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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 2012, 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 2012. Each state review panel chair prepares a report in consultation with an officer of the QSA.

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 2009 syllabus is in its third year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_atsi_09_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment packages emphasised the interrelated and holistic nature of Indigenous knowledges. The use of this approach, described in Section 5.2 of the syllabus, allowed students to develop responses that demonstrated deep understanding and connectedness to the chosen topics. As a result, students had the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities across the range of syllabus standards (pp. 36–38).

In Technique 1, high-quality multimodal presentations required supporting documentation of the research process such as research journals or annotated research notes. This provided the best opportunities for students to address objectives within Dimension 2 — Managing and processing through critical inquiry and Dimension 3 — Reflecting perspectives and processes.

For Technique 3, extended written responses, the most effectively designed tasks directed students to do more than describe events and circumstances, requiring processing of information from an Indigenous worldview. When an individual or event was the case study of the inquiry, students were required to analyse and evaluate how there was an interconnection to land, language, culture and community over time and place.

In both Techniques 1 and 3, appropriate management of Indigenous information was evident in student research through observing and documenting cultural protocols, providing evidence of consent forms for interviews and evaluating sources of information for quality and validity.

High-quality learning logs (Technique 2) required a sufficient number of entries to enable students to demonstrate analysis and evaluation of sources and reflections on perspectives and processes rather than just descriptions of ideas, policies and practices or biographical details. A variety of reflections from those listed on p. 32 of the syllabus was evident and use of traditional languages, Aboriginal Kriol or Torres Strait Islander Creole, community negotiated coding and interior monologue were effective ways of demonstrating elements of the Communicating dimension.

For the additional test formats of Technique 4, questions that required paragraph responses provided students the best opportunity to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives across the full range of standards. Effective response to stimulus tests and objective short-response tests required students to explain information that relates to Indigenous peoples in local, national and global contexts.
Application of standards

In most sample folios there was a match between the qualities of standards and student responses. Concerns about on-balance judgments were associated with evidence related to:

- **Dimension 1 — Knowing and understanding** at Standard A. Some student responses showed effective explanations of information that related to Indigenous peoples in local and national contexts aligning to Standard B rather than precise and effective explanations of information that related to Indigenous peoples in local, national and global contexts required for Standard A.

- **Dimension 2 — Managing and processing through critical inquiry** at Standard B. Planning and use of research was evident at Standard C but was not always competent, which is necessary for Standard B. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation were rudimentary and attempted, aligning to Standard C rather than thorough, required for Standard B.

- **Dimension 3 — Reflecting on perspectives and processes** at Standard B. Reflection on and revision of the decision-making process was evident in student work but was not always logical, which is necessary for Standard B. While student responses considered their own and others’ points of view and drew logical conclusions aligning to Standard C, they did not always demonstrate consideration of constructions of knowledge or make coherent conclusions that are logically justified at Standard B.

Support

- Support materials for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 2009 syllabus available on the QSA website include:
  - syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html#syllabus>
  - work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html#wp>
  - assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and Highlighted standards associated with exit criteria at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Lesley Latu  
State Review Panel Chair

Jackie Dunk  
Senior Education Officer
Accounting — B12

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

Syllabus

The Accounting 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the first verification process was conducted using the 2010 syllabus.


Assessment design

Schools have designed assessment packages that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the three dimensions across the full range of standards. When developing assessment instruments consider:

- innovative and creative ways of designing assessment that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the dimensions of the 2010 syllabus
- how to clearly evidence the general objectives in practical tasks where differentiation is required between Knowledge and procedural practices and Applied practical processes
- the design of contextualised instrument-specific criteria sheets developed from the syllabus standards descriptors
- the conditions of assessment techniques as outlined in Section 5.5.1 of the syllabus. The parameters of extended response and supervised written (extended response) assessment instruments should allow students to respond to an A standard within the recommended word length and time frame. This may necessitate narrowing the breadth of the instrument to ensure that the selected general objectives can be demonstrated across the range of standards
- maximising the opportunities provided to students to demonstrate the full range of general objectives across the summative program. In particular, the knowledge aspect of the Knowledge and procedural practices dimension can best be demonstrated by designing tasks that allow students to describe and explain accounting terminology, concepts and procedures which directly relate to the practical activities
- using case studies and other stimulus materials to respond to the three aspects (analysis; development of reasoned arguments; and communication) of the Interpretation and evaluation dimension. Responses at an A standard require thorough and effective analysis and interpretation of the case study, (i.e. a direct relationship to the stimulus) rather than “textbook-type” responses. Communication of accounting information considers the use of a range of communication forms, clarity of expression and logical exposition, understanding of technical terms, use of correct spelling, punctuation and grammar, and the use of referencing techniques, where applicable (Section 6.1 of the syllabus)
- presenting a complex accounting problem which students are required to solve and/or applying complex concepts and reasoning in order to organise, process and report accounting information when assessing the Applied practical processes dimension. Solving a complex accounting problem provides students with the opportunity to synthesise a situation.


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 qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2013 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

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

- the lack of opportunity provided in assessment instruments to demonstrate an A or B standard, in the Interpretation and evaluation and Knowledge and procedural practices dimensions
- the use of school-developed standards that did not align directly to the syllabus standards descriptors or the inclusion of aspects for which a judgment was unable to be made as the opportunity was not provided, e.g. select and organise data to prepare accounting reports
- matching the evidence in Knowledge and procedural practices dimension to A and B standards descriptors; this dimension requires students to describe and explain accounting terminology, concepts and procedures in relation to relevant accounting practices.

Support

Support materials for the Accounting 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information about future workshops for Accounting is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Judith Beausang Robyn Bergmansons
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Aerospace Studies — A39

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

**Syllabus**

2012 is the final year of implementation of the Aerospace Studies 2008 Pilot syllabus. The Aerospace Studies 2011 syllabus is in its first year of implementation. In 2013, the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the syllabus will be verified.


**Assessment design**

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. Within the 2011 syllabus (pp. 5–6), these are grouped into three dimensions: Knowledge and understanding, Interpretation and communication and Critical thinking.

Schools decide the assessment instruments to be used, and develop an instrument-specific criteria sheet: a tool for making judgments about the quality of student responses to an assessment instrument. Students are given an instrument-specific criteria sheet for each assessment instrument (Section 4.5 of the syllabus).

The following assessment techniques may be considered:

- supervised written
- research
- extended response.

Supervised written, research and extended response are used to determine student achievement in the objectives of all the dimensions. 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 students.

Evidence at monitoring indicated that assessment instruments and instrument-specific 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 give students opportunities to produce responses that demonstrate syllabus objectives across the full range of syllabus standards descriptors, assessment instruments should use the language of the objectives and standards descriptors of the syllabus.

Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria sheets that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments have matched the evidence in student responses in the sample folios with the syllabus exit standards descriptors.
Support

Support materials for the Aerospace Studies 2011 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17016.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17016.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and *Highlighted standards* at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17016.html#assessment>.

Panel training for Aerospace Studies state review panel is scheduled for 2013.

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

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Ross Humphreys
State Review Panel Chair

Regan Spence
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 fifth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_ag_science_07_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Across many assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. Although some disparity in the quality of assessment instruments was observed, a noticeable improvement in the quality, diversity and creativity of assessment instruments was also seen.

The continued development of extended agricultural investigations (EAI}s) provides opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in all general objectives of the course. Schools are developing instrument-specific criteria sheets which clearly align with the syllabus standards using syllabus-specific descriptors. Where criteria sheets do not align with the syllabus standards descriptors, teachers’ judgments have not matched the standards associated with exit criteria.

