmental work)
• annotations that show the match to the standards if this is not obvious
• evidence of the student’s conceptual intention in written or oral form
• an explanation of the installation performance or design media
• a visual image of the context or placement of artwork, formatted to be viewed on a PC, preferably in PowerPoint.

Statewide comparability

Comparability is the process by which state review panels collect information about the extent to which judgments about levels of achievement are comparable across Queensland. That is, that the judgments made in schools across the state match the syllabus descriptors of the standards. At verification, three agreed samples (one as a reserve) were selected from each district and sent to comparability to demonstrate that district panels’ judgments. The state panel reviewed threshold samples and found evidence to support the judgments made by panels in all 13 districts.

Course coverage

In this syllabus, the selected context has become a “frame of reference” (p. 7) for teaching and learning to inform the concept and focus. It allows intended and suggested meaning to evolve and provides another reference point for students in their problem solving and decision making. It assists the refinement, communication of meaning and resolution of responses to the concept.

Page 4 of the syllabus details the general objective in Making, and the place of display in problem solving. Display is a significant aspect of Making and the resolution of artworks. There was little evidence of display in the students’ decision making, compositional considerations or reflections through the Making process, or the final display of resolved Making work. “Making requires students to solve problems when creating and displaying artworks …The formal and informal display of artwork is part of the Making process, depending on the context, media area and expressive response adopted. The effects of diverse contexts on the meanings and aesthetic values of artworks are considered” (p. 4). Images of resolved work in situ or as a collective body of work provides evidence of problem solving in display, and the student’s understanding of visual language and meaning.

Following the first exiting cohort, schools will now have experience teaching their work program and could consider it beneficial to develop the intention of the body of work in Year 11 programs to orientate students to this way of working and to implement the Inquiry model as cyclic and used to help develop their focus. Through modelling this method of inquiry, and guiding the development of a body of work through structured teaching and well-considered learning experiences, the formative experience of the summative assessment instrument may improve outcomes for students in Year 12. Schools could also reflect on the role of the experimental folio in Year 11, and include requirements for the problem-solving demands of resolution at this early point in the course, as a productive aspect in the progress of their student learning.

Many schools are interpreting a body of work as a linear process — researching, developing, resolving and then reflecting on the resolved work. This, rather than “…interrelated, non-hierarchical and non-sequential” (pp. 6–7) process appears to have made it difficult for students to demonstrate Standard A in Visual literacy and Application. When schools have adopted this model, the resolved work often is limited to a didactic and narrow interpretation of the concept as the focus is often only literally interpreted.

Some schools found the idea of using an artist as mentor in the body of work, to be a valuable learning tool. This is not about the student imitating the artist but discerning how the artist can inform their own practice.
Quality of assessment

Assessment items are showing a clearer and intentional articulation of the Inquiry learning model of research, development, reflection, resolution in student bodies of work than they did in the past. This appears to be well considered and supported by scaffolding on student task sheets and the development of resolved work(s).

Some observations by district review panel chairs at verification 2009:

- The integration of Making and Appraising tasks is not always clear and embedded in the development of the student’s focus.

- The Appraising tasks are typically a quotation followed by a request for students to validate the quotation by exploring two or three artists. Schools could consider providing a list of names, time periods, cultural contexts and diversity of approaches to enable students to broaden their response by finding more artists to respond to. To support the opportunity for a depth of study, Appraising tasks could be written to enable students to pursue further research of artists they have referenced in Making.

- Schools could also consider the value of short-response items in Appraising tasks to allow students to respond in a more analytical way. The Appraising evidence in a body of work could include more that one Appraising response, particularly when conditions and purpose of the task may not enable all aspects of the criteria to be met with one task alone.

- In Appraising, some tasks did not allow students to respond to show the interrelationship to the complete body of work. They did not give students the opportunity to explore the link back to their research in Making.

- Schools should ensure that when students use sourced images, they understand the difference between reconceptualising and recomposing. The latter is not providing evidence to support the awarding of standard A, B or C. (See the Glossary p 39: Appropriation)

- When students use projections as a tool on surfaces to create an image, they need to be mindful that this process is not necessarily a resolved solution and should be used with discretion and purpose.

- There is still a misunderstanding that the evidence for research and development can only be demonstrated through the visual journal. This model does not allow multiple interpretations and values only the reflection at the end point of the process.

Subject support

The QSA website includes some advice for moderation and the syllabus, including the evidence for moderation purposes and providing evidence in CD or DVD format and support materials.

Assessment workshops will be held in every district around Queensland in Semester 1, 2010 beginning in early March. Dates and venues for these half-day workshops are available on the professional development section of the QSA website.

Janelle Williams    Susan Hollindale
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer