## Contents

Foreword ................................................................. 1
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies — B31 ......................................................... 2
Accounting — B12 ....................................................... 4
Agricultural Science — A21 .................................................. 6
Ancient History 2004 — B38 .............................................. 8
Biology — A06 ............................................................... 10
Business Communication and Technologies — B28 ......................................................... 12
Business Organisation and Management — B25 ......................................................... 14
Chemistry — A44 ............................................................. 16
Chinese — B23 ............................................................... 18
Dance — B19 ................................................................. 20
Earth Science — A07 ........................................................ 22
Economics — B29 ............................................................ 24
Engineering Technology — A18 ........................................... 26
English — B35 ............................................................... 28
English Extension — B37 .................................................... 30
Film, Television and New Media — B40 ......................................................... 32
French — B02 .............................................................. 34
Geography — B34 .......................................................... 36
German — B03 ............................................................... 39
Graphics — A13 ............................................................. 42
Health Education — A19 .................................................... 45
Home Economics — A25 .................................................. 47
Hospitality Studies — A22 .................................................. 49
Indonesian — B06 ........................................................... 52
Information Processing and Technology — A16 ......................................................... 55
Information Technology Systems — A26 ......................................................... 57
Italian — B04 .............................................................. 59
Japanese — B05 ............................................................. 61
Legal Studies — B21 ........................................................ 64
Marine Studies — A27 ........................................................ 66
Mathematics A — A36 ...................................................... 68
Mathematics B — A37 ...................................................... 70
Mathematics C — A38 ...................................................... 72
Modern History — B39 ..................................................... 74
Multi-strand Science — A08 ................................................ 76
Music — B26 .............................................................. 79
Music Extension — B36 ..................................................... 81
Other Languages — B32 .................................................... 84
Philosophy and Reason — A14 ............................................ 86
Physical Education — A24 .................................................. 89
Physics — A45 ............................................................. 91
Science 21 — A33 ............................................................ 93
Study of Religion — B20 ................................................... 95
Study of Society — B11 ..................................................... 97
Technology Studies — A23 .................................................. 99
Visual Art — B14 ........................................................... 101
Foreword

The Queensland system of externally moderated school-based assessment is a highly regarded model for quality-assuring educational standards in senior schooling. The system is based on confidence and trust in the professional judgments of teachers about the quality of student work.

State and district review panels provide an important safeguard in the system. In 2011, review panels again performed crucial tasks central to its operation. In this cooperative relationship state review panels:

- consider work programs recommended for approval by district review panels and either approve those work programs or provide further advice to schools through district review panels
- provide advice to district review panels and the QSA about comparability of judgments about student achievement across QSA districts in Queensland
- manage the negotiation and resolution of schools' proposed levels of achievement in verification submissions when agreement is not reached at a district level at verification, and conduct all subsequent consultations for those submissions at exit.

This document is a collation of reports of the moderation process for senior secondary Authority subjects in general implementation in 2011. Each state review panel chair prepares a report in consultation with an officer of the Queensland Studies Authority.

I am confident that 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

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 2009 syllabus is in the second year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html>.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has a state-only panel. This panel also moderates Futures (pre-pilot 1998) and Political Studies (pre-pilot). In 2011, these two syllabuses are in the final year of implementation and, from 2012, will no longer be available as Authority subjects.

Assessment design

Through the moderation processes associated with monitoring and verification, it was evident that effective assessments have considered the following key design principles:

• provision of opportunity to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus (pp. 7–8)
• balance and valuing of the diversity and complexity of both Aboriginal culture and Torres Strait Islander culture, as stated in Section 4.1 of the syllabus (p. 9)
• use of preferred terminology demonstrating respect for and acknowledgment of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait islander peoples
• collaboration with the local community as stated in Section 4.2 of the syllabus (p. 10)
• provision of clear and definite instructions allowing optimal participation of students.

Effective multimodal presentations allowed students to negotiate the context and modes of delivery of the inquiry topic. Language used was appropriate to audience, place and purpose, often including elements of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, Aboriginal Kriol or Torres Strait Islander Creole. In alignment with the syllabus (p. 32), documentation of the research process supported student presentations through research notes, learning log entries or annotated bibliographies.

Learning logs were most effective when students were required to address the objectives of the Reflecting on perspectives and processes criterion. Student entries reflected deep understanding and connectedness with the themes and topics studied over a semester. A variety of communication genres was evident allowing inclusive language appropriate to audience and purpose.

Effective examples of extended written responses provided an inquiry question or hypothesis to focus student responses. These instruments also provided clear guidelines on undertaking ethical research, observing protocols for referencing oral histories and selecting and evaluating sources of information.

Additional assessment formats include response to stimulus tests and objective short-response tests. The most effective response to stimulus tests required students to analyse, synthesise and evaluate sources and consider constructions of knowledge and
perspectives over time. Objective short-response tests that assessed recall of policies, practices and issues that impact on Indigenous peoples across local, national and global contexts provided the most effective opportunities for students to meet the objectives of Criterion 1, Knowing and understanding.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

In the majority of sample folios reviewed at verification there was a match between the qualities of standards and student responses.

The few concerns about on-balance judgments were often associated with evidence related to:

- **Criterion 2, Managing and processing through critical inquiry, at A and B standards.** Use of research, referencing and shared information from community was usually competent rather than skilful; and analysis, synthesis and evaluation of sources for quality and validity were thorough rather than thorough and detailed.

- **Criterion 3, Reflecting on perspectives and processes, at A and B standards.** Reflection and revision of the decision-making process was logical but not well-developed and conclusions, while coherent, were about information only and not perspectives as well as information.

**Support**

Support materials for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 2009 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html>. These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Handbook
- *Designing effective assessment instruments.* This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.* This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool.* This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

In addition support materials for Indigenous perspectives are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/577.html>.

To receive updates on support materials, subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

Lesley Latu                Jackie Dunk
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Accounting — B12

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

2011 is the final year of implementation of the Accounting 2003 syllabus. In 2012, the Accounting 2010 syllabus will be implemented with both Year 11 and Year 12 students.


Assessment design for the Accounting 2003 syllabus

The samples reviewed generally provided sufficient scope for students to demonstrate a range of standards across the general objectives.

There were some instances where assessment instruments assessing the Knowledge, interpretation and evaluation criterion did not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the range of general objectives. Tasks which purport to assess analysis and interpretation should require students to break down and make meaning of accounting information to solve a problem in order to make accounting decisions, judgments and recommendations. Using a case study for Electronic Business provides an opportunity for students to analyse and interpret accounting data, in addition to recalling and explaining facts, concepts and principles of accounting.

Assessment of the Challenging practical application criterion requires that tasks include all of the usual but complicated elements, or unusual elements outlined in Appendix 1: Guidelines for Challenging practical application.

When assessing the Accounting Package, the general objectives of Routine practical procedures were best demonstrated through a task that required students to demonstrate the full accounting process, rather than a focus on transactions of a repetitive nature. This provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate a wide variety of accounting concepts which are fundamental to the course.

Implications for the Accounting 2010 syllabus

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) has recently updated its standards relating to the presentation of financial statements. Details relating to AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements can be found at <www.aasb.gov.au>. These standards should be considered and applied to relevant areas of study through learning experiences and assessment.

An instrument-specific criteria sheet should be provided for each assessment instrument which provides evidence of how students meet standards associated with the dimensions involved in that instrument (Section 5.6 of the syllabus). Instrument-specific criteria sheets should be contextualised to the instrument and directly align to the syllabus standards descriptors, for example “detailed analysis and interpretation of relevant accounting data and information relating to the accounting entity assumption, accounting profession and recording transactions using double entry” (B standard — Interpretation and evaluation). Detailed information or checklists often included in school-developed instrument-specific criteria sheets are more appropriately placed within the task instructions.

When assessing the general objectives of the Interpretation and evaluation dimension using the supervised written technique (extended written response), tasks should provide a
significant amount of information or stimulus to enable students to demonstrate sustained analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Critiquing an eBusiness website would provide an opportunity for students to effectively demonstrate these general objectives.

Effective assessment instruments clearly articulate the task requirements relating to communication, e.g. genre, word length and audience. Clear direction of this information will allow students to demonstrate the standards required by the syllabus.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence was found to support most of the decisions relating to the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance processes.

Where evidence in student responses was not matched to standards, it was related to:

- the use of school-developed standards that did not align directly to the syllabus standards descriptors
- the focus being on the final output rather than on the process or processes demonstrated through the evidence
- the lack of opportunity provided in assessment instruments to demonstrate an A or B standard.

**Support**

Support materials for the Accounting senior syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments.* This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.* This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool.* This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- Sample assessment instruments for a variety of assessment techniques including supervised written assessment and practical assessment.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

Wayne Butlin
State Review Panel Chair (Acting)

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Agricultural Science — A21

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Agricultural Science 2007 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1944.html>.

Assessment design

A general improvement in the effectiveness of assessment instruments is evident across the state with most schools developing instruments that allowed students the opportunity to demonstrate the full range of standards for all criteria.

Effective instruments allow students to demonstrate the full range of the problem-solving standards, particularly in the higher achievement levels, e.g. “interpret and analyse, and, evaluate and synthesise” (syllabus, pp. 3 and 29).

Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors (pp. 28–29), teachers’ judgments have matched the syllabus exit criteria and folios have been appropriately placed. However, when schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that do not directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors teachers’ judgments may not demonstrate objectives or match standards from the syllabus and folios may be placed at a standard not evidenced in the folio.

Schools are encouraged to continue developing extended agricultural investigations (EAIs) that elicit evidence of student ability across all general objectives of the course. An EAI:

- brings many variables together
- is usually pursued over an extended period of time
- involves students working individually and in groups at different stages of the task
- assesses at least two of the criteria.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence was found to support district panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards.

However, there was some evidence of schools assessing the criterion of Knowledge as Problem solving. The syllabus defines one aspect of Knowledge is the ability to “apply knowledge in familiar situations” (p. 3) and Problem solving includes interpreting, analysing, evaluating and synthesising agricultural issues. (p. 3). Students must be provided with opportunities to demonstrate the aspects of all criteria to ensure on-balance judgments across all syllabus objectives.
Support

Support materials for the Agricultural Science 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1944.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Developing instrument-specific criteria sheets.** This demonstrates one approach to developing instrument-specific criteria sheets.

To receive regular updates on support material, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

QSA memos provide important information. These can be received through memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

For information about future workshops for Agricultural Science refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Adam Burke  Colleen Palmer
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Ancient History 2004 — B38

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

2011 was the seventh year of implementation of the Ancient History 2004 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments were designed to allow opportunities for students to engage with the general objectives and to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards. The design of supervised instruments (Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence, and Category 4: Additional test formats) needs to ensure that students have the opportunity to interrogate and evaluate sources of evidence and to formulate historical arguments. While provision of some contextualising information will assist in these evaluation processes, this should be discriminating and avoid the signposting of an author’s probable bias or perspective.

Presenting sources of sufficient length and variety for Category 1 and 4 instruments will allow students the opportunity to be selective in their choices of evidence from the sources. Decisions about the length and number of sources will be balanced by the consideration that assessment in these categories is completed under test conditions. Sources should be labelled to indicate whether they are seen or unseen.

The various elements of the general objective Planning and using an historical research process (syllabus, p.7) can inform the design of assessment instruments incorporating research. Overly scaffolded records of research that encourage formulaic responses, rather than opening up opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the interrelated and responsive nature of the critical inquiry processes, may make it difficult for students to demonstrate Criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process at A and B standards.

Application of standards

The panel found evidence to support district review panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student work in sample folios to the syllabus standards.

Attention is drawn to the qualifying language of the standards in Criteria 1 and 2, in particular the differences between B and C standards. At:

- **C standard**, student responses tend to be more narrative and descriptive.
- **B standard**, evaluation of sources is an integral part of developing reasoned arguments.
- **A standard**, students grapple with the historiographical nature of the discipline and understand the constructed nature of historical interpretations.

The subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards) available on the QSA website at <www.qlsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html> distinguish the different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards for each criterion.

Some examples of the differences between the standards for Criteria 1 and 2 are highlighted below.
Criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process is about planning and putting into effect the procedural and organisational structures of a research task. This involves planning the inquiry, locating and organising sources, creating records of research that engage with the Aspects of Inquiry, and reflection on the research as it progresses. For example, when reflecting on the research process, at A standard, reflections are “critical” and lead to “valid choices about direction and emphasis”; at B standard there is evidence that the student “demonstrates reflection” and where necessary “revises the process”; and at C standard students “respond to obvious issues that emerge”.

The qualities that distinguish between the standards in Criterion 2: Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry are related to comprehension, interpretation and analysis of information from a range of sources; the evaluation of these sources of evidence; and the synthesis of this evidence to support decisions that are “insightful” (A standard), or “reasoned” (B standard) or “obvious” (C standard).

Evidence used to make judgments about student achievement for Criteria 2 and 3 in Category 2 instruments (written research tasks) and Category 3 instruments (multimodal presentations) should be from the final response to the research task where students have formed and communicated an historical argument.

Annotated sample student responses on the subject page are provided to assist teachers to match the qualities of student work to the standards.

Support

Support materials for the Ancient History 2004 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- *Assessment program audit tool*. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

New resources are now available including advice for teachers for each category of assessment and sample student responses. Teachers may also find useful sample assessment instruments and sample student responses on the Modern History subject page on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html>.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.htm>.

Sue Burvill-Shaw
State Review Panel Chair

Lyn Sherington
Senior Education Officer
Biology — A06

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Biology 2004 syllabus is in its seventh year of implementation. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946.html>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across the range of standards.

Assessment plans include an Extended experimental investigation (EEI) to provide much of the evidence for standards in the Investigating biology (IB) general objective. The design of the EEI instruments needs to provide students with the opportunity to meet all aspects of the IB general objective as well as Understanding biology (UB). In particular, students need to

- analyse data to reveal trends and interrelationships
- evaluate the design
- reflect on the adequacy of the data collected
- link data to theoretical concepts (UB).

Prior to commencement, student proposals for an EEI need to be carefully considered to ensure that they will be able to fulfil these requirements.

When assessing the IB general objective in Written tasks (WT), ensure that students are being asked to demonstrate the IB general objective and not UB. Not all IB general objectives can be effectively addressed in a WT.

When assessing Evaluating biological issues (EBI) ensure that:

- the instrument allows for the full range of criteria to be addressed
- if students are asked to make a decision, student responses matched to a C standard have “made a plausible decision” rather than “made a statement”
- when recognising concepts, student responses matched to an A standard have considered “past, present and future” biological contexts.

An extended response is developed to consider questions or issues raised within a biological context and are essentially non-experimental. The instrument must allow students to demonstrate:

- an understanding and processing of information and concepts
- the gathering of information and data from a range of sources
- skills of interpretation, analysis and synthesis
- evaluative and decision-making processes.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.
Evidence was found to support district panel decisions of an on-balance match of the qualities of student work in sample folios to the syllabus standards.

Some examples of instrument-specific criteria sheets that were not indicative of the syllabus standards were evident in sample folios. Schools are reminded that while criteria sheets are to be instrument-specific, they should be closely aligned to, and indicative of the syllabus standards. They should not resemble a marking scheme nor should they contain descriptors that prescribe a “quantity” of some element of a criterion.

When student responses are being assessed they are to match to the criteria. A range of techniques can be used including brief annotations that match standards criteria.

Support

In 2011, assessment workshops focused on designing, evaluating and refining instruments to develop effective assessment instruments. Support materials for the Biology 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Developing instrument-specific criteria sheets.** This demonstrates one approach to developing instrument-specific criteria sheets.

To receive regular updates on support material, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

QSA memos provide important information. These can be received through memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Business Communication and Technologies 2008 syllabus is in its third year of implementation. Following notification to schools that embedded vocational education and training (VET) is to be removed from Authority syllabuses, Year 11 in 2012 will be the final cohort to study the 2008 syllabus. The Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus will be implemented with Year 11 for the first time in 2013. Further information is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/memos/11/044-11.pdf>.

Assessment design

The samples reviewed generally provided sufficient scope for students to demonstrate a range of standards across the general objectives. There were some instances where assessment instruments assessing the Knowledge and understanding criterion did not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate an A or B standard. Multiple-choice questions, true/false, sentence or short-paragraph (up to 50 words) responses are more appropriate for Year 11. Paragraph responses (50-200 words) allow students to provide responses requiring greater complexity.