Schools have improved the assessment of the Communication general objective. Many examples of creative and challenging assessment tasks were noted in both extended written tasks and EAI}s. These tasks give students the best opportunity to demonstrate the relevant standards of the syllabus (p. 4).

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 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 as 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 all aspects of the criteria to ensure on-balance judgments can be made across all syllabus objectives.
Support

In 2012, assessment workshops focused on designing, evaluating and refining instruments to develop effective assessment instruments.

Support materials for the Agricultural Science 2007 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1944.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1944.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, annotated instruments and responses, and *Highlighted standards* at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1944.html#assessment>.

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

For information about future implementation workshops for the Agricultural Science 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

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

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

Moderation processes provided evidence that teachers and students are engaging effectively with each of the four categories of assessment.

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence

Category 1 assessment instruments need both an effective question and a well-selected set of sources. The question should be appropriately focused on one aspect of the broader inquiry topic in order to encourage the development of a historical argument, rather than a narrative or descriptive response.

Because the student response is derived “mainly by reference to sources supplied” (syllabus, p. 54) the selection of sources is critical. Provision of both primary and secondary sources that offer a range of perspectives will offer the best opportunities for students to demonstrate the standards. The syllabus (p. 54) states that in Year 12 some sources will be “contestable” and that “evaluation and application of perspectives must be applied to make judgments”. Brief statements accompanying the sources can provide contextual information to enable students to analyse, interpret, and evaluate sources in their response.

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

Research tasks that were carefully aligned with the aspects of Inquiry provided students with the opportunity to achieve across the full range of syllabus standards. A wide variety of suitable formats for records of research are being implemented. When developing a research process, reference to the four parts of the Criterion 1 standards descriptors (which includes demonstration of the aspects of Inquiry) is recommended.

Whatever genre is selected, the final response needs to present a historical argument, demonstrating that students have formed and communicated historical knowledge (Criterion 2 and 3). The syllabus provides guidance about the variety or options for Category 3 assessment (p. 56).

Category 4: Additional test formats

Where Criterion 2 is assessed in a Category 4 instrument, opportunities for demonstration of syllabus standards were evident when questions focused explicitly on Criterion 2 descriptors. Primary and secondary sources that offer different perspectives on the same aspect of the inquiry allow students to identify patterns, interpret values, motives and perspectives, corroborate sources, and synthesise evidence to make decisions. As Category 4 assessment is completed under test conditions, careful consideration should also be given to the length and number of sources.
Application of standards

There was significant agreement across the state about the application of standards. It is noted that the standards for each level of achievement are mid-range descriptors. Folios in the lower range of an achievement level will typically demonstrate achievement at the lower standard in one criterion as per the table of Minimum requirements for exit levels of achievement (syllabus, p. 60–61).

When matching evidence to standards in Criterion 1 — Planning and using a historical research process, the focus is on the qualities of the work contained in the records of research, and not the quantity. Students should avoid a large number of sub-questions which may be unmanageable, and instead be encouraged to more sharply focus their inquiry. Evidence in sample folios demonstrated some streamlined and efficient records of research which were driven by appropriate research questions and underpinned by the aspects of inquiry. Reflections on the direction of research need not be overly long, but do need, at Standard A, to be “critical”, explaining “valid choices about direction or emphasis”.

There was evidence of strong engagement with Criterion 2 — Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry in samples of student responses from around the state. Criterion 2 has three distinct parts:

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

Support

Support materials for the Ancient History 2004 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, annotated instruments and responses, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047.html#assessment>.

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

Darlene Hill Lyn Sherington
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Biology — A06

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

Most assessment plans depend on extended experimental investigations (EEI) to provide much of the evidence for standards in the Investigating biology (IB) criterion. EEIs are suited to providing students with the opportunity to meet all aspects of IB. In particular, students need opportunities to:

- formulate and justify researchable questions to design the investigation
- state a clear hypothesis and consider how variables will be controlled
- collect and organise data to reveal trends and interrelationships
- interpret and analyse results with links to theoretical concepts to draw conclusions
- evaluate the design of the investigation
- reflect on the adequacy of the data collected and propose refinements
- consider health and safety issues.

Student proposals for an EEI need to be carefully considered, prior to commencement, to ensure that students will be able to fulfil these requirements.

Using data from a computer simulation as the only data for an EEI does not satisfy syllabus requirements for “using primary data generated through experimentation by the student” (p. 23).

When assessing the IB criterion in written tasks (WT), care needs to be taken to ensure that what students are being asked to do matches the objectives of IB and not those of the Understanding biology (UB) criterion.

When assessing Evaluating biological issues (EBI) schools need to ensure that students have been given the opportunity to evaluate sources and justify decisions/predictions.

When designing extended response instruments, opportunities must be provided for students to demonstrate the skills of interpretation, analysis and synthesis.

Application of standards

Agreement was reached on level of achievement decisions at the district level for most verification submissions. The application of standards in most Sound Achievement (SA) and Limited Achievement (LA) folios reviewed was supported. Students need to be given opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding to complex and challenging tasks.

Criteria sheets need to be instrument-specific and reflect the syllabus exit standards. They should not resemble a marking scheme nor should they contain descriptors that prescribe a “quantity” of some element.
There was some evidence of the C standard descriptors for EBI not being appropriately matched to responses. There was evidence in some student responses of “making a statement” which was identified as “making a plausible decision”.

**Support**

Support materials for the Biology 2004 (amended 2006) syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, annotated instruments and responses, and *Highlighted standards* at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946.html#assessment>.

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

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Keith Prideaux
State Review Panel Chair

Colleen Palmer
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 final year of implementation with Year 11 students. No new enrolments can occur with the Year 12 cohort in 2013 as some of the units of competency in the BSB07 Business Services training package embedded in this syllabus have been superseded. Further information is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/memos/12/003-12.pdf>.

The Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus will be implemented with Year 11 for the first time in 2013. The timeline for the lodgement of work programs developed for the 2012 syllabus is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/memos/12/027-12.pdf>.

Assessment design

In general, assessment packages have provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the criteria across the range of standards. Some assessment instruments did not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate an A or B standard in the Knowledge and understanding criterion. Paragraph responses (50–200 words) provide opportunities for students to demonstrate recall, definition and description of a comprehensive range of factual information and effective and consistent application and explanation of business concepts, principles, processes and practices (Standard A).

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)
- demonstrate a clear link between the stimulus and the question when using stimulus material, ensuring the question relates to the stimulus
- clearly articulate the task requirements and conditions (Section 7.5 of the syllabus)
- provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives.

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, e.g. effective and consistent application and explanation of a comprehensive range of factual information.

Evidence was found to support most of the decisions relating to the match of qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2013 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 the student response 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.

Support

Support materials for the Business Communication and Technologies 2008 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5699.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5699.html#wp>
- assessment advice including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5699.html#assessment>; this link also includes Subject-specific advice (Frequently asked questions and highlighted standards).

Support materials for the Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151.html>. These include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, annotated instruments and *Highlighted standards* at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151.html#assessment>.

Panel training will be conducted in 2013 focusing on the process of verification.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Andrea Proctor
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Business Organisation and Management — B25

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

Across many assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. Effective assessment provides opportunities for students to demonstrate a range of standards across each of the general objectives. In general, assessment instruments and instrument-specific criteria sheets are being developed using the syllabus criteria and relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, p. 38). Some detailed checklists are included with instrument-specific criteria sheets. These checklists would be more suitably incorporated within the instrument instructions.

Effective assessment instruments:

- clearly articulate the instrument requirements including the format or genre of the required response; when the report genre is being used to assess the Reflection processes, instrument requirements outline the expectation that evaluation of intentions will 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 tasks within the word lengths outlined in Section 7.3 of the syllabus; appendixes, while excluded from the word-length requirement, should be relevant to the instrument and referred to within the response
- incorporate a variety of new and interesting information and communication technologies, such as blog planners, podcasts, on-line applications, services and businesses
- allow for variety in the ways evidence can be collected when assessing Action skills.

Application of standards

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

Where instrument-specific sheets are contextualised to the instrument and directly align to the syllabus standards descriptors, teacher judgments can be matched to the syllabus exit criteria and samples may be appropriately placed. An example of contextualising the standards is the “significant explanation of business ideas, activities, concepts, techniques and theories relating to entrepreneurship, supported by examples” at the Standard B for Knowledge and understanding (p. 38).

Evidence was generally found to support the match of the qualities of student responses in the sample folios to the syllabus standards. Information gathered at comparability will be used to inform the 2013 quality-assurance procedures and processes.
Where evidence did not appropriately match standards, it was commonly related to:

- the use of school-developed standards that did not align directly to the syllabus standards descriptors
- poorly designed assessment instruments that did not provide the opportunity for student responses to be demonstrated across the full range syllabus standards, especially Standard A in Reflection processes which requires “highly appropriate strategies for action” that are communicated with a “fluent and precise response” (p. 38).

Where there has been an issue with on-balance judgments, it is often associated with evidence of the range of reflection processes being used to evaluate appropriate business strategies for action. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities within the student’s response match the syllabus descriptors. When making on-balance judgments, it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall (p. 39).

**Support**

Support materials for the Business Organisation and Management 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1526.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1526.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, annotated instruments and responses, and *Highlighted standards* at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1526.html#assessment>.

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

For information about future implementation workshops for the Business Management 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Brad Greene  
State Review Panel Chair

Maurice Ware  
Senior Education Officer
Chemistry — A44

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

There has been an improvement in the quality of assessment design, particularly in the extended response tasks. Extended response tasks require students to respond to a question, circumstance or an issue. This allows the students the opportunity to meet syllabus requirements to interpret, analyse and evaluate, and synthesise data.

The design of extended experimental investigation tasks has generally allowed students to demonstrate the general objectives and standards A–E. While the full range of syllabus standards can be achieved within the syllabus word recommendations, some schools have allowed students to produce unnecessarily lengthy reports. The additional information presented in these lengthy responses is not providing further evidence of demonstration of the standards, particularly the “discriminating selection, use and presentation of scientific data and ideas” (syllabus, p. 29). Lengthy supervised assessments of three-hour duration are also beyond the syllabus recommended times of 1½–2 hours (p. 21).

Instruments should assess what they purport to assess. For example, instruments identified as assessing “systematic analysis of data” (syllabus, p. 28) for Investigative processes require the use of primary and secondary data. However, these tasks may also allow for the demonstration of the Knowledge and conceptual understanding descriptors for “linking and application” (p. 28) and the Evaluating and concluding descriptors for “analysis and evaluation of … interrelationships” (p. 29) which was not always identified in the instruments.

Application of standards

Schools demonstrated improvement in the understanding and use of the standards associated with the exit criteria. Decisions regarding levels of achievement closely aligned with the syllabus standards descriptors. Where there was not a clear match, the A and B standards for the Investigative processes and Evaluating and concluding criteria had not been appropriately applied. The A standard descriptor for Investigative processes requires that data is analysed to identify relationships between patterns, trends, errors and anomalies. It is within the Evaluating and concluding dimension that these interrelationships are analysed and evaluated.

School judgments beyond the level of the complexity of tasks was also evident, e.g. simply reading a graph may not provide enough stimulus or data for an opportunity for systematic analysis as required for Investigative processes.
Support materials for the Chemistry 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1952.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1952.html#wp>

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

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

Trevor Jones
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Scheiwe
Senior Education Officer
Chinese — B23

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

Syllabus

The 2008 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers' perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a "variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity" (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to "demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey … ideas with flexibility and originality" at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
required at least one writing task of approximately 300 characters
ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (Tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:

- comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A
- a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:

- “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)
- conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support

Support materials for the Chinese 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4840.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1, 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Winnie Edwards-Davis  Lester Ford
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 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the syllabus was verified.


Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information about the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the syllabus. The assessable dimensions are: Choreography, Performance and Appreciation. Successful student responses are most often achieved when assessment tasks make the requirements clear and explicit.

Appreciation assessment instruments that explicitly require the demonstration of all three objectives, including higher-order skills such as synthesis, evaluation and justification, allow for the effective demonstration of the range of standards.

As evaluation is the process of assigning merit according to criteria, basing Appreciation tasks on a given reference point, such as how a choreographer has used dance skills and components for a specific purpose, provides students with a framework to make discerning evaluations.

Effective Appreciation tasks are selective in the length and complexity of the dancework stimulus, and are designed to allow students to demonstrate depth of the objectives of the course. The task description should indicate certain dance components as the focus, such as the use of spatial elements and form (syllabus, p. 10).

The most effective Choreography tasks are those in which the intention of the work is clearly stated, thus providing students with the capacity to convey their intent, a feature of the standards for this dimension.

The statement of choreographic intent (syllabus, pp. 21–22) 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 processes.

The syllabus states that “… in choreography, the assessment of movement components is the focus. The integration of non-movement components should be encouraged if resources are available and relevant to the intention of the choreographic problem” (p. 22).

The most effective Performance tasks are those in which students are required to integrate dance skills and components, rather than demonstrating these in isolation. Integral to the development of effective performance tasks is a clear statement of intent. Irrespective of the genre, style or context, performance tasks should include appropriately complex and challenging movements that require the students to develop and demonstrate dance components and technical and expressive skills, and allow them to interpret and communicate a choreographic intent.
Application of standards

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

There was a very high level of consistency in the application of syllabus standards to student responses. When determining the standard to be awarded schools refer to the syllabus exit standards, Section 5.8.1 of the syllabus (p. 29).

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.

For the most part, video evidence for Choreography and Performance supported judgments.

A statement of choreographic intent is required for both Choreography and Performance tasks as this is integral to students demonstrating the standards in both dimensions.

Support

Support materials for the Dance 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website at include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html#assessment>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

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. When amending a work program, schools consider the syllabus requirements including the verification folio requirements such as having only one individual practical assessment instrument. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_drama_07_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Effective Forming tasks were identified when the task, either written or practical, included clearly stated requirements for evidence, and documentation matched the syllabus requirements (pp. 29–31 and p. 36). Practical Forming tasks require the active shaping and creating of dramatic action using the dramatic languages, whereas delivering a prepared written director’s pitch as an oral is a written Forming task delivered as an oral.

Students were able to demonstrate the A standard descriptors such as “innovative and discerning exploration of ideas” when tasks provided this opportunity. Practical directing workshops require students to create and shape dramatic meaning using a text. However those that include warm-up exercises do not allow student responses to demonstrate a match to the standards. Scriptwriting tasks which required students to adhere to theatrical scriptwriting conventions with an identified style for a particular purpose and context provided the best opportunities.

Effective Presenting tasks provided students with texts that allowed them to be discerning and select dramatic languages to demonstrate an insightful understanding of the purpose and function of drama and so match to an A standard. Script selection provided opportunity when it allowed students to perform effectively in the appropriate style.

When students used group-devised texts for performance, the instrument clearly indicated that it assesses Presenting and not the devising of the text which is a Forming instrument. Effective Presenting tasks provide students with sufficient time for task completion (syllabus, p. 31). Assessment opportunities allowing groups with large numbers performing for only a few minutes did not provide sufficient opportunity for students to demonstrate the full range of standards.