Verification folios must include a task-specific criteria sheet for each assessment instrument which provides evidence of how students meet standards associated with the exit criteria involved in that instrument.

An effective assessment package:

- provides scaffolding in the earlier stages of the course to familiarise students with the expectations for the required outcome; scaffolding should be reduced from Year 11 to Year 12 to allow students to better demonstrate independence in the process
- consists of assessment instruments which develop at increasing levels of complexity over the four-semester course of study.

Effective assessment instruments:

- allow students to write paragraph responses when using Category 1: Short written response technique to demonstrate the understanding aspect of the Knowledge and understanding general objectives (Section 7.5 of the syllabus)
- clearly articulate the format or genre of the required response together with a guide to the length of the response
- demonstrate a clear link between the stimulus and question when using Category 2: Extended written response technique to demonstrate the Reasoning processes general objectives
- include task-specific criteria sheets which directly align to the syllabus standards descriptors.
**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence was found to support the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

When making judgments about the evidence in student responses, the standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of student achievement match the standards descriptors overall in each criterion across the assessment instrument, rather than the awarding of a standard for each component of the task. Awarding a standard for each component may not reflect how the student’s response matches the standards on-balance, as it assumes that the response to every component makes an equal contribution to the judgment.

**Support**

Support materials for the Business Communication and Technologies 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5699.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- **Sample assessment instruments, with student responses for a variety of assessment techniques including short written response and extended written response.**
- **Frequently asked questions.**
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Panel training will be conducted in 2012 focusing on the work program approval process for the Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.


QSA memos provide important information. These can be received through memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Andrea Proctor    Robyn Bergmansons
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Business Organisation and Management — B25

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Business Organisation and Management 2007 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1526.html>.

This syllabus will undergo a periodic revision during 2012 with general implementation scheduled for Year 11 students in 2014.

Assessment design

The samples reviewed generally provided sufficient scope for students to demonstrate a range of standards across the general objectives, particularly in Knowledge and understanding and Action skills.

Verification folios must include a task-specific criteria sheet for each assessment instrument which provides evidence of how students’ responses match standards associated with assessment criteria (Section 7.5 of the syllabus).

Criteria sheets should be contextualised to the instrument and directly align to the syllabus standards descriptors, for example “significant explanation of business ideas, activities, concepts, techniques and theories relating to entrepreneurship, supported by examples” (Standard B — Knowledge and understanding). Detailed information or checklists often included in school-developed task-specific criteria sheets are more appropriately placed within the task instructions.

Effective assessment instruments must match the following requirements:

- Clearly articulate the task requirements including the format or genre of the required response. When the report genre is being used to assess the Reflection processes criterion, task requirements should outline the expectation that evaluation of intentions should be evident throughout the report, with an emphasis on recommendations that allows for the development of highly appropriate strategies for action.
- Provide opportunities for students to respond to the task(s) within the word lengths outlined in Section 7.3 of the syllabus, for example, Business plan (1000–3000 words), extended written response (600–800 words in Year 12). Appendixes, whilst excluded from the word length requirement, should be relevant to the task and referred to within the body of the response.
- Incorporate a variety of new and interesting information and communication technologies, such as blog planners, podcasts, on-line applications, services and businesses (SurveyMonkey, eBay auctions).
- Consider a variety of ways evidence can be collected when assessing the Action skills criterion.
Application of standards

When making judgments about the evidence in student responses, the standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of student achievement match the standards descriptors in each criterion across the instrument.

Evidence was found to support the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Where evidence was not matched accurately to standards, it was related to:

- the use of school-developed standards which did not align directly to the syllabus standards descriptors
- assessment tasks not requiring and/or expecting student responses to contain “highly appropriate strategies for action” or “fluent and precise responses” (Standard A — Reflection processes).

It is not always necessary for the student to have met each descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the student response match the descriptors overall (Section 7.6 of the syllabus).

Support

Support materials for the Business Organisation and Management 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1526.html>. These include:

- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Assessment program audit tool. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- Project and practical work (Reflective learning log) — Reflective learning log structure as supporting evidence of the Business plan and Practical and project work.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

QSA memos provide important information. These can be received through memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Brad Greene    Robyn Bergmansons
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Chemistry — A44

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Chemistry 2007 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1952.html>.

Assessment design

The scope and depth of the key concepts of the syllabus are being adequately covered, but there is sometimes a heavy emphasis on one particular type of chemistry. An example of this is the overuse of organic chemistry as a basis for assessment. A more varied approach would better meet syllabus requirements.

The design of the Extended response task (ERT) has been varied. The syllabus states that the ERT is an assessment instrument developed in response to a chemical question, circumstance or issue (Section 7.4.3 of the syllabus, p. 22). When an assessment requires the gathering and sorting of information and data from a variety of sources, opportunities for the student to process information, to interpret, analyse and synthesise data, to explain relationships, to evaluate information and communicate ideas need to be provided. The task should allow evidence for each of the three criteria to be gathered from the student’s response about Chemistry concepts.

Supervised assessment (SA) should provide opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards descriptors for all the general objectives. There has been an overall improvement in Evaluating and concluding (EC) type questions and there is a greater variety of Knowledge and conceptual understanding (KCU) questions rather than the previous focus on linking and application of algorithms. Words from the exit standards descriptors should be used in designing assessment items.

Effective assessment for Extended experimental investigations (EEI) is open-ended to allow opportunities for students to design and refine investigations (Section 7.4.1 of the syllabus, p. 22) rather than being structured and simplistic.

The assessment task should allow for collection of sufficient data to enable systematic analysis and evaluation of interrelationships. The interrelationships discussed should be linked to the chemistry concepts.

Application of standards

The exit standards should be used to make judgments about the qualities in student responses. Evidence of student achievement may be gathered from a range of items but often items are narrowly viewed as only relating to a particular general objective. For example, evidence of systematic analysis of data may be gathered in relation to demonstration of Investigative processes (IP) (use of primary and secondary data) but that response may also provide evidence for KCU (link and apply) or EC (analyse and evaluate interrelationships).

The exit standards should be used appropriately. Often instruments are labelled as assessing systematic analysis of data for IP (use primary and secondary data), but the task aligns better with KCU (link and apply) or EC (analyse and evaluate interrelationships). School judgments beyond the level of complexity of the question are evident, e.g. simply
reading a graph does not provide enough stimulus or data to give opportunity for systematic analysis.

The criteria sheets for assessment should be derived from the exit criteria and provide the basis for teachers’ judgment about student achievement (Section 7.4.7 of the syllabus, p. 24).

Support

Support materials for Chemistry are available from the QSA website at: <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1952.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Assessment instruments.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their schools. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.

- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus


Assessment design

Assessment design is informed by the general objectives, standards descriptors and requirements of the syllabus.

The assessment plan in each school’s work program aligns with the syllabus general objectives and the teaching and learning experiences developed by schools to achieve these objectives. The assessment plan helps schools to ensure that students have the opportunity to demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types by exit (pp. 47–49).

The Reasoning and responding dimension of the Comprehension criterion in the syllabus requires students to analyse, evaluate, draw conclusions and make decisions as well as respond to cultural meanings. These descriptors and the descriptors from the Knowing and understanding dimension together inform assessment design in the Comprehension skills to ensure opportunities for students to meet syllabus requirements.

Listening and reading assessment instruments

The most effective listening and reading assessment instruments contain texts and questions and/or tasks that allow students to analyse and evaluate information in the text (demonstrating knowledge and understanding of language features) to draw conclusions and make decisions, and to do so across the range of standards. Effective questions and tasks address both dimensions, do not reveal information from the text nor provide clues to responses to other questions, and require students to engage with and respond to the text without any prior knowledge of information or ideas. Further advice on assessment design is provided in the document: Writing questions for comprehension assessment instruments on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html>.

The differentiation of text complexity for listening and reading assessment instruments is described in the syllabus. Texts for Listening assessment instruments are based on familiar material. Texts for reading assessment instruments will differ in length, purpose and complexity (pp. 41–42). The syllabus requires the length of texts to be appropriate to the text type. Listening tasks assess comprehension, not memory.

The most effective assessment instruments for composite classes differentiate between the complexities of language and skills of the Year 11 and Year 12 cohorts and are relative to the stage of the course and the learning experiences for each of the cohorts. When both year levels complete same or similar assessment, the assessment is adjusted to provide appropriate opportunities for each Year level (syllabus, Section 6.3).

Speaking and writing assessment instruments

The most effective speaking and writing assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to respond with a broad, rather than a narrow focus on topics studied in class,
allowing for the demonstration of a range of topics and text types, as well as the complete range of A to E standards.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

There was generally evidence of the match of student responses to listening and reading assessment instruments with syllabus standards. When applying standards to speaking and writing responses, an on-balance judgment should be made.

Making an on-balance judgment requires that student work is matched, on-balance, to the standards descriptors; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the student work match the descriptors overall. Refer to Section 8.5 of the syllabus and the highlighted interim criteria and standards document on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html> for further information.

All items in the summative assessment package contribute to the judgments at verification and exit as they will provide evidence across a range of topics and text types. Refer to the syllabus regarding “fullest and latest” where “latest” refers to the summative assessment package rather than the last task in Year 12.

Support

Support materials for the Chinese 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Sample assessment instruments.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added.

- **Sample assessment instruments with student responses.**

- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

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Winnie Edwards-Davis  Therese Powers
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Dance – B19

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Dance 2004 syllabus is in its final year of implementation. The Year 12 cohort of students in 2011 was the final group to exit using this syllabus.

In 2011, the Dance 2010 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. Schools were required to submit work programs during 2011.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html>.

Assessment design

It is evident that schools are designing quality assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information about the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus.

Appreciation tasks that explicitly require students to analyse, interpret, and evaluate (syllabus, p. 4) elicit more effective responses than those requiring students to discuss or comment on. The use of dance-specific terminology in an assessment instrument and a clear statement of the task provide students with a framework within which to respond most effectively.

Task-specific criteria and standards are derived from the exit criteria and describe standards congruent with the exit standards (syllabus, p. 41). The standards are effectively and authentically adapted by the inclusion of a context and genre/style relevant to the task.

Effective performance assessment instruments include a brief statement outlining the choreographic intent. This statement helps students understand the technical and expressive aspects of the task, and clearly outlines the task requirements, parameters or intent for the purposes of reviewing.

The intention of the choreographic statement in assessment is that it provides a lens through which to view the dance. The emphasis in assessment of choreography remains on the student’s ability to create danceworks in a variety of styles and contexts by employing dance components and skills to communicate their stated choreographic intents (syllabus, p. 45).

The documentation for choreographic intent (syllabus, p. 45) enhances students’ choreographic process and product by clearly reflecting their choreographic work, and shaping its development. This is most effective when formed at the beginning of students’ choreographic process.

While there is no requirement for students to meet a prescribed minimum standard of technique in Performance, the selection of danceworks should allow students to demonstrate their ability in the criterion, and be within their technique. For example, very simple danceworks may not allow students to demonstrate the range of dance components and skills or portray stylistic or expressive aspects, whereas highly complex danceworks could be beyond the student’s technique.

Effective appreciation tasks are selective in the length or complexity of the dancework stimulus, and are designed to allow students to demonstrate depth of analysis, interpretation and evaluation. The task description indicates certain dance components as the focus, such as the use of motifs and form (syllabus, p. 6).

Appreciation tasks that focus on one succinct question elicit greater depth in student response. This allows students to demonstrate thinking skills such as evaluation.
When approaching danceworks with challenging or controversial themes, it is important to ensure that students engage with the analytical and evaluative activity to ensure that the topics are dealt with in a sensitive, respectful and appropriate way.

**Application of standards**

When making judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the course, the syllabus standards descriptors are used. Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools.

**Support**

Support materials for the Dance 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html>. These will include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Highlighted syllabus standards*. This information supports schools in implementing the assessment requirements of the syllabus. The advice supports school decision making about the approaches to assessment design and making judgments.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

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Helen Mullins    Andrew Reid
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Drama — B22

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Drama 2007 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. A number of schools submitted amendments to work programs to meet the needs of their schools. When amending a program schools consider the syllabus requirements including verification folio requirements such as having only one individual practical assessment instrument.

Assessment design

Forming tasks

Effective Forming tasks focus on one skill of performance such as directing, design or scriptwriting rather than a combination of these and this allows students to demonstrate the objectives particularly exploring and interpreting ideas to create and shape dramatic action.

Practical directing tasks provide opportunity when students focus on “structuring the dramatic action to create dramatic meaning” and “interpreting ideas from the text” (syllabus, p. 34) rather than actors’ warm-ups and games. Directing student-devised scripts can limit the opportunity for students to demonstrate the full range of standards if there is no input from the teacher before the directing task.

The choice of stimulus needs to allow students in Year 12 to meet the full range of standards and achieve “an individual, innovative and discerning exploration of ideas” (syllabus, p. 34).

Presenting tasks

Choice of text needs to allow students in Year 12 to meet the full range of standards. The design of some texts may limit students’ ability to “interpret and understand meaning”. They need to allow students to match the conditions for time (syllabus, p. 31) which are a guideline to ensure that when students present they are able to match with the syllabus standards.

When presenting is based on a student-devised script, it is important to ensure that after the devising process students are given opportunities to rehearse and polish the performance. Performance responses based on student-devised scripts and physical theatre require criteria sheets to be accompanied by the script with students’ parts highlighted (syllabus, p. 36).

Responding tasks

Responding tasks are effective when students are required to experience and respond to live dramatic action (syllabus, pp. 16 and 70). Schools that are unable to attend live performances provide students with opportunities to respond to dramatic action by responding to the wide range of DVDs of live theatre now available. Some made effective use of touring productions by embedding the responding task in the current unit and then requiring students to reflect on relevant dramatic languages using an appropriate focus.

Tasks provide opportunity to match to the range of standards when they ask students to analyse, synthesise and evaluate the full range of relevant dramatic languages, styles,
conventions and relevant skills of performance and do not limit students’ responses. This opportunity is provided by clear and concise questions.

**Application of standards**

Verification folios require sufficient material to validate judgments made regarding the application of standards. The original task and criteria sheet for each response (including any comments) needs to accompany other required documentation (p. 36). In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools. In cases where the application of standards could not be supported this was often due to the lack of appropriate documentation of practical tasks particularly in the Forming criterion.

Effective documentation of Forming assessment responses occurs where the assessment instrument clearly outlines what documentation is required and provides some structure for students. For example, directing tasks that describe the annotations required beside the script such as “ideas for shaping dramatic action, interpretations of meaning, applying style in required voice and movement” clearly indicate to students what a “script with relevant annotations” means.

While documentation is required to support judgments for practical tasks, the practical response and the practical shaping and creating of the dramatic meaning and action is what is assessed and matched to the standards rather than the written response (p. 36). Documentation to validate teachers’ judgments about standards can be supplemented with observations.

Presenting tasks require a highlighted script and DVD samples. The A and C samples on a DVD need to be clearly identified, include marked criteria sheets and be of a technical standard and quality that ensures that the presenting students are clearly seen and heard (syllabus, p. 37). These requirements are outlined for verification submissions and also apply to monitoring submissions.

Concerns with on-balance judgments were often associated with the judgments about A standards in Responding responses. The A standard includes “insightful communication of an informed and justified position”, “extensive knowledge”, “synthesis” as well as “critical analysis and evaluation” (Section 6.7.1 of the syllabus, p. 35). Synthesis occurs throughout the essay, drawing together ideas to support the position.

**Support**

Support materials for the Drama 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1239.html>. These include:

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- **Annotated sample assessment instruments and sample student responses.**
- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers to design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

To receive updates on support materials, subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

Debb Wall     Shauna Bouel  
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Earth Science — A07

This report is based on information gathered from by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Earth Science 2000 syllabus is in its eleventh year of implementation. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954.html>. All references in this report relate to the 2000 Earth science syllabus.

Over the eleven years of the syllabus, a school may have accumulated a range of minor changes to its work program. If so, an amendment should be submitted. Refer to the work program requirements, review checklist and sample work program on the website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954.html>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across the range of standards.

Across the state, assessment instruments continue to provide students with a range of opportunities in field- and laboratory-based, theoretical and practical learning activities to demonstrate the standards relative to the Earth Science general objectives (pp. 5–8). In many instances, Extended investigations (EI) focus on the local environment allowing students to engage with and learn more about their local context. This continues to promote relevance to Earth Science.