Effective Responding tasks required students to evaluate how successfully dramatic languages were manipulated to create dramatic action and meaning. In appraising live theatre, students were required to analyse, interpret dramatic action and meaning, and present a justified position selecting relevant techniques, conventions and elements of drama to justify their statements (syllabus, p. 26). Questions with a literary focus that required references to theme, literary value of the text, description of the text and plot, identity of the characters or issues dealt with in the play did not allow students to demonstrate the Responding general objective.

Effective Responding tasks required students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the full range of dramatic languages beyond the elements of drama to include the skills of performance and the conventions of style. Effective instruments required students to respond to live theatre (or recorded live theatre). Responding to documentaries, films, some musicals or about theatre companies did not provide the
opportunity to evaluate or interpret dramatic action and meaning or refer to appropriate conventions of style and elements of drama to justify their position.

**Application of standards**

Verification folios require clear indication of teacher judgments and include sufficient material to validate judgments made regarding the application of the exit standards which are not amended. The original task and criteria for each student response is required (syllabus p. 36). When the Standard A or C DVD sample belongs to a sample folio, a second copy needs to be included with the DVD, clearly identifying each student and their standard (syllabus p. 41). In most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools.

Judgments about standards in *Forming* could be supported when students submitted the documentation required by the syllabus (p. 36). Practical directing responses had relevant annotations on the script that included directions to actors, movement, emotions and justified decisions, and these were related to the interpretation of the text. Some successful annotations used a targeted graphic organiser to record post-directorial decisions related to the objectives. Improvisation tasks require the documentation described in the syllabus (p. 36). Commedia dell’Arte improvisations that included only a group scenario did not meet these requirements. Group forming tasks, other than an improvisation, did not provide evidence of individual contribution.

*Presenting* tasks in a verification folio must include one “published” playtext (p. 36). A transformed text, such as physical theatre where dialogue is minimal, does not meet this requirement. When the second *Presenting* instrument is a student-devised or physical theatre performance scripts are also required and need to have the student’s role highlighted. The A standard responses require planned, rehearsed and polished performances. Students reading from scripts did not match this standard descriptor.

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” and “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 available on the QSA website include:

- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1239.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1239.html#assessment>.

For information about future implementation workshops for the Drama 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from the combined state review panel meeting.

Syllabus

The Earth Science 2000 syllabus is in its twelfth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_earth_science_00_syll.pdf>.

Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Generally, assessment instruments provided opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives across the range standards.

It has been noted that two criteria need to be more explicitly addressed in assessment, specifically in Knowledge, conceptual understanding and application (KCUA) “evaluating relevance of information” and in Working scientifically (WS) “assesses validity and adequacy of data”. Opportunities to assess KCUA include annotated bibliographies or inquiry guides for extended investigations (EI) and concept overviews in extended laboratory-based and/or field-based investigation (ELF), or evaluating provided sources in written tests. Opportunities to assess WS include students assessing data gathered in short laboratory-based or field-based investigation (SLF) and ELF tasks.

Students should have explicit opportunities to recognise investigation questions (WS) and plan investigations (WS) in both years of a course. In some instances, the level of teacher direction or scaffolding can prevent students from demonstrating their ability relative to these elements. Assessment instruments that start with a broad concept, theme or question relative to which students need to develop and implement a specific investigation to test a question they have identified should provide viable opportunities for assessing WS.

The gathering of evidence to demonstrate levels of achievement is best achieved when students are provided with more than one opportunity per year to demonstrate each of the aspects of the general objectives.

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. When determining levels of achievement using the body of evidence in the folio, decisions need to be made on-balance in each criterion.

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 Earth Science 2000 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954.html#wp>

QSA memos 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>.

Chris Blundell 
State Review Panel Chair

Colleen Palmer
Senior Education Officer
Economics — B29

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

Syllabus

The Economics 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the Year 12 cohort of students was the first to exit using this syllabus.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_economics_10_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Across most assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. Within the 2010 syllabus (pp. 3–5), these are grouped into three dimensions: Knowledge and understanding, Investigation, and Synthesis and evaluation. In general, it was also evident that for each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards were drawn from the syllabus dimensions and the relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, pp. 31–32).

The supervised written assessment technique is used to assess student responses that are produced independently, under supervision and in a set time frame (syllabus, p. 24). For verification folio requirements (syllabus p. 28), one of the two supervised assessment instruments must be an extended response written in response to stimulus with an unseen question. The stimulus provided should be varied in its nature. Varied stimulus provides opportunities for students to select and organise data and information from sources (Investigation dimension). It also provides opportunities for student work to demonstrate a variety of viewpoints, economic ideas and decisions to construct economic understanding (Synthesis and evaluation dimension).

The purpose of the research assessment technique is to assess the research abilities of students and the outcomes of the application of that research (syllabus, p. 26). This should include locating and using information that goes beyond the data provided and possibly the generation of primary data and/or the use of secondary data. This provides opportunities for students to examine data for completeness, relevance, accuracy and bias to determine validity which is a general objective within the dimension of Investigation. When the research technique is revisited (most likely in Year 12), the assistance provided to students should be reduced and could be a series of generic questions (syllabus, p. 28).

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 most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools on the standard awarded to each dimension.

Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was often associated with the evidence within sample folios related to the Synthesis and evaluation dimension. The Standard A in this dimension includes a discerning use of a comprehensive variety of viewpoints, economic ideas and decisions, and drawing valid and supported conclusions.
It also includes the purposeful and effective communication of information through sequencing relevant and substantial subject matter (syllabus, p. 32).

The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities within the student's work match the descriptors overall in a dimension. This means that when making an on-balance judgment it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in the dimension (syllabus, p. 29).

Support

Support materials for the Economics 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11543.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11543.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website's “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11543.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

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

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.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 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, both Year 11 and 12 students studied the Engineering Technology 2010 syllabus for the first time.


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 technical engineering report in the summative year. The report is included in the verification submission. This technique offers students an opportunity to apply the engineering design process to solve an engineering design challenge.

Effective tasks encourage modelling and simulation of engineering principles and applications. The design challenge requires the development of a prototype that can be tested to confirm the validity of the proposed engineering solution. This assessment technique provides for the demonstration of all three dimensions. Effective tasks provide opportunities for students to achieve across the full range of syllabus standards descriptors.

The qualities in student responses are matched to the syllabus standards to make achievement decisions within the dimensions. Supervised written assessments must explicitly identify the standards to be demonstrated in order for students to know what they have to do and for teachers to be able to make syllabus standards-based judgments.

Schools had difficulty directly applying assessment items from the 2004 syllabus without considering the changes to the dimensions in the 2010 syllabus. The criteria of the 2004 syllabus do not directly align with the dimensions of the 2010 syllabus.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific standards matrices drawn from the syllabus standards. In most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by the schools.

There were concerns with some schools’ judgments at the A standard for Dimension 2 — Investigative and analytical processes, particularly for:

- prototype developments that validate solutions rather than just provide data
- solutions that are analysed in depth and detail from multiple perspectives.
Support

Support materials for the Engineering Technology 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11673.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11673.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11673.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Tony Muller  Roy Barnes
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
English — B45

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

Syllabus

The English 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the syllabus was verified.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_english_10_syll.pdf>

Assessment design

The syllabus dimensions and objectives inform the design of effective assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to:

- examine how texts are structured and organised for particular purposes and then apply this knowledge to produce different types of texts for particular purposes
- understand and control textual features in a variety of contexts
- create and evaluate texts to demonstrate how and why meaning is made.

The assessment instrument design process begins with a decision about which objectives in each of the three dimensions will be assessed and which standards descriptors will be selected for use in making judgments about student achievement. Teachers use the language of the objectives to frame assessment instruments and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevant objectives of the three dimensions for all standards.

Instrument-specific standards matrixes align with instrument demands/requirements. To develop an instrument-specific standards matrix for an assessment instrument, teachers select those objectives from each of the dimensions that relate to the instrument. For example, if the focus of the instrument is on students analysing texts constructed by others, schools include the relevant “evaluating” objectives from dimension three; if the focus is on students constructing/creating their own texts, then relevant “creating” objectives are included. Schools do not change the qualitative descriptors of the syllabus standards or add descriptors to standards matrixes.

Students must have a number of opportunities to demonstrate achievement in the dimensions and objectives of the course. In Dimension 3, schools ensure that students have the opportunity to both use aesthetic features to achieve purposes and evaluate the effects of aesthetic features in others’ texts. How students are expected to demonstrate this objective is indicated on the assessment instrument. Schools ensure that all instruments are contextualised in terms of purpose and audience so as to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevant objectives of the three dimensions.

In both Year 11 and Year 12, students must produce a written analytical exposition based on the in-depth study of a complete literary text (Section 5.6 of the syllabus). Schools ensure the selected literary text is sufficient to provide the opportunity for an in-depth study. The analytical exposition must be in response to an unseen question which must allow for the full range of standards to be demonstrated. The response is completed in one uninterrupted session under supervised conditions.

The second supervised written response allows students prior notice of task. Once students begin writing under supervised conditions, they complete the response with no access to feedback. The response may be completed in one uninterrupted session or
within five school days. Schools must ensure the instrument conditions are maintained to guarantee student authorship and the integrity of the technique. Schools may choose from either the written imaginative or written persuasive or reflective category for this instrument.

The third required written instrument must be conducted under open conditions. Schools may choose from either the written imaginative or written persuasive or reflective category for this instrument.

In each year of the course, students must produce two extended spoken responses. Schools must choose two of the three available text categories. The syllabus does not require schools to include the same two categories in each year; for example, schools might include the imaginative and expository categories in Year 11 and the persuasive or reflective and expository categories in Year 12. At least one spoken response in the verification folio must be an individual task.

Application of standards

In making judgments about student achievement, schools match qualities of student responses with the syllabus dimensions and standards descriptors. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student's response match the standards descriptors overall across the three dimensions. It is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard. Relative achievement decisions are made by looking for the extent to which standards descriptors have been achieved across the three dimensions at a threshold, typical, or better than typical standard.

The minimum requirements for Sound Achievement are applied only at exit from a four-semester course. Decisions about achievement for students who exit after one, two or three semesters are made by matching available evidence in relation to the objectives covered to the stage of the course, with the particular standards descriptors related to those objectives. To be awarded Sound Achievement or above, students who exit after four semesters must meet or exceed the minimum requirements for Sound Achievement in both written and spoken modes. The evidence across all written responses is to be considered independently of the evidence across the spoken responses to confirm that minimum requirements have been met. Teachers should match the evidence of all written or spoken responses with the qualitative descriptors in Section 5.8.2 of the syllabus in order to make an on-balance judgment about the match of all the evidence in that mode with each descriptor. Once the minimum requirements have been confirmed for both modes, schools make relative achievement decisions as described above.

Support

In 2011 and 2012, six sample assessment instruments, with annotated student responses at Standards A and C were added to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703.html#assessment>.

In 2012, panel training was conducted in the thirteen districts.

In Semester 1, 2013, assessment workshops for the English 2010 syllabus will be conducted. Dates and venues are published on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Edna Galvin
State Review Panel Chair

Jo Genders
Senior Education Officer
English Extension — B37

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

Syllabus

In 2012, the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the English Extension 2011 syllabus was verified.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_syll_eng_extn_11.pdf>

Assessment design

The syllabus dimensions and objectives inform the design of effective assessment instruments. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to:

- understand and interpret literary texts and theoretical approaches to their study
- analyse literary texts by applying theoretical approaches to them
- evaluate texts and theoretical approaches and synthesise these understandings.

The three dimensions describe the complex thinking that students use when working with literary texts and theoretical approaches in their study, and responding to assessment. The dimensions are closely interrelated and involve iterative processes.

The syllabus describes the requirements for each of the three assessment instruments. Assessment packages must meet the requirements specified in the assessment overview in Section 4.6 of the syllabus. Instrument-specific standards matrixes are developed using the syllabus standards descriptors (Section 4.9.2 of the syllabus) and align with instrument demands. To develop an instrument-specific standards matrix for an assessment instrument, teachers select the objectives, described at standards A to E, from each of the dimensions that relate to the instrument. Schools do not change the qualitative descriptors of the syllabus standards or add descriptors to standards matrixes.

In Assessment Instrument 1, while there is a close relationship between a reading and a defence, students must produce two distinct texts. In the reading, students make meaning of the text by applying interpretive strategies associated with particular theoretical approaches. In the accompanying defence, students analyse the reading they have produced, explaining how the theoretical approach used has allowed them to make meaning of the text in particular ways. The glossary explains the key terms and concepts of the syllabus.

In Assessment Instrument 2, the written or multimodal complex transformation invites alternative and/or resistant readings other than those the base text seems to invite. Alternative and resistant readings require an ideological shift that moves beyond mere inversion. The spoken/signed defence of the complex transformation requires students to identify relevant aspects of the base text, including the key assumptions and values underpinning the text that they would like to challenge and how the relevant textual features support or construct these assumptions and values. The defence must explain how theoretical approaches were applied in the intervention of the text and evaluate how the application of theoretical understandings offers readers alternative positions in the rewritten text. In the defence, to evaluate how the application of theoretical understandings allows the rewritten text to offer alternative positions, students explain how the theoretical approaches were applied in the intervention of the text. An emphasis on identifying the key
assumptions and values underpinning the base text might not provide sufficient opportunity for students to demonstrate the range of objectives across the standards.

Assessment Instrument 3 requires students to select at least one complex literary text and at least two theoretical approaches to apply to the text. The focus question must be achievable given the guidelines for the length of student response. Furthermore, it must allow for evaluation of the effectiveness of at least two theoretical approaches when applied to the chosen text(s) to produce a close reading. It may be necessary to revisit and refine the focus question as students work on their response. There must be a clear link between the focus question and the analysis and evaluation of the texts and theoretical approaches in the response. Students must select a text with enough complexity to sustain depth of analysis.

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).

**Application of standards**

In making judgments about a student response, schools match the qualities of the work with the syllabus standards descriptors. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about the best match to the standards across the three dimensions. It is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard.

When students exit a course of study, teachers make decisions about levels of achievement using student folios of responses to the range of assessment instruments offered over the course of study.

Relative achievement decisions are made by looking for the extent to which standards descriptors have been achieved across the three dimensions at a threshold, typical, or better than typical standard.

On-balance judgments made at exit are decisions are about each student’s achievement in all the dimensions across the variety of assessment techniques implemented over the course.

Exit decisions are based on the evidence in folios about achievement of syllabus objectives across a two-semester course of study. Each dimension must be assessed in each instrument; each dimension makes an equal contribution to the exit levels of achievement.

**Support**

In 2012, three sample assessment instruments, with annotated student responses at Standard A, were added to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17601.html#assessment>. The assessment samples support school-based decisions about the design of effective assessment and the appropriate application of standards.

Other resources, including *Approaches to Reading Practices* are available on the website to support teachers in implementing this subject.

In 2012, panel training was conducted in the three districts.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

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 seventh year of implementation. A number of schools submitted work program amendments to allow for:

- inclusion of new media and its current use
- review of design tasks
- limiting the focus and number of the key concepts to suit contexts, genres and assessment in units (pp. 8–19).

Assessment design

The syllabus provides advice about assessing the key concepts across Design, Production and Critique (pp. 29–33). Advice on assessment in the key concepts is outlined in the tables 1–5 of conditions (syllabus, pp. 37–43). Section 4 of the syllabus, Course organisation, explains each key concept including features and learning experiences.