On the whole, the mandatory requirements of the syllabus were satisfied by assessment design. However, the following issues were identified during verification:

- Evidence in folios of the “evaluating relevance” aspect of the Knowledge, conceptual understanding and application (KCUA) is inconsistent.
- Over the last few years there has been growing recognition of the need to ensure that students have more than one opportunity to engage with the “recognise the problem” and “plan investigations” aspects of working scientifically (WS).
- In some instances, the relevant short or extended investigation tasks have not provided opportunities for students to overtly demonstrate that they can recognise and identify investigation questions and plan scientific investigations.
- The match of written tests to the syllabus standards continues to improve. Further improvement is possible through the careful consideration of the qualifying terms in the standards when developing written tests.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

The application of the syllabus standards (pp. 31–33) was appropriate in most submissions. In a limited number of instances, the evidence provided to substantiate A standard work inconsistently reflected the discriminating elements of the syllabus standards for all three
criteria. Given appropriate application of the standards, judgments of levels of achievement uniformly matched with syllabus guidelines (pp. 37–38).

**Support**

Support materials for the Earth Science 2000 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- *Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards)*. This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- *Developing instrument-specific criteria sheets*. This demonstrates one approach to developing instrument-specific criteria sheets.

- Sample assessment tasks.

Specific new documents for development of work programs are:

- work program requirements
- work program review checklist
- sample work program.

To receive regular updates on support material, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Economics 2004 syllabus is in its seventh and final year of implementation. The Year 12 cohort of students in 2011 was the final group to exit using this syllabus. In 2011, the Economics 2010 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. Schools were required to submit work programs during 2011.

The 2010 syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11543.html>.

Assessment design

Across most assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing quality assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the 2004 syllabus (pp. 5–7).

The design of assessment instruments requiring research were characterised by the Inquiry approach (2004 syllabus, pp. 16–17). This is also relevant to Research assessment when implementing the 2010 syllabus (pp. 26–27). Using the Economics inquiry process (2010 syllabus, p. 17), the design of most research assessments should include:

- the establishment of a research question or economic problem
- the generation and/or collection of primary and/or secondary data/information
- independent collection of information/data from a variety of sources
- the sorting and analysis of information/data – examining relevance, validity and value
- synthesis of information/data
- development of research conclusions with justifications.

For each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards are drawn from the syllabus dimensions (2010 syllabus, pp. 3–5) and the relevant standards descriptors (2010 syllabus, pp. 31–32).

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools.

Most concerns about on-balance judgments were associated with the evidence within sample folios related to Criterion 2, Interpretation, and Criterion 3, Decision-making (2004 syllabus, pp. 70–71). The A standard in Criterion 2 includes constructing complex meanings, the critical use of economic ideas and concepts and the identification and explanation of interrelated causes, effects, trends and patterns. For Criterion 3, the A standard includes the critical selection and use of information from diverse sources and the use of established criteria to appraise the extent to which alternative ideas are appropriate, effective or satisfying. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the
qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each criterion. When making an on-balance judgment on the standard awarded, it is not necessary for students to have met every standard descriptor for a criterion (2004 syllabus, p. 69).

For the 2010 syllabus, the descriptors for each dimension are within the Standards matrix (pp. 31–32). The dimensions are Knowledge and understanding, Investigation, and Synthesis and evaluation.

Support

Support materials for the Economics 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11543.html>. These include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Highlighted syllabus standards. This information supports schools in implementing the assessment requirements of the syllabus. The advice supports school decision making about the approaches to assessment design and making judgments.

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For information about future workshops for Economics refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Karen Swift
State Review Panel Chair

John Langer
Senior Education Officer
Engineering Technology — A18

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Engineering Technology 2004 syllabus is in its last year of implementation. In 2012, both Year 11 and 12 students will be studying the Engineering Technology 2010 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11673.html>.

Assessment design

Schools have developed a diverse range of assessment instruments that are embedded in and relevant to local contexts across the state. The syllabus requires at least one in-depth project to be completed in the summative year and included in the verification submission. This technique offers students challenging opportunities that require an investigation and a demonstration of their ability to acquire and apply knowledge to solve a problem.

In-depth assessment projects provide students with the opportunity to clearly demonstrate their achievement in the Reasoning criterion. Hypothesis, synthesis and evaluation must be given adequate emphasis and the tasks suitably challenging to allow demonstration of the A and B standards.

Effective types of tasks require students to propose solutions to real-world engineering problems, include prototyping and testing solutions built in a workshop or laboratory, and result in the analysis and evaluation of a model. These extended reasoning tasks should be of a standard that allows students to achieve across the full range of standards and dimensions.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments that were made by the schools.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

Support

Support materials for the Engineering Technology 2010 syllabus available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11673.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
• Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

• Assessment instruments. These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their schools. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.

• *Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.* This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

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Tony Muller  
State Review Panel Chair

Roy Barnes  
Senior Education Officer
English — B35

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

2011 was the final year in which the English 2002 syllabus was offered. The English 2010 syllabus began general implementation with all Year 11 students in 2011. In 2012, all Year 12 students studying the Authority subject English will study the English 2010 syllabus. This syllabus is available the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703.html>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments viewed by the state review panel affirmed that good opportunities to demonstrate the general objectives of the course were provided when tasks had a:

- succinct and clearly defined task statement written in a manner that is accessible to students
- clear and realistic context, including, genre, audience, purpose, roles and relationships
- task that allows enough scope for the demonstration of the full range of standards
- standards matrix that maintains the language of the standards.

The document, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools* is a useful tool for teachers to evaluate and refine assessment instruments. This document is available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703.html>.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

The state review panel found evidence to support district review panels’ decisions of the match of the qualities of student work to the syllabus standards in most of the sample folios.

Support

Support materials for the English 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703.html>. These include:

- Sample work programs.
- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Sample assessment instruments and responses.

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Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Kerry Baumanis  Lyn Sherington
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
English Extension — B37

This report is based on information gathered in 2011 for the 2010 (trial) syllabus from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The English Extension (Literature) 2003 syllabus completed its final year of general implementation in 2011. The revised syllabus (English Extension 2010 syllabus) proceeded to open trial in 2011.

Schools intending to implement English Extension in 2012 must use the 2011 syllabus. No school will be able to record data using the 2003 or 2010 (trial) syllabuses after 2011.

All schools offering English Extension will need to submit a new work program for the 2012 cohort. Work program requirements and a review checklist are available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11689.html>.

Assessment design

The most effective assessment instruments are those that are explicitly framed in such a way as to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the exit standards (Section 5.5, Assessment techniques, of the syllabus).

Assessment packages must provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the three dimensions which describe the complex thinking that students use when working with literary texts and theoretical approaches in their study, and when responding to assessment.

The syllabus provides advice for preparing students appropriately for assessment instruments with a particular focus on the learning experiences required to engage with the syllabus dimensions and objectives (Section 3, Course organisation).

Assessment instrument 1: Reading and defences

Students must apply a theoretical approach to produce a reading of a literary text and an accompanying defence. The reading must include direct and indirect references to the selected text. The defence requires that students explain and justify how the chosen theoretical approach has allowed them to make meaning of the text in particular ways.

Assessment instrument 2: Complex transformation and its defence

When responding to this instrument, students must produce a complex transformation of a base text and a defence of this transformation. The complex transformation requires students to apply a theoretical approach or approaches to intervene in a text in order to offer readers an alternative position(s). The rewritten text must invite alternative and/or resistant readings other than those the base text seems to invite. Simply confirming (even by reversing) the text’s existing assumptions and values does not reposition the reader in a purposeful way. The defence must explain how the rewritten text realises the repositioning of readers. In the defence, students are required to focus on aspects of the text that were the launching pad for the transformation by identifying how textual features and language choices support or construct particular assumptions and values. The defence must explain how theoretical approaches were applied in order to reposition readers and evaluate how the rewritten text offers an alternative position(s).
Assessment instrument 3: Exploration and evaluation

Student responses to this instrument must take the form of an analytical exposition in the style of an academic paper. After selecting a complex literary text, students are required to develop a focus question for their theoretical exploration and evaluation of the selected text(s). Students must choose at least two theoretical approaches to apply to the text(s) and evaluate how effective these approaches have been in producing a close reading of the selected text(s). Students must be discerning when selecting texts and theoretical approaches to explore the focus question. There must be a clear link between the focus question and the analysis and evaluation of the texts and theories; students may need to revisit and refine their focus question as they develop their response.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Across the state, decisions about levels of achievement were appropriately made according to the syllabus information about determining exit levels of achievement. There was also evidence of the appropriate matching of student responses with the particular syllabus standards descriptors based on student responses in sample folios.

Support

Support materials for the English Extension 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11689.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

In 2012, resources to support the syllabus, including annotated sample student responses, will continue to be added to this website.

Syllabus implementation workshops will be delivered in early 2012 to support the implementation of the 2011 syllabus. Schools who were not involved in the open trial of the 2010 syllabus are particularly encouraged to attend. Information about registering for the workshops can be found at: <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

To receive regular updates on support material, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

Tony Hytch       Jo Genders
State Review Panel Chair   Senior Education Officer
Film, Television and New Media — B40

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Film, Television and New Media 2005 syllabus is in the sixth year of implementation. A number of schools submitted amendments to work programs to meet the needs of their students. Such amendments included:

- the inclusion of new media and its current use
- limiting the focus of the key concepts to those most suitable to the context, genre and assessment in the unit
- reviewing the syllabus and the “Details of the key concepts: features and learning experiences”, pp. 8–19
- ethical and copyright issues in the use and publication of recorded images.

Assessment design

By restricting the assessment of key concepts to one or two in each task, schools have provided opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards and the key concepts. Key concepts are integral to the task and would be embedded in the task.

When designing assessment consider the most suitable format and genre in Design, Production or Critique to best demonstrate the criterion for that task. In Design the information in the pre-production format should demonstrate explicit film language in relation to the key concept, context and task.

Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed. This document can be accessed on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html>. Advice on assessment in the key concepts is outlined in the syllabus Tables of conditions 1–5 (pp. 37–43).

The syllabus requires one extended written response for Critique, enabling students to be engaged in moving image-based formats in the second response. Section 4 of the syllabus, Course organisation explains each key concept including features and learning experiences that may assist students in their understanding and distinctions of each of these key concepts. Some of the suggested learning experiences could be developed into formative and summative assessment instruments.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence was found to support district review panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student work in sample folios to the syllabus standards in all districts.

The syllabus exit standards describe the characteristics of the general objectives and the qualifiers distinguish the standards from A–E. Instrument-specific criteria sheets should reflect the syllabus standards and include the key concepts being assessed. The syllabus standards are described as typical and a standard is awarded for each assessment item.
When assessing Critique, the context for production (e.g. institutional context or audience context: fan culture, popular culture) is a significant part of the criterion and would be stated on tasks and evident in all responses. If the product has been created by a group, then the individual student is assessed on the identifiable component they created, not the whole product; that is, there is no group mark. The instrument-specific criteria sheet must clearly identify what individual component(s) is assessed, and an individual’s contribution to a group production should be clearly identified so decisions made by schools can be supported by the moderation processes.

The individual’s contribution to a group production can be demonstrated in formal roles such as cinematographer, editor, sound technician or by completing a segment of the film (syllabus, p. 41). Time codes, or the overlaying of a student’s name as a title, are ways schools can clearly identify an individual student’s film segments.

A copy of the subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards) is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html>.

Support

Support materials for the Film, Television and New Media 2005 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Work program and work program amendment requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (**Highlighted standards**). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Sample assessment instruments: Design, Production and Critique.
- Sample instrument and student response at standards A and C: annotated sample that shows the match between the response and the awarded standard.

To receive regular updates on support material, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Keri Church    Susan Hollindale
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
French – B02

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The French 2008 syllabus is in the third year of implementation. Schools that now find that their work programs or assessment plans could be refined are able to submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Review panels found that assessment generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards.

Assessment instruments in all four macroskills need to cover a range of topics and text types and reflect the work program. Assessment conditions are to be clearly detailed on assessment instruments for students (Section 8.3 of the syllabus).

Listening and Reading instruments need to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate both dimensions, Knowing and understanding and Reasoning and responding, and particularly the aspects of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Using more than one text in an instrument, and giving students comparisons and choices to make, assists them to demonstrate reasoning and responding.

Listening

The length of texts chosen should be appropriate to the text type and assess comprehension, not memory. Providing too much contextual information for the task, or details in questions, can provide students with some of the answers and so prevent them from demonstrating comprehension. Listening texts should be spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus).

Reading

When choosing texts consider their authenticity, linguistic and cultural currency, and ensure that the references are up to date. Texts should be of sufficient length and linguistic complexity to enable students to demonstrate analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Questions that elicit information that is clearly stated in the text do not provide these opportunities; neither do multiple-choice and true-or-false questions.

When designing a Reading instrument, rather than formulating questions to match a chosen text, it is more effective to examine the standards, decide which aspects need to be demonstrated, then choose texts and formulate questions that will provide students with opportunities to do this.

Directing students to draw extensively from the text in their answers will assist them to provide well-constructed conclusions, well-substantiated decisions, detailed analysis and thorough evaluation.

Speaking and Writing tasks need to elicit a range of language and grammatical structures, allow students to express ideas and opinions on topics of relevance to them (Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the syllabus), and prompt students to produce spontaneous language.
Speaking tasks

All tasks require spontaneous language use in realistic situations (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus). Assessment instruments need to be open-ended enough to allow students to communicate clearly and effectively while demonstrating flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context (A standard).

Writing tasks

Students will write texts differing in length, purpose and style. These can include current text types such as emails, blogs and SMSs. Length depends on the text type, and students are only required to write one text of approximately 200 words by verification (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus).

Tasks that ask students to write with a broad rather than narrow focus on a topic prompt them to use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, cohesive devices and idiomatic expressions. For example, on the topic of health, students have better opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency if they can write about nutrition, exercise, a balanced lifestyle and substance abuse, than if they are restricted to the topic of smoking.

Where stimulus material is provided, regardless of the language, it should neither impede nor assist students in demonstrating their writing ability.

Application of standards

Evidence was found of the match of the qualities of student responses with syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

In awarding a particular standard, a student's response has to match the descriptors of that standard, though it may also match some aspects of the standard above and/or below. It is not always necessary for the student to have met each descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall (Section 8.5 of the syllabus).

Indicating on the instrument-specific criteria sheets the aspects that students have demonstrated in each skill assists teachers in making on-balance decisions about student responses.

The Highlighted interim criteria and standards assist in understanding the differentiations between the standards.

Writing

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A standard: the writer’s ideas and purposes are conveyed effectively with flexibility and originality. To convey meaning effectively, a high degree of accuracy would be demonstrated in spelling, punctuation and word order, and the register would be appropriate to the situation. Flexibility is demonstrated through the use of a wide range of vocabulary and grammar. This is characterised by the use of the first and third persons, singular and plural, various tenses (e.g. past, present and future), different moods (e.g. conditional and subjunctive), differing adjectives and adverbs, a range of cohesive devices. Originality is observed when students use language that is not restricted to routine phrases learned in class.
A standard: an understanding and response to cultural contexts is clearly evident. If the context and topic of the writing elicits it, students may be able to include reference to cultural issues, perhaps comparing opinions or practices in Australia and the target language country. Using register that is appropriate to the situation and language that matches the audience and adheres consistently to the conventions of the text type also, makes the understanding and response to cultural contexts clearly evident.

**Speaking**

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A and B standards have the same descriptor pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker indicating that there is no difference in these aspects between the two standards. Other aspects differentiate between A and B standards, e.g. a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and a range of cohesive devices.

At C standard, spoken communication relies on prompts and cues, with the student basically answering questions but not elaborating further and the teacher having to rephrase or suggest words that enable the student to continue the conversation. At B standard, conversation is generally sustained, meaning that in addition to being able to answer questions, students can continue the conversation or topic of discussion. At A standard, conversation is initiated and sustained, the student moving the topic along, introducing other elements, maybe changing the direction of the conversation or the topic itself, and at times even asking the teacher about their opinions of the topics being discussed.

The requirements for verification folios are found in Section 8.9 of the syllabus. The Speaking performance to be used as a sample for confirmation of standards is to be a teacher-student performance (Section 8.9.1 of the syllabus).

**Support**

Support materials for the syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4908.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Sample assessment instruments and responses are periodically placed on the QSA website. Panel training will be conducted in 2012.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

This is the fourth year of implementation of the Geography 2007 Syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design matched the recommendations for the techniques as described in the syllabus (pp. 68–70). Advice more specific to each technique has been provided.

Short-response tests

Short-response tests are the most appropriate technique to assess the Knowledge criterion. It is most important that these tests enable students to provide evidence to match the syllabus standards.