By assessing only one or two key concepts in each task, schools successfully provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the range of key concepts across the syllabus standards A–E. The syllabus provides the suggested guidelines for task conditions in Design, Production or Critique (pp. 37–43).

When designing assessment, schools consider the most suitable format (pp. 37–43) and genre in Design, Production or Critique to best demonstrate the criterion for that task.

When assessing Design:

- Information in pre-production formats should include explicit film language in relation to the selected key concepts, context and task. For example, treatments include more than just a plot or narrative outline and are developed to elicit responses best suited to products and their contexts of use. In developing a treatment, the appeal to a target audience, character development, the visual style, how mood will be created, how representations will be constructed using film codes and the use of mise-en-scène is considered.

- Three-column scripts and film scripts include explicit film languages to best demonstrate the key concepts being assessed including more than outline plot information and dialogue.

- Ensure that the outcomes from the pre-production task do not restrict opportunity in the production task.

- Other Design formats include details that correlate with the type of production to follow. For example, in a music video, lyrics and instrumental sections included in the shot-list show the match between images and sound.

When assessing Production:

- Art and experimental films have particular stylistic constructs experienced through a course of study. Successful art and experimental film responses employ those stylistic constructs, rather than producing selections of random shots or a music video.

- The context (e.g. institutional context or audience context: fan culture, popular culture) is a significant part of the criterion, stated on tasks and evident in responses.
When assessing *Critique*:

- Tasks have a clear focus that allows students the opportunity to analyse and evaluate film products and their context of production and use. A clear focus directly related to the criteria provides the opportunity to demonstrate the syllabus standards A–E.

- The syllabus does not require oral presentations to be accompanied by an analytical essay. Only materials directly related to the presentation (e.g. a PowerPoint or multimedia presentation) are required for moderation purposes (p. 45).

- Moving-image media are the products being analysed and evaluated.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student responses are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards. Instrument-specific criteria sheets are developed using the syllabus standards descriptors and include the key concepts being assessed. Judgments are made using the typical standards and the syllabus minimum requirements (p. 47).

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

When responding to *Design* tasks, students demonstrated their knowledge of the key concepts through explicit film languages and storyboard information. Storyboard information goes beyond basic shot type and angles and includes detailed shot information such as explanations of camera use and movement, mise-en-scène, lighting, transitions and sound. Use of stick drawings does not allow students to sufficiently demonstrate their understanding about framing, use of space and information about mise-en-scène.

When responding to *Production* tasks, students:

- are assessed individually in a group production based on the identifiable component that they created; no group grade is awarded for the complete product

- are judged using instrument-specific criteria and the individual’s contribution to a group production

- demonstrate their contribution to group productions in formal roles such as editor, cinematographer, and sound technician or by completing a segment of the film (p. 41).

**Support**

Support materials for the Film, Television and New Media 2005 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html#syllabus>

- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html#wp>

- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1245.html#assessment>.

Keri Church  
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Hollindale  
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 fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers' perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a "variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity" (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to "demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey ideas with flexibility and originality" at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
required at least one writing task of approximately 200 words
ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrices or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:

• comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A

• a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:

• “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance”, as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)

• conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support

Support materials for the French 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

• syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4908.html#syllabus>

• work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4908.html#wp>

• assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4908.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Clayton Forno       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**


**Assessment design**

*Short-response test*

Assessment instruments that best facilitated demonstration of Criterion 1 across the range of standards had the following qualities:

- Tasks relevant to each key question in the unit as described in Section 1.5 of the syllabus (p. 4).
- Coverage of a cross section of key ideas for the unit as described in the syllabus so as to reflect the key questions of geographic inquiry.
- Limited choice in questions to allow coverage of key questions and key ideas.
- A number of paragraph length responses that allowed a demonstration of an A standard of Knowledge, and of a thorough and comprehensive coverage of geographical facts, concepts, key ideas, processes and explanations.
- Spatial knowledge questions that were linked to the case studies undertaken in the units, including recall of places and patterns on maps at local and national scales not just at a global scale, and written descriptions of spatial patterns e.g. “describe the pattern of annual rainfall in Australia”.

*Practical exercises*

The most effective instruments had the following qualities:

- Complex manipulation and presentation of data such as the creation of choropleth maps or compound bar graphs with comprehensive sets of data that allows the Analytical processes criterion of an A standard to be demonstrated.
- Student responses that reflected the expectations of geographic conventions such as use of borders, ruler drawn legends, accurate titles and acknowledging of sources which allows students to demonstrate the range of the Research and communication criterion.

*Stimulus response essay*

The most effective instruments had the following qualities:

- Stimulus that included mostly graphs, diagrams, maps and statistics with little or no text material. This non-written stimulus provided the best opportunities for student responses to demonstrate insightful transformation and extrapolation of geographic information necessary for Standard A.
- Essay questions with a section based on analytical processes such as “identify simple/complex relationships and causes” and another section based on decision-making processes such “evaluate alternative proposals by applying appropriate criteria and justifying decisions”.

• Decisions made between two valid options only, which were small scale and realistic. Criteria applied to the decisions were written as specific statements such as “impact of noise on nearby residents”, rather than just “social impacts”.

Application of standards

• Criterion 1 — Knowledge at Standard A student responses must demonstrate a thorough and comprehensive coverage of geographical facts, concepts, key ideas, processes and explanations.

• Criterion 2 — Analytical processes at Standards A and B need to demonstrate thorough explanation of simple and complex relationships. Insightful and effective transformation of geographical information required for Standard A is best demonstrated when stimulus material is nonwritten.

• Criterion 3 — Decision-making processes at Standards A and B. While district samples provided evidence of comprehensive and detailed evaluation, there was less evidence of well-reasoned and logical justification of decisions.

• Criterion 4 — Research and communication at Standards A and B should demonstrate highly effective or effective organisation and presentation of information that adheres to geographic conventions, cognisant with the advice on the QSA website.

Support

Support materials for the Geography 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

• syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html#syllabus>

• work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html#wp>

• assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, annotated instruments and responses, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

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 fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers’ perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a “variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity” (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to “demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey ideas with flexibility and originality” at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
• required at least one writing task of approximately 200 words
• ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:

• comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A
• a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:

• “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus).
• conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support

Support materials for the German 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

• syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html#syllabus>
• work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html#wp>
• assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1, 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Helen Nicolson Setz
State Review Panel Chair
Lester Ford
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 fifth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at

Assessment design

Schools are involving students in a wide range of contextual units; however, the following issues have been identified:

- Some assessment tasks focus students towards the design or modification of a product rather than researching and planning the graphical solutions for the specified target audience.
- Scaffolding of assessment tasks limited the student demonstration of the full range of syllabus standards.
- The implementation model was not being fully used.

The syllabus recommends that a context-based folio provides the documentation of the reasoning behind the planning, refinement and production stages of the implementation model as well as the evaluation of all these stages (p. 24). This aligns with the planning, analysis, evaluation and refinement aspects of the Reasoning criterion as outlined in the standards associated with exit criteria (p. 31).

Some tasks are directing students to produce written information about the design or modification of a product rather than focusing on how to graphically represent their product for a particular audience. An example was a student response that contained approximately twenty pages of investigation related to the design of a piece of gym equipment. The response contained limited evidence of planning and refinement of the graphical representations that they were going to draw. While the graphical product submitted was of standard that matched to the Standard A, there was no evidence of how the student reached this solution. This adversely impacted upon the opportunities for student demonstration of the full range of descriptors for Reasoning.