Short-response tests that best facilitated this had the following qualities:
- items relevant to each key question in the unit
- coverage of most of the key ideas in the unit as described in the syllabus
- a number of paragraph-length responses that showed a depth of knowledge with details relating to a particular case study
- very little or no choice in the questions so that students could demonstrate comprehensive, not selective, knowledge
- limited single-word, multi-choice and single-line answers in these tests so that students were able to demonstrate thorough knowledge
- spatial knowledge that was linked to the case studies undertaken in the units
- spatial questions that included recall of places and patterns on maps at local and national scales, not just at a global scale
- written descriptions of spatial patterns e.g. “Describe the pattern of annual rainfall in Australia”.

Data response tests

Effective data response tests had the following qualities:
- assessment of analytical processes and/or decision making processes only
- responses that were in-depth and paragraph length
- data such as images, maps, graphs and statistics with limited use of text.

Practical exercises

An improvement in the manipulation of data in this technique was evident. The best examples of this technique had the following qualities:
- manipulated data and produced choropleth maps, scattergraphs and used correlation coefficients
- followed conventions in the presentation of graphs and maps including the use of borders, ruler-dawn legends, titles and acknowledging sources.
Stimulus response essays

The quality of stimulus in stimulus response essays has provided students with effective assessment opportunities. Where this was evident:

- stimulus was manageable, easy to read and included mostly graphs, diagrams, maps and statistics with little text material
- the essay question had a section that was based on analytical processes and another section based on decision-making processes.

Reports

When designing this technique consideration of which units make collection of primary data by students easier to undertake is important. Catchments and Biodiversity for example, provide a significant opportunity for the collection of primary data.

The most effective reports had the following qualities:

- primary data collection was based on local field work not collection of statistics
- the collected data was explained so analysis was authentic and not extracted from other sources
- decision making was linked to the analysis and based on local, small-scale alternatives, not tasks that governments would grapple with for years
- tasks enabled students to work within the syllabus requirements and conditions for reports (refer to Section 8.5 of the syllabus, p. 70).

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence presented through the moderation process in the past year indicates that schools are making informed decisions about the match between the qualities in student responses and the standards descriptors in the syllabus.

The few concerns about application of standards were associated with the following:

- Criterion 1, Knowledge at B and C standards. At B standard geographical and spatial information should be detailed, accurate and relevant whereas C standard requires basic, accurate and relevant coverage.
- Criterion 2, Analytical processes, identification and explanation of relationships at B and C standards. At B standard simple and complex relationships should be identified and explained whereas C standard requires only simple relationships to be explained.
- Criterion 4, Research and communication at A and B standards. A standard requires clear and concise expression and accurate use of geographic conventions while B standard requires clear expression and appropriate use of geographic conventions.

Support

Support materials for the Geography 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html>. These include:

- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
Additional support materials for the Geography 2008 syllabus include:

- data response tests
- reports
- stimulus response essays
- geographic conventions
- sample assessment instruments
- sample instruments and responses.

To receive updates on support materials, subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the Memo subscriptions service available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Jo MacDonald                      Jackie Dunk
State Review Panel Chair          Senior Education Officer
German – B03

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The German 2008 syllabus is in the third year of implementation. Schools that now find that their work programs or assessment plans could be refined are able to submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Review panels found that assessment generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards.

Assessment instruments in all four macroskills need to cover a range of topics and text types and reflect the work program. Assessment conditions are to be clearly detailed on assessment instruments for students (Section 8.3 of the syllabus).

Listening and Reading instruments need to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate both dimensions, knowing and understanding and reasoning and responding, and particularly the aspects of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Using more than one text in an instrument, and giving students comparisons and choices to make, assists them to demonstrate reasoning and responding.

Listening

The length of texts chosen should be appropriate to the text type and assess comprehension, not memory. Providing too much contextual information for the task, or details in questions, can provide students with some of the answers and so prevent them from demonstrating comprehension. Listening texts should be spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus).

Reading

When choosing texts consider their authenticity, linguistic and cultural currency, and ensure that the references are up to date. Texts should be of sufficient length and linguistic complexity to enable students to demonstrate analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Questions that elicit information that is clearly stated in the text do not provide these opportunities; neither do multiple-choice and true-or-false questions.

When designing a Reading instrument, rather than formulating questions to match a chosen text, it is more effective to examine the standards, decide which aspects need to be demonstrated, then choose texts and formulate questions that will provide students with opportunities to do this.

Directing students to draw extensively from the text in their answers will assist them to provide well-constructed conclusions, well-substantiated decisions, detailed analysis and thorough evaluation.

Speaking and Writing tasks need to elicit a range of language and grammatical structures, allow students to express ideas and opinions on topics of relevance to them (Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the syllabus), and prompt students to produce spontaneous language.
Speaking tasks

All tasks require spontaneous language use in realistic situations (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus). Assessment instruments need to be open-ended enough to allow students to communicate clearly and effectively while demonstrating flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context (A standard).

Writing tasks

Students will write texts differing in length, purpose and style. These can include current text types such as emails, blogs and SMSs. Length depends on the text type, and students are only required to write one text of approximately 200 words by verification (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus).

Tasks that ask students to write with a broad rather than narrow focus on a topic prompt them to use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, cohesive devices and idiomatic expressions. For example, on the topic of health, students have better opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency if they can write about nutrition, exercise, a balanced lifestyle and substance abuse, than if they are restricted to the topic of smoking.

Where stimulus material is provided, regardless of the language, it should neither impede nor assist students in demonstrating their writing ability.

Application of standards

Evidence was found of the match of the qualities of student responses with syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

In awarding a particular standard, a student’s response has to match the descriptors of that standard, though it may also match some aspects of the standard above and/or below. It is not always necessary for the student to have met each descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall (Section 8.5 of the syllabus).

Indicating on the instrument-specific criteria sheets the aspects that students have demonstrated in each skill assists teachers in making on-balance decisions about student responses.

Writing

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A standard: the writer’s ideas and purposes are conveyed effectively with flexibility and originality. To convey meaning effectively, a high degree of accuracy would be demonstrated in spelling, punctuation and word order, and the register would be appropriate to the situation. Flexibility is demonstrated through the use of a wide range of vocabulary and grammar. This is characterised by the use of the first and third persons, singular and plural, various tenses (e.g. past, present and future), different moods (e.g. conditional and subjunctive), differing adjectives and adverbs, and a range of cohesive devices. Originality is observed when students use language that is not restricted to routine phrases learned in class.

A standard: an understanding and response to cultural contexts is clearly evident. If the context and topic of the writing elicits it, students may be able to include reference to cultural issues, perhaps comparing opinions or practices in Australia and the target...
language country. Using register that is *appropriate to the situation* and language that matches the audience and *adheres consistently to the conventions of the text type* also, makes the understanding and response to cultural contexts *clearly evident*.

**Speaking**

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards. 

*A and B standards* have the same descriptor *pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker* indicating that there is no difference in these aspects between the two standards. Other aspects differentiate between *A* and *B* standards, e.g. a *wide range of vocabulary and grammar and a range of cohesive devices*.

At *C standard*, *spoken communication relies on prompts and cues*, with the student basically answering questions but not elaborating further and the teacher having to rephrase or suggest words that enable the student to continue the conversation. At *B standard*, *conversation is generally sustained*, meaning that in addition to being able to answer questions, students can continue the conversation or topic of discussion. At *A standard*, *conversation is initiated and sustained*, the student moving the topic along, introducing other elements, maybe changing the direction of the conversation or the topic itself, and at times even asking the teacher about their opinions of the topics being discussed.

The requirements for verification folios are found in Section 8.9 of the syllabus. The Speaking performance to be used as a sample for confirmation of standards is to be a *teacher-student performance* (Section 8.9.1 of the syllabus).

**Support**

Support materials for the syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool*. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- *Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards)*. This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Sample assessment instruments and responses are periodically placed on the QSA website. Panel training will be conducted in 2012.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

Dr Helen Nicolson Setz  Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Graphics — A13

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Graphics 2007 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation. The syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2153.html>.

Assessment design

When designing a course of study, the emphasis of student work should be directed towards creating graphical communication for an identified target audience. The contextual nature of the curriculum provides opportunities for students to experience industry-related learning and involves students in the process of collecting, investigating, analysing, synthesising and evaluating data and imagery relating to graphical representations and presentations.

Evidence of the mandatory topics: Constructions and plane geometrical drawing, Orthogonal projection, Developments, Pictorials, Shadows, and Reflections should be clearly displayed in a folio of summative student work.

Assessment design should ensure that context-based folio tasks provide valid opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives. Context-based folios must meet the syllabus requirements in Section 7.6.4, p. 28. The primary focus of a context-based folio should be on using the implementation model to plan, refine and produce a set of 2D and 3D graphical representations for a specified target audience. They provide students with opportunities to undertake interesting and rewarding simulated real-world learning experiences. Two context-based folios are required in Year 12.

Each student’s final set of graphical representations should be in the mode required by the target audience. For example, if an animation were developed for a particular target audience, then the evidence presented should include the electronic file of the final animation.

Criteria and standards used on instrument-specific criteria sheets should be drawn from the standards descriptors associated with the exit criteria from the syllabus (Section 7.9, p. 31). Not all elements from the exit matrix will necessarily be covered in each assessment task, but should be clearly identifiable across the program of summative assessment.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Across the state, decisions about levels of achievement were appropriately made according to the syllabus information about determining exit levels of achievement. There was also evidence of the appropriate matching of student responses with the particular syllabus standards descriptors based on student responses in sample folios.

Where evidence did not substantiate school judgments of the match of qualities with descriptors, it was commonly related to the aspects of the Reasoning criterion associated with the planning, analysis, evaluation and refinement of graphical representations. Typically this issue was identified in the student responses to context-based folios where
there was an over-emphasis on the effective application of 2D and 3D graphical procedures, and rigorous application of Australian standards to a specified set of drawings with insufficient evidence of the planning, analysis and evaluation of graphical representations in relation to the needs of the target audience.

Support

Support materials for the Graphics 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2153.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Sample assessment instruments.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their schools. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.

- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Wayne Van Den Bos
State Review Panel Chair

Roy Barnes
Senior Education Officer
Health Education — A19

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Health Education 2004 syllabus is in its final year of implementation with the current Year 12 students being the final cohort to exit using this syllabus. The revised Health Education 2010 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students in 2011. The first cohort of Year 12 students to exit using this syllabus will be in 2012.

Assessment design

The most effective assessment instruments were those that were relevant to the community in which they were to be implemented and based on current, up-to-date health issues that were supported by research and/or data. Instruments that required students to evaluate ideas and strategies, and formulate responses that address social injustice in a specific aspect of the health issue enabled students to demonstrate responses across the full range of the syllabus standards.

When designing assessment instruments, it is important that consideration be given to depth rather breadth of a health issue. It has been observed that tasks which are too broad and general do not provide students with enough specific direction for effective synthesis and evaluation. A more targeted approach to a specific element of a health issue allows students to provide thorough evaluation and formulate well-reasoned responses.

Tasks that specifically target the Synthesis and evaluation criterion, requiring responses that encompass one or two Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion Action Areas are more effective at allowing students to demonstrate the objectives in all three criteria simultaneously (Section 3.2.4 of the syllabus). These tasks allow students to achieve across all standards, whilst eliciting responses that are achievable within the work requirements and time frame.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

The state panel found evidence to match the qualities of student work to the syllabus standards in most of the sample folios. The few concerns with on-balance judgments were associated with the application of the Synthesis and evaluation criterion, specifically around the complexity of relationships. It was found that in some cases there was a mismatch of the evidence with the standards at a Very High Level of Achievement with the responses lacking evidence of thoroughly evaluated ideas and strategies, and formulation of well-reasoned responses in the context of complex relationships in health issues.

Support

Support materials for the Health Education 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11622.html>. These include:
Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

Assessment program audit tool. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

Sample assessment tasks.
Sample work program.
Work program review requirements and checklist.
Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the Memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

For information about future workshops for Health Education refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Pam Ruddell Maree Peppin
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Home Economics — A25

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

This was the final year for Year 12 students studying the Home Economics 2001 syllabus. The Home Economics 2010 syllabus has been used for the first time with Year 11 students this year. The majority of work programs have been approved or are in the approval process. Some work programs that initially were not approved involved the:

- assessment program not meeting verification requirements
- outline of intended student learning and learning experiences not supporting assessment techniques and objectives or not demonstrating sufficient scope and depth aligned with the suggested issues and design challenges.

Schools may submit work program amendments; however, before amending, the complete program of intended learning and assessment should be considered.


Assessment design

Assessment instruments generally provided opportunities for students to respond to the full range of syllabus standards.

Opportunity was provided for students to demonstrate the full range of standards in the Knowledge and understanding criterion, including “thorough understanding” when instruments required students to explain and apply the key concepts rather than to just find and copy information. This was evident in written tests and extended written responses in addressing both research and practical performance tasks.

Effective assessment instruments incorporating Reasoning processes allow for opportunities for students to research an issue. An issue is a matter which has particular importance or significance to the wellbeing of individuals or families and should be clearly framed and presented as a statement followed by a defined task. Effective research tasks ask students to conduct research from sources, analyse information to develop arguments and draw conclusions and/or make recommendations about the issue.

Assessment instruments using issues that are current and relevant to the students and their region provide the best opportunities. Issues should not be so complex that students cannot develop logically reasoned arguments and sustain them with evidence within the word limit suggested by the syllabus (pp. 55–56). Conversely, tasks that are too narrow will not provide sufficient opportunity for students to meet the full range of exit standards. Some topics used are not issues but instead ask for opinions, stereotypes or value judgments which do not allow students to demonstrate the objectives and standards.

Effective assessment instruments provide issues rather than requiring students to develop their own. Instruments may give choices of issues and are successful when there are sufficient resources available for each issue.

Practical performance design challenges that require students to demonstrate skills, justify decisions and evaluate the process provided sufficient opportunities rather than those requiring students to produce a simple product. Effective design challenges focused on the
skills involved in producing products to enhance the wellbeing of individuals and their families rather than discussing menus for restaurants or products from food suppliers. Assessment instruments that assess more than one criterion have instrument-specific criteria sheets that include all relevant syllabus standard descriptors for each of the criteria being assessed.

**Application of standards**

When making judgments it is important to ensure that the evidence in the student response matches the standards awarded.

The A descriptor for Reasoning processes includes “the student communicates effectively using accepted language and referencing conventions” (Section 8.9 of the syllabus, p.62) from a range of sources. Evidence of this aspect of the descriptor can include reference lists using appropriate formats rather than a bibliography, as well as valid, relevant and current data. American data, especially nutritional data, is usually not relevant to the Australian issues presented. Relevant appendices contain collated statistics or primary data gathered by the student to support their arguments rather than copies of articles used as reference material.

In Practical performance, effective process journals included evidence of the product clearly identified, justified decisions, effective planning and organising, as well as evaluation and recommendations matched to the standards. Those that were simply “scrapbooking” pictures and recipes did not provide evidence of the match to standards. Evaluations or reflections need to address the process, planning, product and recommendations to match the A–E standard descriptors. An evaluation completed on a set template may not provide the opportunity for students to match the A and B standard descriptors.

The A standard in Practical performance requires students to perform a comprehensive range of practical skills. Students need to perform, for example, food preparation skills, not just food assembly when matching the student response to the standards.

**Support**

The 2010 Home Economics syllabus and support materials are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11788.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers to design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool*. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- *Work program requirements and work program review checklist*.
- *Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards)*. This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Annotated samples of assessment instruments and sample student responses will be available on the website in 2012.

In 2011, the 2010 Home Economics syllabus was supported by assessment workshops for teachers across the state. This will be followed by panel training in 2012.
To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Meredith Gleadhill
State Review Panel Chair

Shauna Bouel
Senior Education Officer
Hospitality Studies — A22

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Hospitality Studies 2009 syllabus is in the second year of implementation. Schools that may wish to make changes to their work programs may submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8691.html>.

Assessment design

Schools’ assessment instruments are generally effective and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards. Information from the moderation processes of monitoring, verification and comparability indicates the following areas for improvement in assessment instrument development.

To provide opportunities across the full range of standards, assessment instruments for Knowledge and understanding should provide the opportunities for students to demonstrate recognition, description, explanation of key ideas, principles and concepts across the topic area stated in the school’s approved work program. To allow for this, the emphasis in Year 12 instruments should be on paragraph responses (syllabus, p. 48).

Effective instruments provide opportunities to apply a range of concepts, key ideas and principles relevant to the hospitality industry. Consideration should be given to the selection of a range of relevant subject matter to ensure that it covers more than one focus area: it is unlikely that the selection of only one or two items from the subject matter suggestions will allow students to develop sufficient understanding and skills to be able to meet the general objectives and criteria within the topic area (syllabus, p. 17).

Reasoning refers to the ability to select and analyse information to expound and communicate a viewpoint through developing arguments, drawing conclusions and making recommendations on issues relevant to the hospitality industry.

Assessment instruments should provide students with the opportunity to respond to hospitality issues that allow for:

- analysis of data
- development of arguments supported by evidence to draw conclusions and make recommendations
- communication in appropriate forms, using accepted language and referencing conventions.

Practical performance refers to the ability to make and justify decisions, and perform skills in the planning, implementation and delivery of quality products and services in a hospitality industry context. Students are required to evaluate and reflect planning, implementation and outcomes of the hospitality event or function. Practical performance tasks should increase in complexity towards the end of the course.

The general objective Practical performance indicates that students should perform practical skills and produce products and services while adhering to workplace health and safety practice (syllabus, p. 4). When developing assessment instruments, consideration should be given to the appropriate workplace health and safety relevant to the hospitality task or context. Students would then demonstrate this through the planning and
implementation of the task and wearing appropriate footwear, or handling certain foods in a
safe and hygienic manner.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

It is noted that some schools are not using the standards of the current syllabus to make judgments on student work. Schools are advised to ensure that the standards of the syllabus (p. 57) are used to make judgments about student responses.

For each assessment instrument, schools should develop instrument-specific criteria drawn from the syllabus standards. Syllabus standards descriptors should not be modified other than to include the context of the hospitality event, e.g. High tea or Coffee shop.

The application of standards was, in the main, appropriate. However, in the Reasoning criterion, to demonstrate analysis of information from a wide range of sources and development of arguments, responses should be supported by documented evidence and draw conclusions (syllabus, p. 4). Referencing of sources is an essential part of this criterion. Whilst the communication is an important component, judgments about student responses should be made on-balance and no aspect of the criterion should be given more emphasis than another.

In Practical performance, evidence provided to support the justification of decisions should address all plans, products and services that are produced and should be based on the dimensions of the task that were identified in the initial stages of planning.

Video/DVD evidence needs to clearly demonstrate the match between the qualities in the student response and the standards descriptors of the syllabus. The accompanying commentary should identify the specific aspects of the Practical performance that match the A standard or C standard descriptors. Specific reference to the practical skills being demonstrated and the high-quality product and/or services being produced should be included to indicate how the school has made judgments about this criterion.

**Support**

Support materials for the Hospitality Studies 2009 syllabus are available from the subject page on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8691.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- *Sample assessment instruments*. These instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment. These qualities are outlined with annotations. Sample assessment instruments are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their school contexts.
- *Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12 Moderation and reviewing* (DVD): this resource provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance. It is available on the on the website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2138.html>.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.  .
QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

For information about future workshops for Hospitality Studies refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Penny Braithwaite  Beryl McLachlan
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Indonesian — B06

This report is based on information gathered from districts and schools across the state.

Syllabus

The Indonesian 2008 syllabus is in its third year of implementation. Schools who wish to make changes to their work programs or assessment plans may submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html>.

Assessment design

Assessment design is informed by the general objectives, standards descriptors and requirements of the 2008 syllabus. The assessment plan in a school’s work program assists the school in ensuring that students have the opportunity to demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types by exit (syllabus, pp. 47–49). Assessment instruments are generally providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives. If a problem arises, the effectiveness of assessment can be enhanced by incorporating the qualities that are to be demonstrated in the design of the instrument.

Listening and Reading

The most effective listening and reading assessment instruments contain texts and questions and/or tasks that allow students to analyse and evaluate information in the text (also demonstrating knowledge and understanding of language features) to draw conclusions and make decisions, and to do so across the range of standards. Effective questions and tasks address both dimensions, do not reveal information from the text nor provide clues to responses to other questions, and require students to engage with and respond to the text without any prior knowledge of information or ideas. Further advice on assessment design is provided in the document: Writing questions for comprehension assessment instruments on the Indonesian subject page on the website.

Speaking and Writing

The most effective speaking and writing assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to respond with a broad rather than a narrow focus on topics studied in class, allowing for the demonstration of a range of topics and text types, as well as the complete range of standards. Speaking tasks should allow for spontaneous language use in realistic situations. Teacher input should allow for student conversation to be initiated and sustained (and) spoken communication (that) demonstrates flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context. Open-ended questions can provide the opportunity to demonstrate spontaneity and all aspects of the standards.

Application of standards

The application of standards to sample student responses for comprehension tasks has been, in general, appropriate. However, judgments in the productive skills have not
consistently matched responses to the standards. In particular, speaking samples have provided evidence of a range of standards descriptors.

When making judgments about speaking, only the student responses can be used as evidence. Teacher input to a conversation, and the student’s ability to comprehend the teacher input, may be crucial to the conversation, but the evidence of the standard of the student response comes from the student’s spoken communication. Spontaneous student responses provide the evidence relevant to the creating and responding dimension, particularly at the A and B standards.

When applying standards to speaking and writing responses, an on-balance judgment should be made. Making an on-balance judgment requires that student work is matched, on-balance, to the standards descriptors. The standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the student responses match the syllabus descriptors overall. Refer to Section 8.5 of the syllabus and the highlighted interim criteria and standards document on the subject page of the QSA website for further information.

**Support**

Support materials for the Indonesian 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html). These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments.* This document helps teacher’s design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.* This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).* This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- *Assessment instruments.* These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their school settings. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.
- *Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.* This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html).

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the Memo subscriptions service. This is available at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act).

Kath Symmons                    Therese Powers
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
Information Processing and Technology — A 16

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Information Processing and Technology (IPT) 2004 syllabus is in its seventh and final year of implementation. In 2011, the Year 12 cohort of students was the final group to exit using this syllabus.

In 2011, the IPT 2010 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. Schools were required to submit work programs during 2011. The IPT 2010 syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11678.html>.

Assessment design

Across most assessment packages, the opportunity to apply the design–develop–evaluate (DDE) cycle approach to problem solving was evident. The use of this approach in the design of extended written tasks and projects allows students to develop responses that are analytical and evaluative. As a result, students had opportunities to demonstrate their abilities across the range of syllabus standards within the 2004 syllabus (pp. 36–37).

With the implementation of the 2010 syllabus, the use of a DDE cycle to determine solutions is fundamental (p. 19). It is important to consider this when designing a product assessment. For major projects, as a type of product assessment, all stages of the software development cycle, the information development cycle, or a combination of the two should be demonstrated (2010 syllabus, p. 35).

The software development cycle involves problem identification, solution specification, selection and application of appropriate design methods, implementation of the design, and testing for errors and evaluation of the product and process. The information system development cycle involves identification, conceptualisation, formalisation, implementation, testing and evaluation. By considering this in the design of a product assessment, students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their abilities in each of the dimensions of the 2010 syllabus (pp. 39–40).

For each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards are drawn from the syllabus dimensions (2010 syllabus, pp. 2–3) and the relevant standards descriptors (2010 syllabus, pp. 39–40).

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools.

The few concerns with on-balance judgments were associated with the evidence within sample folios related to Criterion 2, Research and development (2004 syllabus, pp.36–37). For this criterion, the A standard includes analysing problems from multiple perspectives, showing initiative in designing and developing effective, efficient and elegant solutions to a
range of unrehearsed and complex problems, evaluation with detailed justification and making informed judgments. Communication is both clear and cohesive.

When making an on-balance judgment on the standard awarded, it is not necessary for students to have met every standards descriptor for a criterion (2004 syllabus, p.37).

For the 2010 syllabus, the descriptors for each dimension are within the standards matrix (pp. 39–40). The dimensions are Knowledge and application, Analysis and synthesis, and Evaluation and communication.

Support

Support materials for the IPT 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11678.html>. These include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teacher’s design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This service is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

For information about future workshops for Information Processing and Technology refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Ross Jardine    John Langer
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Information Technology Systems — A26

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Information Technology Systems 2006 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. Schools that may wish to make changes to their work programs may submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2157.html>.

Assessment design

The samples reviewed generally provided sufficient scope for students to demonstrate a range of standards across the general objectives. There were some instances where assessment instruments assessing the Problem-solving dimension did not always provide opportunities for students to demonstrate an A or B standard in the evaluation aspect. Well-designed tasks require justification rather than identification, classification and description of issues, e.g. “evaluates contexts, inputs, processes and products, with justification and against appropriate criteria” (Standard B descriptor, syllabus, p. 44).

Effective assessment design includes:

- designing instruments that allow teachers to validly assess the responses of individual students and not apply a judgment of the group product and processes to all individuals (Section 7.5 of the syllabus)
- instrument-specific criteria sheets that are contextualised and directly align to the syllabus standards descriptors
- clear articulation of the requirements in the Problem-solving dimension to demonstrate all aspects of the design, develop and evaluate (DDE) cycle and to conduct the evaluation phase using contexts, inputs, processes and products (Section 7.8 of the syllabus)
- providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the language and technical detail appropriate to the information technology context through assessment tasks that include elements from the Theory and techniques thread
- providing opportunities for students to develop project and team management skills (Section 6.3 of the syllabus)
- considering the organisation of assessment instruments in allowing students to carry out the design phase of a project prior to the creation/synthesis of the product, e.g. submitting the design proposal prior to the commencement of the synthesis phase
- considering new and interesting ways in which extended writing tasks could be developed, e.g. television documentary.

Application of standards

Evidence was found to support the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.
When awarding an exit level of achievement, schools must apply the table “Awarding exit levels of achievement” which indicates the minimum combination of standards across the criteria for each level (Section 7.9 of the amended February 2010 syllabus).

Support

Support materials for the Information Technology Systems 2006 amended February 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2157.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Panel training will be conducted in 2012 focusing on the work program approval process for the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

For information about syllabus workshops for the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

QSA memos provide important information. These can be received through memo subscriptions service at <https://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Col Thompson
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Italian – B04

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Italian 2008 syllabus is in the third year of implementation. Schools that now find that their work programs or assessment plans could be refined may submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Review panels found that assessment generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards.

Assessment instruments in all four macroskills need to cover a range of topics and text types and reflect the work program. Assessment conditions are to be clearly detailed on assessment instruments for students (Section 8.3 of the syllabus).

Listening and Reading instruments need to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate both dimensions, Knowing and understanding, and Reasoning and responding, and particularly the aspects of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Using more than one text in an instrument, and giving students comparisons and choices to make, assists them to demonstrate reasoning and responding.

Listening

The length of texts chosen should be appropriate to the text type and assess comprehension, not memory. Providing too much contextual information for the task, or details in questions, can provide students with some of the answers and so prevent them from demonstrating comprehension. Listening texts should be spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus).

Reading

When choosing texts consider their authenticity, linguistic and cultural currency, and ensure that the references are up to date. Texts should be of sufficient length and linguistic complexity to enable students to demonstrate analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions. Questions that elicit information that is clearly stated in the text do not provide these opportunities; neither do multiple-choice and true-or-false questions.

When designing a Reading instrument, rather than formulating questions to match a chosen text, it is more effective to examine the standards, decide which aspects need to be demonstrated, then choose texts and formulate questions that will provide students with opportunities to do this.

Directing students to draw extensively from the text in their answers will assist them to provide well-constructed conclusions, well-substantiated decisions, detailed analysis and thorough evaluation.

Speaking and Writing tasks need to elicit a range of language and grammatical structures, allow students to express ideas and opinions on topics of relevance to them (Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the syllabus), and prompt students to produce spontaneous language.
Speaking tasks

All tasks require spontaneous language use in realistic situations (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus). Assessment instruments need to be open-ended enough to allow students to communicate clearly and effectively while demonstrating flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context (Standard A).

Writing tasks

Students will write texts differing in length, purpose and style. These can include current text types such as emails, blogs and SMSs. Length depends on the text type, and students are only required to write one text of approximately 200 words by verification (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus).

Tasks that ask students to write with a broad rather than narrow focus on a topic prompt them to use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, cohesive devices and idiomatic expressions. For example, on the topic of health, students have better opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency if they can write about nutrition, exercise, a balanced lifestyle and substance abuse, than if they are restricted to the topic of smoking.

Where stimulus material is provided, regardless of the language, it should neither impede nor assist students in demonstrating their writing ability.

Application of standards

Evidence was found of the match of the qualities of student responses with syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

In awarding a particular standard, a student's response has to match the descriptors of that standard, though it may also match some aspects of the standard above and/or below. It is not always necessary for the student to have met each descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall (Section 8.5 of the syllabus).

Indicating on the instrument-specific criteria sheets the aspects that students have demonstrated in each skill assists teachers in making on-balance decisions about student responses.

The Highlighted interim criteria and standards assist in understanding the differentiations between the standards.

Writing

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A standard: the writer’s ideas and purposes are conveyed effectively with flexibility and originality. To convey meaning effectively, a high degree of accuracy would be demonstrated in spelling, punctuation and word order, and the register would be appropriate to the situation. Flexibility is demonstrated through the use of a wide range of vocabulary and grammar. This is characterised by the use of the first and third persons, singular and plural, various tenses (e.g. past, present and future), different moods (e.g. conditional and subjunctive), differing adjectives and adverbs, a range of cohesive devices. Originality is observed when students use language that is not restricted to routine phrases learned in class.
A standard: an understanding and response to cultural contexts is clearly evident. If the context and topic of the writing elicits it, students may be able to include reference to cultural issues, perhaps comparing opinions or practices in Australia and the target language country. Using register that is appropriate to the situation and language that matches the audience and adheres consistently to the conventions of the text type also makes the understanding and response to cultural contexts clearly evident.

**Speaking**

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A and B standards have the same descriptor pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker indicating that there is no difference in these aspects between the two standards. Other aspects differentiate between A and B standards, e.g., a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and a range of cohesive devices.

At C standard, spoken communication relies on prompts and cues, with the student basically answering questions but not elaborating further and the teacher having to rephrase or suggest words that enable the student to continue the conversation. At B standard, conversation is generally sustained, meaning that in addition to being able to answer questions, students can continue the conversation or topic of discussion. At A standard conversation is initiated and sustained, the student moving the topic along, introducing other elements, maybe changing the direction of the conversation or the topic itself, and at times even asking the teacher about their opinions of the topics being discussed.

The requirements for verification folios are found in Section 8.9 of the syllabus. The Speaking performance to be used as a sample for confirmation of standards is to be a teacher-student performance (Section 8.9.1 of the syllabus).

**Support**

Support materials for the syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4912.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Sample assessment instruments and responses are periodically placed on the QSA website. Panel training will be conducted in 2012.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Japanese 2008 syllabus is in its third year of implementation. The syllabus is available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments are generally providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives and cover the mandatory four themes. Where issues arise, the effectiveness of assessment can be enhanced by incorporating the qualities that are to be demonstrated in the design of the instrument. This is sometimes evident in writing and speaking tasks, and when differentiating complexity of tasks for composite classes.

For example, the balance of word-processed and hand-written tasks in a folio of student responses can be determined by the requirement for sufficient evidence to match to the standards. Word-processed and hand-written responses may be used as long as there is evidence in the folio that allows a judgment to be made about “kanji (being) correctly formed and appropriately used” (syllabus, p.48).

Speaking tasks

Speaking tasks should allow for “spontaneous language use in realistic situations”. Teacher input should allow for student conversation to be “initiated and sustained [and] spoken communication [that] demonstrates flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context” (syllabus, p. 49). Open-ended questions can provide the opportunity to demonstrate spontaneity and all aspects of the standards.

Composite classes

Comprehension tasks for the assessment of students in composite classes need to be designed to allow the differences between Year 11 and Year 12 student understanding of, and capacity to use, language to be demonstrated. Both year levels should not complete the same test instrument without considering the complexity of the tasks and the language used in the chosen texts. Both the task and the language in the texts should be appropriate to each cohort’s learning experiences.