Scaffolding in assessment packages may limit opportunities for student demonstration of the full range of standards, including the interpretation of the target audience’s needs and the development of the appropriate set of graphical representations. Effective tasks allow students to demonstrate the aspects of the implementation model of the syllabus defined in Planning and Refinement (p. 7) as:

- Planning — reflecting on information gathered, evaluating concepts and initial ideas; an example is the use of annotations that demonstrate judgments and decisions.
- Refinement — consolidating and improving the chosen graphical representation by considering the elements and principles of graphical communication and elements of presentation relevant to the contextual unit, and evaluating the graphical response on this basis.

Reference must be made within the assessment task to a target audience and the emphasis of the task is to create a purposeful graphical representation. Effective tasks require students to explore and implement a variety of approaches to set graphical
problems, rather than be confined to preconceived ideas or a specified set of drawings. Learning experiences build on the prior knowledge, strengths and interests that the students bring to the learning situation.

**Application of standards**

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets 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 Standard A descriptors for **Reasoning**, including:

- graphical representations, analysed in detail from multiple points of view in consideration of the elements of presentation
- perceptive recommendations derived from critical evaluation and supported by valid justifications
- considered refinement of concepts to create insightful, effective and distinctive graphical responses.

**Support**

Support materials for the Graphics 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2153.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2153.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2153.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

For information about future implementation workshops for the Graphics 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Wayne Van Den Bos  Roy Barnes  
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Health Education — A19

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

Syllabus

The Health Education 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation with the current Year 12 students being the first cohort to exit using this syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_health_ed_10_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

The most effective assessment instruments are those that allowed for the demonstration of the full range of dimensions and standards. When designing assessment instruments it is important that consideration be given to the depth rather than breadth of a health issue. A more targeted approach to a specific element of a health issue, requiring responses that encompass one or two action areas of the Ottawa Charter, is effective. This provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the objectives in all three dimensions and the full range of standards.

Ideally, task requirements should direct students to consider the underpinning core elements, health promotion theories, concepts and strategies that are applicable to the health issue. Responses that demonstrated insightful synthesis and critical evaluation were evident when students:

• explored current health issues that were relevant to the community in which they were to be implemented and were supported by current research
• analysed current primary and secondary data and information and distinguished significant findings relating to the health issue
• analysed the health issue by applying current health promotion theories, concepts and strategies to make decisions, formulate actions and propose effective solutions
• evaluated data and justified recommendations, conclusions, strategies and actions based on current initiatives, testable theories and factual evidence and/or consideration of previous projects and their associated success
• reflected on and evaluated strategies and action for change.

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 match the qualities of student work to the syllabus standards in most sample folios. Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, this was associated with the Application and analysis dimension. Evidence of this dimension is best demonstrated within student work when the data and information being used is current and/or relevant. This also applies to the theories, concepts and strategies used when exploring the health issue.
Support

Support materials for the Health Education 2010 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11622.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11622.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11622.html#assessment>.

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 assessment workshops for Health Education in 2013, refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.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

The Home Economics 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the syllabus was verified.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_home_ec_10_syll.pdf>.

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. Schools provided opportunities to demonstrate the general objectives of the course in assessment instruments by:

- succinctly and clearly defining the task using the language of the standards so that it was accessible to students
- developing instrument-specific standards matrixes that selected the relevant standards descriptors to match the dimensions and objectives that the task was designed to assess
- providing a clear and realistic context, including genre, audience and intended purpose for research assessment instruments
- selecting issues that were significant to the wellbeing of individuals, families or communities, and relevant to students so they can effectively research and evaluate evidence to support conclusions
- developing design challenges where students could seek solutions to help improve the wellbeing of individuals, families or communities. Successful design challenges provided opportunities to justify and support solutions if responding to Reasoning and communicating processes and refining a variety of practical skills and planning for Practical performance.
- designing performance and products tasks that provided the opportunity for Knowledge and understanding and Practical performance through the production of products and a process journal. Effective tasks allowed for the demonstration of Knowledge and understanding and required the application of the relevant key concepts related to the design challenge. The design challenge required the refinement of a variety of skills to produce a quality product and the collection of evidence to support the practical trials and experiments (Section 5.5.3 of the syllabus). They included clear task instructions for process journals and required thorough planning, effective and efficient management and reflection on the process rather than just an evaluation of the product.
- considering the syllabus objectives and standards when developing questions for supervised written tasks. These questions provided opportunities to use thorough explanations and application of key concepts plus aspects of Reasoning and communication processes to analyse and evaluate evidence to support conclusions. In order to analyse and evaluate evidence, appropriate stimulus materials were provided.
- linking all aspects of the task requirements for assessment instruments which combined all dimensions in a performance and products assessment. These aspects were all
linked to the design challenge, from application of relevant key concepts, to Reasoning and communication processes and Practical performance. Not all aspects of the three dimensions need to be assessed in such a task and the scope of the task needs to be achievable for students in the suggested conditions.

- clearly identifying the techniques and the dimensions to be assessed. Where a Research assessment instrument was based on the same design challenge as a performance and products assessment instrument there was a clear task outline for both instruments, a separate set of conditions and a separate instrument-specific standards matrix. It is important to ensure that the solutions or conclusions drawn in the first task will provide students with opportunity to complete the second task.

**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 most sample folios, 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.

Where evidence in student responses was not matched to standards, it was related to the lack of opportunity provided in assessment instruments to demonstrate the A or B standard descriptors.

The A standard for the *Knowledge and understanding* dimension requires a comprehensive range of significant facts and thorough explanation and application of key concepts. The A standard for the *Practical performance* dimension requires evidence of thorough planning, effective and efficient management and perceptive reflection. Process journal documentation needs to provide evidence of these qualities in order to match to the A standards for these dimensions.

**Support**

Support materials for the Home Economics 2010 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at &lt;www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11788.html#syllabus&gt;
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at &lt;www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11788.html#wp&gt;
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, *Highlighted standards*, and annotated instruments and responses at &lt;www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11788.html#assessment&gt;.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at &lt;www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html&gt;.

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 third year of implementation and includes the vocational qualifications SIT10207 Certificate I in Hospitality and SIT10307 Certificate I in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations).

The Hospitality Studies 2012 syllabus was released this year without embedded VET. It can be found at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_hospitality_12_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments that provided opportunities across the full range of standards for Knowledge and understanding required students to demonstrate recognition, description, and explanation of key ideas, principles and concepts across the topic area studied. To allow for this, the emphasis in Year 12 instruments should be on paragraph responses (syllabus, p. 48).

Assessment instruments provided effective opportunities when they allowed students to apply a range of concepts, key ideas and principles relevant to the hospitality industry and were based on a range of relevant subject matter that ensured coverage across more than one focus area. It is unlikely that the selection of only one or two items from the subject matter suggestions would 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).

Instruments which require students to demonstrate the Reasoning general objective were more effective when they provided opportunity to respond to hospitality issues by:

- analysing data
- developing arguments supported by evidence to draw conclusions
- making recommendations as well as communicating in appropriate forms
- using appropriate language and referencing conventions.

The Practical performance general objective requires the demonstration of the ability to make and justify decisions, perform skills in the planning, implementation and delivery of quality products and services, in a hospitality industry context. Effective tasks required students to evaluate and reflect on planning, implementation and outcomes of the hospitality event or function. Assessment instruments which assess the Practical performance general objective provide opportunities for students to demonstrate adherence to workplace health and safety practices.

Application of standards

Judgments about student responses are made by matching the evidence with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards. For each assessment instrument, schools developed an instrument-specific criteria sheet from the syllabus standards. Syllabus standards descriptors are not modified other than to include the genre of the communication (e.g. research report or essay) and context of the hospitality event (e.g. High Tea or Coffee Shop). The highlighted standards available from the QSA website provide guidance on the development of instrument-specific standards matrices.
The application of standards, in the main, is 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 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 decisions should address all plans, products and services that are produced and should be based on the dimensions of the task that were specifically identified during 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 available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8691.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8691.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, Highlighted standards, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8691.html#assessment>.