Productive tasks for composite classes may be similar in design but student responses for Years 11 and 12 would be different. Responses would be relative to the stage of the course and the learning experiences for each of the cohorts. For both groups of students the instrument-specific criteria and standards would be drawn from the syllabus exit criteria.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

The application of standards to sample student responses for comprehension tasks has been, in general, appropriate. However, judgments in the productive skills have not demonstrated consistent matching of responses with standards. In particular, speaking samples have provided evidence of a range of standards descriptors.
When making judgments about speaking, only the student responses can be used as evidence. Teacher input to a conversation, and the student’s ability to comprehend the teacher input, may be crucial to the conversation, but the evidence of the standard of the student response comes from the student’s spoken communication. Spontaneous student responses provide the evidence relevant to the creating and responding dimension, particularly at the A and B standards.

Support

Support materials for the Japanese 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- **Assessment instruments.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their school settings. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.
- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Greg Dabelstein
State Review Panel Chair

Therese Powers
Senior Education Officer
Legal Studies — B21

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Legal Studies 2007 syllabus is in the fourth year of general implementation. The syllabus is available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html>.

Assessment design

Assessment programs continue to include challenging assessment instruments providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in the general objectives across a range of standards. Effective assessment opportunities have been provided which allow students to engage in critical analysis and problem solving in order to develop an understanding of legal issues in society.

Students undertake investigations of significant legal issues that face Australian society. It is important that the focus be on the legal issues, positions and rights and responsibilities rather than on the social aspects of the issue. Using the Understandings in the “Sections of study” in the syllabus to plan teaching and learning will help to focus on the legal understandings. Additionally, ensuring assessment instruments relate directly to the general objectives of the syllabus (pp. 3–5) will provide a legal focus for student responses.

When designing assessment instruments it is important that consideration be given to depth rather than breadth of a topic. Tasks that are too broad and general do not provide students with enough specific direction for effective Investigation or Evaluation. A more targeted approach to a specific element of a broad topic allows students to demonstrate Investigation by examining the situation and/or issue, and Evaluation by critically reviewing the law’s attempts to achieve just, fair and equitable outcomes (Section 3.3 of the syllabus, p. 4).

The use of case studies is popular in short-response assessment. Most case studies provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability in Knowledge and understanding, and Investigation. However, there are limited opportunities, in most case studies, for students to evaluate. Evaluation involves a critical review of the law’s attempt to achieve just, fair and equitable outcomes.

The syllabus requires that each folio should contain a variety of assessment techniques over a range of topics (p. 48). Topics previously researched should not be selected again for the independent study.

When constructing short-response tasks it is important that opportunity is provided for students to demonstrate all aspects of the Knowledge and understanding criterion. Opportunity should be given for students to make statements and describe and explain key concepts and to link these with examples.

Schools are continuing to effectively use instrument-specific criteria sheets. These outline exactly what is required for each criterion and each standard. Additional detail should be on the task instructions rather than in the criteria sheet itself.
Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence presented through the moderation process in the past year indicates that schools are making informed decisions about the match between the qualities in student responses and the standards descriptors in the syllabus. Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments have matched the syllabus exit criteria and folios have been appropriately placed.

The few concerns with on-balance judgments were associated with the evidence in sample folios related to Evaluation and/or Communication and research skills (p. 50). Evaluation requires critiques, conclusions and justification on issues of law. Communication and research requires evidence of research, presentation of information and use of legal terminology.

Support

Support materials for the Legal Studies 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Assessment instruments.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their schools. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.

- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Karyl Young    Beryl McLachlan
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Marine Studies — A27

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Marine Studies 2004 syllabus is in the seventh year of implementation.


Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across a range of standards.

In order to give students opportunities to demonstrate at an A and B standard, the assessment tasks should use the qualifiers of the standards descriptors, e.g. “efficiently”, “critically”, “justifying” (syllabus, p. 57). Assessment tasks should include complexity that allows students to demonstrate the A and B aspects of the Knowledge and understanding, and Information processing and reasoning criteria.

Task-specific criteria should directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors. Integrated skills need to be assessed using task-specific criteria not checklists.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Where schools have created task-specific criteria sheets that align with the relevant syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments about student responses to assessment instruments have matched the syllabus descriptors. However, when schools have used task-specific criteria that do not directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments may not demonstrate objectives or match standards from the syllabus, and folios may be placed at a standard not evidenced in the folio.

Support

Support materials for the Marine Studies 2004 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1956.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Subject-specific advice (**Highlighted standards**). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Additional support materials for the Marine Studies 2004 syllabus are also available from the QSA website. These include:

- work program requirements
- **Developing effective instrument-specific standards matrixes**
sample supervised written test
sample investigative research.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml>.

QSA memos also provide important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Tanya Martin Regan Spence
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Mathematics A – A36

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Mathematics A 2008 Syllabus is in its third year of implementation. In 2011, the second cohort of Year 12 students exited under this syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html>.

Assessment design

The most successful assessment instruments were designed using the syllabus terms to explicitly explain the outcome desired in the student responses. This allowed students to demonstrate and teachers to identify attributes required in the criteria and standards. For example, requesting students to reflect on the strengths and limitations of mathematical models, investigate alternative solutions and/or procedures, make decisions based on mathematical reasoning and justify the reasonableness of results, allows students to specifically identify what is required. This, however, does not mean that the qualities incidentally observed across instruments should be ignored. Making an on-balance judgment and finding evidence across the entire folio of work and matching to the appropriate standard is recommended.

Opportunities need to continue to be provided to allow students to display evidence of the full range of complexity as required by the syllabus standards. Open-ended instruments allow students to produce this evidence within complex situations. Assessment techniques such as extended modelling, and problem-solving tasks and reports provided valuable avenues for students to show evidence across the range of standards and should contribute significantly to the decision making-process in each criterion.

Judgments are made by matching the qualities in the student responses to the standards descriptors in the syllabus, therefore instrument-specific standards should be derived from and constructed to align with syllabus standards. Where alternative grading systems are used, schools must ensure that the system clearly shows the match between the standards descriptors in the syllabus and the students’ responses.

Application of standards

When making judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the course, the syllabus standards descriptors are used. The state panel found evidence to support district panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards.

The few concerns with on-balance judgments were associated with the application of the criteria and standards at a Limited Level of Achievement. If was found that in some cases, judgments using alternative grading systems did not have explicit links to the criteria and standard. However, when the evidence in the student responses was matched to the syllabus descriptors it often displayed C standard qualities particularly in the Knowledge and procedures, and Communication and justification criteria. In some cases, this provided sufficient evidence of an overall Sound Level of Achievement placement. This highlights the importance of using criteria and standards when making judgments about student achievement.
Subject support

Support materials for the Mathematics A 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool*. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

Additional support materials for the Mathematics A syllabus 2008 is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html>. These include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Senior Mathematics curriculum glossary.
- Quality assuring your assessment program (Mathematics A, B and C).
- Assessment program tracking sheet.
- Developing assessment instruments.
- Sample assessment instruments.
- Sample assessment instruments and responses.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

For information about future workshops for Mathematics A refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Andrew Foster    Maree Peppin
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Mathematics B — A37

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Mathematics B 2008 syllabus is in the third year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1892.html>.

Work program requirements and documents for work program amendments can also be found on the subject webpage.

Assessment design

Although there is significant variation in the style of assessment items across both Knowledge and procedures, and Modelling and problem solving, generally the total assessment packages meet syllabus requirements.

Opportunities need to continue to be provided to allow students to display evidence of the full range of complexity as required by the syllabus standards. Open-ended instruments allow students to demonstrate evidence within complex situations. Extended modelling and problem-solving tasks and reports provide opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence across the range of standards and contribute to the decision-making process in each criterion (Section 6.4 of the syllabus).

Use of technology is very evident in a variety of ways, from the basic mandated requirement of a graphing calculator through to sophisticated computer packages. There are opportunities across topics for all levels of achievements. The mandatory requirements of the syllabus were being met.

- Schools are reminded that the syllabus stipulates the minimum subject matter that must be covered (Section 5 of the syllabus).
- Where submissions were using instrument-specific criteria that align to the syllabus standards descriptors, more appropriate decisions about the match of evidence in student responses were being made.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Generally, the application of standards when making decisions about levels of achievement of sample folios was appropriate. Where evidence was not matched accurately to standards, it usually occurred at the level of achievement/sound level of achievement threshold. At this juncture, there was insufficient evidence of a $B$ standard in at least two criteria, usually Knowledge and procedures, and Modelling and problem solving.

Opportunities need to continue to be provided to allow students to display evidence of the full range of complexity as required by the syllabus standards.

Support

Panel training for Mathematics B district panels is scheduled for 2012.

These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments.* This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.* This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment program audit tool.* This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

Additional support materials for the Mathematics B senior syllabus 2008 are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1892.html>. These include:

- Quality assuring your assessment program (Mathematics A, B and C).
- Assessment program tracking sheet.
- Developing assessment instruments.
- Using standards to make judgments about student responses.
- The articulation between the mathematics of Years 1–10, and Maths B and C.
- Sample assessment instruments and sample instruments and responses.
- Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus


Work program requirements and documentation for work program amendment can also be found on the subject webpage.

Assessment design

Generally schools provided appropriate opportunities for students to demonstrate the standards of the syllabus across the full range of exit criteria. Some issues that arose included:

- extended modelling and problem-solving tasks which did not always offer students the opportunity for a full range of responses
- most schools provided students with instrument-specific criteria sheets that reflected the syllabus standards; however there were some instances of the use of inappropriate descriptors which had little or no relation to the standards descriptors.

Opportunities need to continue to be provided to allow students to display evidence of the full range of complexity as required by the syllabus standards. Open-ended instruments allow students to demonstrate evidence within complex situations. Extended modelling and problem-solving tasks and reports provide opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence across the range of standards and contribute to the decision-making process in each criterion (Section 6.4 of the syllabus).

Within the sample folios, the topic of Dynamics was approached using vector & calculus methods, as referenced in the topic focus statement.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Level of achievement and relative achievement decisions must be made using syllabus standards descriptors. The majority of judgments made within the sample folios viewed were appropriate. Schools were generally applying the standards of the syllabus. Decisions about levels of achievement were made according to syllabus requirements. In most cases, the qualities of the evidence in student responses matched the syllabus standards descriptors in all three criteria.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately made where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

Support

Panel training for Mathematics C district panels is scheduled for 2012.
Support materials for the Mathematics C 2008 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1896.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

Additional support materials for the Mathematics C senior syllabus 2008 are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1896.html>. These include:

- Quality assuring your assessment program (Mathematics A, B and C).
- Assessment program tracking sheet.
- Developing assessment instruments.
- In-class investigations.
- The articulation between the mathematics of Years 1–10, and Maths B and C.
- Sample assessment instruments and sample instruments and responses.
- Subject-specific advice (**Highlighted standards**). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

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Bevan Penrose
State Review Panel Chair

Wayne Stevens
Senior Education Officer
Modern History — B39

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

2011 was the seventh year of implementation of the Modern History 2004 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html>.

Assessment design

Best practice was evident where the following considerations informed assessment design.

**Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence**

In Category 1 assessment instruments, students were given the best opportunity to achieve across the full range of syllabus standards when the task was clearly focused on a contentious historical issue, as opposed to a broad, generic topic.

As students derive their response to a Category 1 instrument “mainly by reference to sources supplied”, relevant sources must be carefully selected to allow for a range of perspectives and around which the student can construct an “insightful” argument in response to the question. A brief contextual statement can accompany the sources to assist students in their analysis, interpretation, corroboration and evaluation of each source used. Ensuring clear reproduction of sources, and considering the number and length of seen and unseen sources, will enable students to work effectively with them under test conditions.

**Category 2: Written research tasks, and Category 3: Multimodal presentations**

Research tasks designed carefully around the Aspects of Inquiry provided appropriate opportunities for students to address the general objectives of the syllabus.

The Aspects of Inquiry are an integral part of the syllabus. The Aspects of Inquiry are referenced in Learning experiences (pp. 19–20), Themes and inquiry topics (pp. 26–43) and Standards associated with exit criteria (pp. 57–59). Student research questions developed from the aspects Backgrounds, changes and continuities: motives and causes; and Effects, interests and arguments establish an appropriate focus for student inquiries.

While the design of Category 2 or 3 instruments might include the use of research booklets, care should be taken to ensure the scaffolding does not restrict students in the demonstration of Criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process at A and B standards.

The syllabus general objectives (p. 8) state that students should be able to produce responses that use a correctly formatted bibliography and the conventions of referencing. There is no stipulation for a particular style of referencing or annotated bibliographies. The standards statements refer to “a recognised system of referencing” (pp. 57–60) and for Category 3 assessment, referencing should be as “appropriate to the genre” (p. 51).

**Category 4: Additional test formats**

High-quality response to stimulus tasks, whether stand-alone instruments or combined with short-response tasks, provided scope for students to demonstrate interpretation, analysis,
evaluation and decision making. The selection of an appropriate range of sources allows students to respond to questions that address the range of descriptors for Criterion 2: Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Evidence was found to support district review panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student work to the syllabus standards in sample folios from all districts.

It is anticipated that by Year 12 the full range of standards descriptors relevant to the criteria being assessed would be applied across all assessment instruments. The key language of the standards should not be altered. The subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards) available on the subject page on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html> demonstrates the qualities that distinguish between the standards for each criterion. The comments below point to some of the qualities of student work at different standards for each criterion.

**Criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process**

Criterion 1 is about planning and putting into effect the procedural and organisational structures of a research task. The syllabus standards for Criterion 1 describe the different qualities of work across the standards. For example, when making judgments about the application of the aspects of inquiry, at A standard records of research demonstrate “the interrelationships of the aspects of inquiry”; at B standard they demonstrate “effective applications of the aspects of inquiry”; at C standard they demonstrate “a basic understanding of the aspects of inquiry”; and at D standard records of research demonstrate “some of the aspects of inquiry”.

**Criterion 2: Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry**

Criterion 2 is about the production of historical knowledge through critical engagement with historical sources. It has three distinct parts:

- using a diversity of sources to comprehend, analyse, interpret and corroborate evidence
- evaluating sources
- synthesising evidence to make decisions.

By Year 12 each of these three elements would be evident in student’s final responses where Criterion 2 is being assessed.

**Criterion 3: Communicating historical knowledge**

Criterion 3 is about presenting the historical knowledge that students have formed. Student responses at A standard present “accurately recalled or selected” knowledge in a “succinct” manner, referring to evaluation processes “without disrupting the argument”.

Annotated sample student responses on the subject page are provided to assist teachers to match the qualities of student work to the standards.

**Support**

Support materials for the Modern History 2004 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html>. These include:
• Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

• Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

• Assessment program audit tool. This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

New resources are now available including advice for teachers for each category of assessment and sample student responses. Teachers may also find useful sample assessment instruments and sample student responses on the Ancient History subject page on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html>.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA’s fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Kevin McAlinden         Lyn Sherington
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Multi-strand Science — A08

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

**Syllabus**

The Multi-strand Science 1998 syllabus is in its thirteenth year of implementation with the final cohort exiting the subject in 2011.

**Assessment design**

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across the range of standards.

The most effective assessment instruments for complex reasoning were those that provided open-ended extended-response opportunities to novel tasks. These tasks typically provided excellent discrimination based on a broad range of creative and critical thinking processes.

Similarly, examples of good practice in scientific processes around the “devise and design of simple investigations” provided the opportunity for students to develop a methodology, and collect and analyse data to supplied investigable questions.

The documents *Designing effective assessment instruments* and *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools* assist teachers to develop and quality assure their own assessment instruments. These documents are available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1958.html>.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

The state panel found evidence to support district panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student work in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments have matched the syllabus exit criteria and folios have been appropriately placed.

**Support**

Support materials for the Multi-strand Science 1998 syllabus remain available at this time from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1958.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Work program review checklist
- Amendment to approved work program
- Curriculum glossary for senior sciences
- Subject guide.
Teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html> to receive regular updates on support materials.

QSA memos also provide important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>. 

The DVD *Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12: Moderation and reviewing* is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/12059.html>. This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

Terry Rudder  
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Scheiwe  
Senior Education Officer
Music — B26

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at state-wide comparability.

Syllabus

The Music 2004 syllabus is in its sixth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html>.

Assessment design

It is evident that schools are designing high-quality assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information about the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus.

Analysing repertoire

Effective Analysing repertoire tasks require students to respond primarily by deconstructing and evaluating repertoire rather than by referring to secondary sources such as books and websites. Tasks that require students to justify a position, or prove a hypothesis can give students a wider scope for effective and perceptive evaluation. Questions that ask students to compare and contrast can also be more effective when a purpose is stated (syllabus, p. 22).

The most effective formal exams consist of one to two questions that focus student responses on demonstrating the components and aspects of the Analysing repertoire criterion. This provides students with the opportunity to respond in depth and to demonstrate the standards. Where formal exams contain an excessive number of questions students may not have the opportunity to demonstrate the general objective for Analysing repertoire. This general objective requires students to deconstruct repertoire and determine the relationships between identified musical elements and compositional devices, and evaluate how these relate to context, genre and style (syllabus, p. 5).

Questions that focus on shorter excerpts of music (visual and/or aural) can allow for greater depth of response than those focusing on larger excerpts of repertoire. Section 6.4.1 of the syllabus outlines the requirement for unstudied repertoire to be a part of Analysing repertoire tasks (p. 22).

The most effectively designed Analysing repertoire tasks explicitly direct students to deconstruct and evaluate repertoire and apply their understanding to unstudied repertoire. The following common definitions of these words may be helpful to teachers’ understanding of them and their role in Analysing repertoire.

Composing

Effective Composing assessment tasks allow the combination of musical elements and compositional devices, not the manner of presentation (recorded sound or scores), to be the focus. Students can present their compositions as a score (traditional, graphic or contemporary) and/or a sound recording (syllabus, p. 24). The Composing general objective clarifies this emphasis on musical aspects: “Students combine the musical elements and compositional devices to create music that is within a context and/or genre, and which expresses style” (Section 3.3 of the syllabus, p. 5).
Performing

The most effective performances are those in which the students present within a context and genre. Effective video evidence of these polished performances demonstrates the match to the standards, in particular A standard, in convincingly communicating the music to audiences, as appropriate to the style and genre of the music. The syllabus provides specific advice on developing performing tasks (pp. 24–25).

Effective Performing assessment tasks provide an authentic context, allowing students to present their work in a convincing mode. The syllabus requires the performance to be to an audience, either real or virtual, and to interpret and communicate the music to the audience through a convincing performance (p. 25).

The syllabus conditions for ensemble performances indicate a maximum of eight performers, with one person per part (p. 27). As student performances are assessed using audiation, it is important that the individual within the ensemble can be heard clearly. Ensembles of students playing in unison do not allow for this discernment.

Where individual students both sing and play for their performance assessment, they may be marked as a unified whole, or nominate the instrument they will be assessed on: that is, either voice or the instrument being played.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

Section 6.7 of the syllabus (pp. 31–32) outlines the awarding of an exit level of achievement. In some instances, schools proposed levels of achievement in a manner inconsistent with the minimum combination of standards outlined in Table 3 of the syllabus.

Section 6.6.1 of the syllabus (p. 29) outlines the nature of the post-verification assessment task. “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 complete one assessment 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 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 then consider how this impacts upon the student’s exit placements, along with achievement in the other criteria. It is the student’s work, not the profile in isolation, that forms the basis of decisions about exit levels of achievement.

Support

Support materials for the Music 2004 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html>. These include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Sample work programs.
• **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

• **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

• **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

• **Sample assessment instruments for: Analysing repertoire, Composing, and Performing.**

• **Sample assessment instruments and responses.**

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This service is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Helen Leyden  
State Review Panel Chair

Andrew Reid  
Senior Education Officer
Music Extension — B36

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Music Extension 2008 syllabus is in its third year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936.html>.

Assessment design

It is evident that schools are designing high-quality assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information about the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus.

The most effectively designed Investigating tasks explicitly ask students to research, explore, analyse and synthesise 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 (syllabus, p. 3). Such assessment instruments elicit more effective responses than those requiring students to merely discuss, comment on or research.

Investigating tasks that are descriptive rather than analytical do not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate synthesis. Where assessment tasks are prescriptive, student investigations may lack depth and breadth of research, exploration, analysis and synthesis of evidence.

Effective Investigating assessment instruments allow for a variety of topics and response formats. The assessment techniques and conditions are outlined on page 22 of the syllabus. The syllabus also lists proposed topics and learning experiences for the Investigation of music sources (p. 21).

The Investigating task is summative. At both monitoring and verification, one response to an Investigating task is to be included in student folios. At verification this may be the same task and student response submitted at monitoring, or a different task and student response completed post-monitoring (syllabus, p. 26).

If a second Investigating task is submitted for verification, it must not involve students reworking and resubmitting previously graded responses to assessment instruments.

Effective planning of independent learning is demonstrated when students plan and prepare their Investigating and Realising programs for the entire year. Realising programs may be worked on from the start of the year.

In Realisation of the work, students should be encouraged to select repertoire in the style(s) or genre(s) that allow them to best display their emerging skills as a performer and to demonstrate the exit standards.

The conditions for Realisation of the work are found on pages 23–25 of the syllabus. These conditions are to be met by students under teacher supervision. Some sample folios reviewed at monitoring, verification and comparability contained Realising responses that were significantly short of the conditions of the syllabus, particularly in the performance specialisation.
Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

There is a high level of consistency of teachers’ judgments in Investigation of music sources and Realisation of the work. In some instances, though, the qualities evident within the student responses matched the descriptors of a higher standard rather than the standard awarded. This is particularly evident in the Performance specialisation.

Investigating tasks which centre on a topic or argument for students to focus on provide succinct direction and they elicit a greater depth of response and thorough demonstration of the qualities of the higher standards such as thorough analysis and insightful synthesis.

There were some instances where performances of particular styles and genres were awarded standards that did not match the evidence in folios. Given the diversity of styles and genres that students access in their musical lives, the syllabus and standards do not preference particular styles and genres over others. The descriptors should not have other expectations built into them either overtly or covertly that could hinder students’ chances of achieving the standard.

Support

Support materials for the Music Extension 2008 syllabus available are from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936.html>. These include:

- Work program requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the Memo subscriptions service. This service is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

Margaret Overs Andrew Reid
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer

Queensland Studies Authority January 2012 | 85
Other Languages – B32

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Korean, Latin, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese 2008 syllabuses are in the third year of implementation. Schools who now find that their work programs or assessment plans could be refined may submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Review panels found that assessment generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards.

Assessment instruments in all four macroskills need to cover a range of topics and text types and reflect the work program. Assessment conditions are to be clearly detailed on assessment instruments for students (Section 8.3 of the syllabus).

Listening and Reading instruments need to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate both dimensions, Knowing and understanding, and Reasoning and responding, and particularly the aspects of Analysis, Evaluation, Conclusions, and Decisions. Using more than one text in an instrument, and giving students comparisons and choices to make, assists them to demonstrate reasoning and responding.

Listening

The length of texts chosen should be appropriate to the text type and assess comprehension, not memory. Providing too much contextual information for the task, or details in questions, can provide students with some of the answers and so prevent them from demonstrating comprehension. Listening texts should be spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus).

Reading

When choosing texts consider their authenticity, linguistic and cultural currency, and ensure that the references are up to date. Texts should be of sufficient length and linguistic complexity to enable students to demonstrate Analysis, Evaluation, Conclusions and Decisions. Questions that elicit information that is clearly stated in the text do not provide these opportunities; neither do multiple-choice and true-or-false questions.

When designing a Reading instrument, rather than formulating questions to match a chosen text, it is more effective to examine the standards, decide which aspects need to be demonstrated, then choose texts and formulate questions that will provide students with opportunities to do this.

Directing students to draw extensively from the text in their answers will assist them to provide well-constructed conclusions, well-substantiated decisions, detailed analysis and thorough evaluation.

Speaking and Writing tasks need to elicit a range of language and grammatical structures, allow students to express ideas and opinions on topics of relevance to them (Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the syllabus), and prompt students to produce spontaneous language.
Speaking tasks

All tasks require spontaneous language use in realistic situations (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus). Assessment instruments need to be open-ended enough to allow students to communicate clearly and effectively while demonstrating flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context (Standard A).

Writing tasks

Students will write texts differing in length, purpose and style. These can include current text types such as emails, blogs and SMSs. Length depends on the text type, and students are only required to write one text of approximately 200 words by verification (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus).

Tasks that ask students to write with a broad rather than narrow focus on a topic prompt them to use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, cohesive devices and idiomatic expressions. For example, on the topic of health, students have better opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency if they can write about nutrition, exercise, a balanced lifestyle and substance abuse, than if they are restricted to the topic of smoking.

Where stimulus material is provided, regardless of the language, it should neither impede nor assist students in demonstrating their writing ability.

Application of standards

Evidence was found of the match of the qualities of student responses with syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2012 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

Teachers’ judgments about matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus exit criteria have been appropriately placed where schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors.

In awarding a particular standard, a student’s response has to match the descriptors of that standard, though it may also match some aspects of the standard above and/or below. It is not always necessary for the student to have met each descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall (Section 8.5 of the syllabus).

Indicating on the instrument-specific criteria sheets the aspects that students have demonstrated in each skill assists teachers in making on-balance decisions about student responses.

The Highlighted interim criteria and standards assist in understanding the differentiations between the standards.

Writing

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A standard: the writer’s ideas and purposes are conveyed effectively with flexibility and originality. To convey meaning effectively, a high degree of accuracy would be demonstrated in spelling, punctuation and word order, and the register would be appropriate to the situation. Flexibility is demonstrated through the use of a wide range of vocabulary and grammar. This is characterised by the use of the first and third persons, singular and plural, various tenses (e.g. past, present and future), different moods (e.g. conditional and subjunctive), differing adjectives and adverbs, a range of cohesive devices. Originality is observed when students use language that is not restricted to routine phrases learned in class.
A standard: an understanding and response to cultural contexts is clearly evident. If the context and topic of the writing elicits it, students may be able to include reference to cultural issues, perhaps comparing opinions or practices in Australia and the target language country. Using register that is appropriate to the situation and language that matches the audience and adheres consistently to the conventions of the text type also, makes the understanding and response to cultural contexts clearly evident.

**Speaking**

The following notes describe salient features of a student’s response at different standards.

A and B standards have the same descriptor pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker indicating that there is no difference in these aspects between the two standards. Other aspects differentiate between A and B standards, e.g., a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and a range of cohesive devices.

At C standard, spoken communication relies on prompts and cues, with the student basically answering questions but not elaborating further and the teacher having to rephrase or suggest words that enable the student to continue the conversation. At B standard, conversation is generally sustained, meaning that in addition to being able to answer questions, students can continue the conversation or topic of discussion. At A standard, conversation is initiated and sustained, the student moving the topic along, introducing other elements, maybe changing the direction of the conversation or the topic itself, and at times even asking the teacher about their opinions of the topics being discussed.

The requirements for verification folios are found in Section 8.9 of the syllabus. The Speaking performance to be used as a sample for confirmation of standards is to be a teacher-student performance (Section 8.9.1 of the syllabus).

**Support**

Support materials for these language syllabuses are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1823.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Sample assessment instruments and responses are periodically placed on the QSA website. Panel training will be conducted in 2012.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

George Orfanos  
State Review Panel Chair

Lester Ford  
Senior Education Officer
Philosophy and Reason – A14

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Philosophy and Reason 2004 syllabus is its seventh year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057.html>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments in the majority of school submissions provided evidence of sufficient coverage of syllabus subject matter, topics and treatment of electives. Most of the assessment instruments included in monitoring and verification submissions provided opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives and across the range of standards.

The assessment program must ensure a balance across the assessment techniques and these are detailed in Section 8.3 of the syllabus (pp. 39–40).

Effectively designed criteria sheets aligned to the syllabus standards were specific to the assessment instrument and clearly indicated which aspects of the criteria and range of standards descriptors were being assessed. Further advice on designing instrument-specific criteria sheets is provided in Designing Effective Assessment Instruments (see section “Subject support”).

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

When making an on-balance judgment on the standard awarded for exit levels of achievement, all three criteria of Knowledge, Application, and Communication must be used (Section 8.4 of the syllabus, pp. 40–41).

Verification provided advice to schools about school judgments on syllabus standards descriptors based upon evidence within sample folios. The state panel found evidence to support schools’ decisions regarding the match between the qualities of student responses and the syllabus standards.

Subject support

Support materials for the Philosophy and Reason senior syllabus 2004 are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057.html>. These include:

- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
• **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the Memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

David Shapland  
State Review Panel Chair

Maree Peppin  
Senior Education Officer
Physical Education — A24

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Physical Education 2004 syllabus is in its final year of implementation with the 2011 Year 12 students being the final cohort to exit using this syllabus. Some schools continued to seek approval for minor amendments to their approved programs, particularly where schools had combined cohorts and needed to manage Year 12 and Year 11 students undertaking different syllabuses.

Following the release of the Physical Education 2010 syllabus, schools are now transitioning to the new syllabus with the first cohort of Year 11 students implementing this syllabus in 2011. Schools are seeking approval for their work programs and have been responding well to the Form R2 feedback throughout this process. Most schools have already gained work program approval.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html>.

Assessment design

The school’s assessment instruments are generally effective and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the range of standards across the criteria. However, some issues surrounding assessment design for the 2004 syllabus will continue to apply to the 2010 syllabus.

Assessment instruments that follow syllabus requirements and assess the intended general objectives provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus standards.

Tasks do not need to assess everything a student has learnt in a unit of work. Assessment tasks should require students to be selective in their responses. This will allow for the quality of “discerning evaluation” in student responses, as well as encourage a depth of understanding rather than a breadth of knowledge.

Assessment instruments that clearly and succinctly describe what students are to do provide the best opportunity for students. When a task is described over a series of paragraphs with no clear question or a question that is extrapolated into four or five “additional” tasks, student responses are often lengthy and focus on the Acquire element of the task at the expense of Evaluation. The lack of clarity and conciseness in student work is often related to the task design.

Tasks that specifically target the Evaluation dimension are more effective in providing an opportunity for students to demonstrate the objectives in all three dimensions across all standards (syllabus, p. 42), whilst eliciting responses that are achievable within the word lengths required by the syllabus.

Assessment instruments should require students to demonstrate the objectives described in the syllabus. Tasks that require students to gather information or assess a collection of data are not relevant to addressing the assessable dimensions of Acquire, Apply, and Evaluate. Suitable instrument-specific standards for physical and written or spoken tasks must reflect the standards outlined in the syllabus standards matrix and should not require students to demonstrate additional elements not required in the standards.
Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.

In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools. Where minor discrepancies existed between standards and the evidence, this generally occurred:

- in the application of the A standards to physical responses — the A standard is clearly demonstrated in a complex environment and for sufficient time (p. 58); the effective physical response samples clearly identify those students on screen who were displaying the standard through video evidence and an appropriate syllabus standard related commentary
- when the evidence of physical responses did not reflect the cohort results
- in the D and E standards for written or spoken assessment items — effective judgments are those where the qualities in student work match the standards
- in the A and B standards for written or spoken assessment — judgments appropriately match the qualities in student responses to the standards specifically related to solving problems, making decisions and providing solutions.

Support

Support materials for the Physical Education 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html>. These include:

- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- A–Z of Senior Moderation. Includes the policies, protocols, procedures and strategies related to moderation processes.
- Work program requirements and work program review checklist.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- Annotated assessment instruments and physical performance response.

Further resources including annotated student responses and annotated physical performance instruments will be available in 2011.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed. This is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>

For information about future workshops for Physical Education refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>

Ross Stewart    Shauna Bouel
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Physics — A45

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Physics 2007 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1964.html>.

Assessment design

The design and standard of the Extended response task (ERT) has been varied. The syllabus states that the ERT is an assessment instrument developed in response to a physics question, circumstance or issue (Section 7.4.3, p. 24). Some schools' assessment only requires students to gather and sort information and data from a variety of sources. This does not allow the student to process the information, to interpret, analyse and synthesise data, to explain relationships, to evaluate information and communicate ideas.

The syllabus glossary defines data as “documented information or evidence of any kind that lends itself to scientific interpretation”. It may be quantitative or qualitative (Section 7.4.3). An ERT should have sufficient scope for evidence to be gathered about Physics concepts for each of the three criteria.

Effective assessment in the category of Supervised assessment provides opportunities for coverage of the general objectives. There has been improvement in Evaluating and concluding (EC) items and greater variety in Knowledge and conceptual understanding (KCU) questions rather than the previous focus on linking and application of algorithms. Descriptors from the exit standards descriptors should be used in assessment instruments. Many items assessing Investigative processes (IP) that use primary and secondary data have been judged as an A standard where the item does not require relationships to be identified, e.g. identifying a simple relationship on a graph may not fulfil "systematic analysis of primary and secondary data to identify relationships between patterns, trends, errors and anomalies".

Effective assessment for Extended experimental investigations (EEI) is open-ended to allow opportunities for students to design and refine investigations (Section 7.4.1 of the syllabus, p. 22) rather than being structured and simplistic. The task should allow sufficient collection of data to enable systematic analysis and evaluation of interrelationships. The interrelationships discussed should be linked to the physics concepts and not those of other subject areas. There should be opportunities to control variables. For example, an excursion to Dreamworld may provide the basis for an ERT but not for an EEI since students have no control over an independent variable.

Syllabus guidelines regarding Workplace health and safety (section 6.3, p16) should be followed when planning and conducting investigations.

Application of standards

The exit standards should be used to make appropriate judgments about student achievement. Issues arise when responses are not appropriately matched to the qualities of the student responses.

All the evidence available in responses is sometimes not used to make a judgment when items are identified as assessing particular standards descriptors but the student response goes beyond the scope of the item. For example, responses about systematic analysis of
data (IP use primary and secondary data) may also provide evidence of KCU (link and apply) and EC (analyse and evaluate interrelationships). Schools use all the available evidence to make decisions about achievement.

Judgments match the evidence that is available to the appropriate standards descriptors. For example, simply reading a graph may not provide enough stimulus or data for systematic analysis. Issues of this nature occur frequently in the Supervised assessment category.

The criteria sheets for assessment should be derived from the exit criteria and provide the basis for teachers’ judgment about student achievement (Section 7.4.7 of the syllabus).

Support

Support materials for Physics 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at: <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1964.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards...

- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

- **Assessment program audit tool.** This document helps schools to review their assessment program and compare the requirements of their assessment program to the minimum assessment requirements of the syllabus.

- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

- **Assessment instruments and sample assessment with student responses.** These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their school settings.

- **Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12.** This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

David Austin          Susan Scheiwe
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Science21 — A33

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

2011 is the final year of implementation of the Science21 2007 syllabus. In 2012, the Science21 2010 syllabus will be implemented with both Year 11 and Year 12 students. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across the range of standards.

Schools decide the assessment instruments to be used, and must develop a criteria sheet: a tool for making judgments about the quality of student responses to an assessment instrument. Students must be given a criteria sheet for each assessment instrument (Section 5.5 of the syllabus).

Where students undertake assessment in a group or team, instruments must be designed so that teachers can validly assess the work of individual students and not apply a judgment of the group product and processes to all individuals. The following assessment techniques may be considered:
- supervised written assessment
- extended experimental investigation
- extended response task
- collection of work.

Evidence indicated that assessment instruments and criteria sheets typically address the objectives, language and standards of the syllabus.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards. To elicit responses from students that match the syllabus standards descriptors, assessment instruments should use the language of the general objectives of the syllabus.

Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments have matched the syllabus exit criteria and folios have been appropriately placed. However, when schools have used instrument-specific criteria sheets that do not directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors teachers’ judgments may not demonstrate objectives or match standards from the syllabus and folios may be placed at a standard not evidenced in the folio.

Where the interdisciplinary nature of the subject has been addressed effectively in syllabus delivery and assessment, the ability of students to demonstrate complexity and understanding at very high levels has been apparent.

Support

Panel training for Science21 district panels is scheduled for 2012.
Support materials for the Science21 2010 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html>. These include:

- **Designing effective assessment instruments.** This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- **Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools.** This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- **Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards).** This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Additional support materials for the syllabus are also available from the QSA website. These include:

- work program requirements
- work program review checklist
- sample work programs
- sample assessment instruments and sample instruments and responses
- extended response task and extended experimental investigation planners
- supervised written assessment planner.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml >.

QSA memos also provide important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Sign up to receive QSA Connect, QSA's fortnightly email that updates you directly about QSA initiatives, professional development activities and events. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/publications/2408.html>.

Ian Stewart    Regan Spence
State Review Panel Chair    Senior Education Officer
Study of Religion — B20

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

This is the third year of implementation of the Study of Religion 2008 Syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063.html>.

Assessment design

The most effective assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate the objectives of the course were those that reflected the design qualities described in Section 9.5: Assessment techniques of the syllabus (pp. 56–57).

Response to stimulus materials were used most effectively when the amount of stimulus provided was of manageable quantity and suited to the conditions of the task. Stimulus that was provided one or two lessons prior to the supervised test provided students the best opportunity to engage with the religious information contained in the sources. Quality stimulus material allowed students to draw on divergent and diverse ideas about religion in familiar (known to students) and unfamiliar contexts to meet A and B standards in Knowledge and understanding, and Evaluative processes. Referencing of stimulus also allowed students to effectively present information, ideas and concepts, which is necessary to meet A and B standards in Research and communication.

In the Evaluative processes criterion, supervised essays, research assignments and multimodal presentations were most effective when students were given clear direction to develop a hypothesis that was more than straightforward. In these examples, the question included a quotation or key inquiry question requiring students to make a deduction about viewpoints, values and interrelationships, thereby providing opportunity for critical analysis necessary for A standard. Section 9.6.2 of the syllabus (p. 59) details the assessable elements of Criterion 2, Evaluative processes.

The most effective multimodal presentations were those where students investigated a religious issue or religious phenomenon and presented the results of their inquiry individually rather than in groups. These ensured students were given the best opportunity to document and demonstrate framing of relevant research questions and document evidence of investigation required for the Research and communication criterion. For multimodal presentations based on an ethnographic investigation, Section 8.3 of the syllabus (p. 45) states that students’ work must be independent.

Individual assessment instruments must reflect some or all of the core components of the course to allow students to demonstrate achievement of the objectives, specifically:

- the nature and significance of religion as a cultural and historical phenomenon
- the beliefs of a major world religion which is not always the home tradition
- religious expression in the Australian context.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.
In the majority of sample folios reviewed there was a match between the qualities of standards and student responses.

The few concerns with application of standards were associated with:

- instrument-specific criteria sheets which should align with the exit criteria and standards listed in Table 9.8 of the syllabus (pp. 62–63)
- Knowledge and understanding at A and B standards — this is because for the B standard, a diverse range of information was drawn on only whereas Standard A drew on a divergent range of information
- Evaluative processes at A and B standards — at B standard, there was analysis of information about religion and synthesis of complex ideas only whereas Standard A required critical analysis and synthesis of complex and divergent ideas about religion.

**Support**

Support materials for the Study of Religion 2009 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063.html>. These include:

- Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

Additional support materials for the syllabus include:

- using an annotated bibliography as evidence of the inquiry process
- sample instrument and response: multimodal presentation.

To receive updates on support materials, subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

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

This report is based on information gathered by the state panel during moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Study of Society 2001 syllabus is in its eleventh year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2065.html>.

Assessment design

Through the monitoring and verification moderation processes, it was evident that schools are designing high-quality assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information about the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus (pp. 5–7).

Across assessment packages, the opportunity to apply social theory was evident in the design of assessment instruments. This provides a systematic means of reflecting on issues (Section 6.4 of the syllabus, p. 21) and to discuss a facet of society from many perspectives (p. 23). It assists students to understand relationships, identify the values underlying decisions, evaluate evidence, apply relevant and extensive criteria to justify decisions and draw conclusions that are supported with evidence. As a result, opportunities are provided for students to demonstrate their abilities across the range of syllabus standards, including Criterion 2, Critical processes.

In addition, the design of assessment instruments requiring research were characterised by a process of social inquiry (Section 6.2 of the syllabus, p. 15). This provides a model for investigating issues, theories or topics. It involves students deciding on the research issue, making judgments and conducting the research. It includes:

- framing a research question or hypothesis
- locating a range of sources, gathering data and collecting evidence
- analysing and evaluating evidence
- making decisions or drawing conclusions which are justified.

For each assessment instrument, there was also evidence of the development of instrument-specific criteria which focused on the standards that will be used to make a judgment on the quality of student responses. This must always align with the syllabus criteria (p. 52) and the relevant standards descriptors (pp. 60–61).

Application of standards

When making judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the course, the syllabus standards descriptors are used. In the majority of sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools.

The few concerns with on-balance judgments were associated with the evidence within sample folios related to Criterion 3, Research. To assist in making judgments on this criterion, evidence of research should include:

- the identification of issues for investigation
• framed research questions or hypotheses
• the gathering and recording of information from sources
• the research or investigative techniques used.

For extended writing tasks such as research assignments and reports, students are required to produce notes as evidence of their research. This also applies to nonwritten presentations (pp. 54–55).

After standards have been determined in each of the four exit criteria, the minimum standards required for awarding an exit level of achievement are stated in Table 12 of the 2001 syllabus (p. 58).

**Support**

Support materials for the Study of Society 2001 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2065.html>. These include:

• *Sample instruments and responses*. The sample assessment instruments are intended to inform assessment design for the subject and demonstrate sample responses. The annotations on student responses highlight the qualities of student work and the match with particular syllabus standards.

• *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.

• *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.

• Subject-specific advice (*Highlighted standards*). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.

QSA memos also provide educators with important information. These can be received through the memo subscriptions service. This is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act>.

For information about future workshops for Study of Society refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Allen Bennett  John Langer
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Technology Studies — A23

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Technology Studies 2007 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html>.

Assessment design

The mandatory aspects of the course are identified in Section 7.1 of the syllabus and include the three areas of study: Foundations of technology, Safety, and Manufacturing resources. The moderation processes indicate that schools are adequately covering the area of study of manufacturing resources; however, there should be evidence in summative folios of work of coverage of the safety and foundations of technology (interrelationship of technology and society, elements and principles of design, the product design sequence and sustainability).

The syllabus requires the consideration of the safety of a product in terms of its use and in the process of its design (Section 5.2 of the syllabus, p.13.). Evidence of the consideration and integration of aspects of safety should be evident in the development of the design and include justification of safety-related design decisions.

Technology Studies is a product design course and assessment design should direct students to demonstrate the general objectives and the product design sequence described in Section 4.4 of the syllabus. Approaches to assessment that result in students focusing on the manufacture of industry-standard-quality products such as pool tables and road-registrable trailers do not align to the general objectives of the syllabus. Students should be directed to engage in design tasks that encourage innovative and creative design solutions to real, identified design problems. It should not be unusual for the realisation of a prototype, to confirm the design solution, to be undertaken in a much shorter time than the actual designing. Assessment instruments should direct students to design tasks that require the identification of a need, want or opportunity within a stated context and with predetermined constraints, challenging students to design and produce solutions to problems.

The syllabus requires that in Year 12 students complete two design projects. One of these must be in response to an identified design problem in a community context. For the other project schools may decide to allow the students to choose the context for the design project. This does not mean that the student chooses a product that they would like to manufacture for themselves. It is important that the design situation, brief and design criteria are valid and relate to a real design problem within the chosen context. The best opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives of the course are those where the design brief describes the needs of an identified third party.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards.
Across the state, decisions about levels of achievement were appropriately made. There was also evidence of the appropriate matching of student responses with the particular syllabus standards descriptors based on student responses in sample folios.

The few concerns with on-balance judgments were mostly related to the appropriate matching of student responses with the A standard descriptors of “effective and discriminating application of knowledge and thorough and perceptive investigation” associated with the Knowledge and application criterion. The investigative analysis instrument should provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate these aspects.

Decisions in the Production criterion are often challenging due to the limited photographic evidence provided. A log book should include photographic evidence for all the key stages of production.

**Support**

Support materials for the Technology Studies 2007 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html>. These include:

- *Designing effective assessment instruments*. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
- *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
- *Assessment instruments*. These sample instruments demonstrate particular qualities of assessment, which are outlined in the annotations. New assessment instruments have been added. They are intended to help teachers generate assessment instruments for their school settings. Sample assessment instruments with student responses have been added to the website.
- *Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards)*. This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
- *Quality assuring school-based assessment in Years 11–12*. This DVD provides an explanation of the processes associated with quality assurance.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/index.html>.

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Tim Osborne
State Review Panel Chair

Roy Barnes
Senior Education Officer
Visual Art — B14

This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

Syllabus

The Visual Art 2007 syllabus is in the sixth year of implementation. A number of schools submitted amendments to their work programs in order to meet the needs of students. These amendments included:

- the school-selected concepts and their current relevance
- teaching strategies and student learning in Year 11 to support student understanding of and in the development of a body of work
- providing the opportunity for students to engage in a depth of study across the units in the course.

Work program amendment details are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html>.

The syllabus establishes that the selected context has become a “frame of reference” (p. 7) in teaching and learning to inform the selected 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 in the refinement, communication of meaning and resolution of responses to the concept. Assisting students in their cognitive understanding may improve their ability to engage more deeply in Making and Appraising.

The syllabus glossary defines Appropriation as “where an artist borrows an idea or image and reconceptualises it to give it new meaning” (p. 9). Students need to understand the difference between reconceptualising and recomposing. Having students photograph objects and locations as the stimulus for developing their own subject matter and compositions rather than selecting images from the internet may have more meaning to them in the resolution of their artwork. Selecting images from the internet can lead to imitation and using imagery that may have no relevance to a student’s life.

Assessment design

The state panel found that where assessment instruments are designed to show a clear and intentional articulation of the inquiry learning model, the scaffolding frame was research, development, reflection and resolution. This process of inquiry is a direct link to the Making and Appraising objectives and is assessed in the criteria. Scaffolding that aligns with the inquiry model will assist teachers to collect and identify evidence of the criteria and the match of evidence to the standards.

Elaborations of the Inquiry learning model in figure 1 (syllabus, p. 6) could be used to scaffold assessment tasks. Using the model will clearly explain this way of working for students.

Developing new assessment instruments or refining previous instruments allows teachers to ensure that:

- there is a link between teaching and learning and to the concept
- suggested focus(es) define interpretations and responses to the concept, rather than being another broad concept
- suggested contemporary Australian, Aboriginal and International artists support the demands and conditions of the task
• identification and reference information on all images included in assessment instruments are consistent with the conventions used by the school — this reference acts as a model for students, and provides them with initial information for further research.

State and district review panel chairs noted that assessment instruments across Making and Appraising are more closely related to the concept and enable students to build on their acquired knowledge of artists as part of their research. This approach reinforces the integral nature of Making and Appraising.

Application of standards

The state panel found evidence to support district review panel decisions of the match of the qualities of student work in sample folios to the syllabus standards in all districts.

The moderation process provides advice to schools about the application of standards in moderation samples. These samples represent the schools judgment for the student cohort. As panel advice relates to sample student folios, schools must then consider the extent to which that advice has implications for the level of, and relative achievement of, non-sample student folios. (A-Z of Senior Moderation, p. 83)

For moderation purposes, images of the resolved work in situ or as a collective body of work, provides evidence of problem solving in display, and the student’s understanding of creating meaning through the use of visual language and expression.

District review panel chairs noted many schools seeking significant movement for students from verification to exit. The syllabus states that the post-verification evidence “…contributes to one of the verification bodies of work” (p. 31). The contribution of the post-verification evidence to the body of work at exit is likely to be less significant that the evidence already in the body of work at verification. At exit, this additional evidence is not another discrete body of work with a separate grade in Visual Literacy, Application or Appraising, but part of the selected body of work 1 or 2. It is in addition to the body of work evidence provided at verification. In effect, at exit the body of work is assessed again, now including the post-verification response. The school makes a revised decision (following the verification decision) about the best match to the standard and award a Visual Literacy, Application and Appraising grade at exit for the selected body of work. Earlier results are not replaced — rather they are added to by the post-verification evidence.

Post-verification evidence that does not demonstrate the same qualities will not negate what has already been demonstrated by the student in that body of work. It does provide information to schools for any fine-grain decisions and the relative level of achievement placement at exit, just as it does when this evidence demonstrated some improved characteristics of the criteria.

The final on-balance decision for awarding an exit level of achievement will be made on these two resolved bodies of work.

Support

Support materials to assist schools to implement the Visual Art 2007 syllabus are found on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html>. These include:

• Designing effective assessment instruments. This document helps teachers design effective assessment instruments that give students the opportunity to cover the syllabus general objectives and demonstrate the syllabus standards.
• Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools. This is a useful tool to evaluate and refine an assessment instrument after it has been constructed.
• Subject-specific advice (Highlighted standards). This document highlights different aspects in the standards and how these aspects vary across the different standards.
Additional support materials for the Visual Art 2007 syllabus are also available from the QSA website. These include:

- Work program and work program amendment requirements.
- Work program review checklist.
- Sample assessment instruments — Making and Appraising
- Sample instrument and student response at Standard A and C: annotated samples that show the match between the response and the awarded standard.
- Frequently asked questions about the syllabus and moderation.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers can subscribe to the QSA News RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/news.xml >.

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Janelle Williams       Susan Hollindale
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