The release of the Hospitality Studies 2012 syllabus was supported by implementation workshops in four districts. The syllabus will be implemented with the Year 11 cohort in 2013. Assessment workshops are scheduled in Term 2. Information about the workshops can be found at: <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

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

This report is based on information gathered from moderation processes.

Syllabus

The Indonesian 2008 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers’ perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a "variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity" (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to "demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey … ideas with flexibility and originality" at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
required at least one writing task of approximately 200 words
ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrices or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (Tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:
- comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A
- a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:
- “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)
- conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support

Support materials for the Indonesian 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:
- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4842.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1, 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Kath Symmons Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Information Processing and Technology (IPT) — A16

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

Syllabus

The Information Processing and Technology (IPT) 2010 syllabus is in its second year of implementation. In 2012, the Year 12 cohort of students was the first to exit using this syllabus.


Assessment design

Across many assessment packages it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. Within the 2010 syllabus (pp. 2–3), these are grouped into three dimensions: Knowledge and application, Analysis and synthesis, and Evaluation and communication. In general, it was also evident that for each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards were drawn from the syllabus dimensions and the relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, pp. 39–40).

The supervised written assessment technique is used to assess student responses that are produced independently, under supervision and in a set time frame (syllabus, p. 31). When implementing this technique, the most effectively designed assessment instruments provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a range of general objectives across the dimensions. These items include short response — practical exercises and calculations and short response — prose. Such items allow students to explain concepts, processes and principles. These may also provide opportunities to interpret, analyse and evaluate through using reasoning or evidence to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

The purpose of the extended response assessment technique is to assess the sustained application of higher-order cognition of students to known and provided materials, stimuli and concepts. Student responses may be written, spoken or multimodal in nature. However, the focus of the technique is not research (syllabus, p. 32). When the technique is revisited (most likely in Year 12), the assistance provided to students should be reduced and could be a series of generic questions (syllabus, p. 34).

Finally, when implementing the product assessment technique, assessment instruments that were aligned with the design–develop–evaluate (DDE) cycle provided opportunities for students to apply a practical solution to solving a problem. The DDE cycle allows for the demonstration of all stages of the software development cycle, the information system development cycle, or a combination of the two. The written explanation in response to a product assessment may include the problem definition, rationale, assumptions and evaluation of process and product (syllabus, p. 35).

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 most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools on the standard awarded to each dimension.

Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was often associated with the evidence within sample folios related to Dimension 2, Analysis and synthesis. Within this dimension, both the A standard and B standard include the interpretation and analysis of problems and situations. For the A standard, this is detailed and from multiple perspectives. Evidence of Interpretation and analysis within a response should encompass the deconstruction of a problem or situation to determine their salient features and their suitability for solution using information technology (syllabus, p. 3). In addition, for the A standard in Analysis and synthesis, a characteristic of the solutions designed and developed is that these are effective (syllabus, p. 39).

**Support**

Support materials for the Information Processing and Technology (IPT) 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11678.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11678.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11678.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

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

Ross Jardine
State Review Panel Chair

John Langer
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 final year of implementation with Year 11 students. No new enrolments can occur with the Year 12 cohort in 2013 as the training package embedded in this syllabus has been superseded. Further information is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/memos/11/047-11.pdf>.

The Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus will be implemented with Year 11 for the first time in 2013. The timeline for the lodgement of work programs developed for the 2012 syllabus is available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/memos/12/027-12.pdf>.

Assessment design

In general, assessment packages have provided students with the opportunities to demonstrate the criteria across the range of standards. Authentic tasks have provided effective opportunities for students to demonstrate a client focus. In the Problem solving criterion there has been clear articulation of the requirement for students to evaluate using contexts, inputs, processes and products. Instrument-specific criteria sheets which are contextualised and developed from the syllabus standards are used to make judgments about students’ responses to all assessment techniques including tests and examinations.

An effective assessment package:

- provides students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate the general objectives of the syllabus
- provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives in a diversity of unrehearsed and complex situations within the chosen context(s)
- clearly articulates the task requirements including the documentation which supports the project development process (Section 7.5 of the syllabus).

Effective assessment instruments:

- clearly articulate the requirements in the Problem solving criterion to demonstrate the synthesis in project development, e.g. a journal or log that demonstrates the steps the student has taken to develop to the product
- allow teachers to validly make judgments about 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).

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 2013 quality-assurance processes.

Where evidence in student responses was not matched to standards, it was related to:
use of school-developed standards that did not align directly to the syllabus standards descriptors

analysis and synthesis aspects of the Problem solving criterion.

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 available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2157.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2157.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2157.html#assessment>.


Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Col Thompson  
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons  
Senior Education Officer
Italian — B04

This report is based on information gathered from moderation processes.

Syllabus

The 2008 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers’ perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a “variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity” (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to “demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey … ideas with flexibility and originality” at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
• required at least one writing task of approximately 200 words
• ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrices or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:
• comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A
• a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:
• “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)
• conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support

Support materials for the Italian 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:
• syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4912.html#syllabus>
• work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4912.html#wp>
• assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4912.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

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 2008 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. Schools may refine their work programs or assessment plans and submit an amendment on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/wponline/login.qsa>.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers' perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a "variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity" (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B but did not overuse katakana or have overly familiar content.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to "demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey … ideas with flexibility and originality" at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
- were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)
• required at least one writing task of approximately 400 characters
• ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (syllabus 8.1). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:

• comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A

• a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:

• “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)

• conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types. Kanji required by the syllabus was evident in student responses.

Support

Support materials for the Japanese 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

• syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html#syllabus>

• work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html#wp>

• assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html#assessment>.

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1, 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Greg Dabelstein
State Review Panel Chair

Lester Ford
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 fifth year of general implementation. The syllabus is available on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_legal_studies_07_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

There was evidence of challenging assessment instruments that provided students with the opportunity to demonstrate the general objectives across a range of standards. Schools have acted on advice to ensure that assessment instruments allow for investigation of legal issues, and legal rights and responsibilities in social contexts.

Schools are continuing to effectively use instrument-specific standards matrixes. Enabling criteria should not be included in the instrument-specific standards matrix but rather included in the task instructions to provide students with guidance about task requirements.

When completing the independent inquiry, students should be choosing their own topics (syllabus, p. 39). Teacher guidance during the drafting process is required to ensure students choose a current legal issue facing Australian society and to direct students to address a sufficiently narrow topic to enable students to demonstrate the full range of standard descriptors. Topics that are too broad tend to lead to shallow investigation which will not allow students to produce a succinct response that demonstrates the depth and breadth required by the syllabus.

The implementation of short response as an assessment technique usually involves the assessment of the Knowledge and understanding and Investigation criteria. As a result a range of questions should be included. To assess the Investigation criterion appropriately practical exercises and questions that require students to respond to stimulus material are effective. These questions offer students more opportunities to analyse situations and information to identify legal issues and problems, select and apply relevant legal principles and procedures and identify a range of relevant legal responses to issues raised (syllabus p. 4).

Application of standards

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

Where schools have created instrument-specific standards matrixes that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, most teacher judgments matched the syllabus exit criteria and folios were appropriately placed.

School judgments in Knowledge and understanding were consistent across the state. Investigation and Evaluation judgments were less frequently supported by evidence in sample folios. In some instances, student responses demonstrated Knowledge and understanding but judgments were made using standards of the Investigation criterion. The descriptions of the general objectives and examples of how students might demonstrate them should be referred to when designing assessment instruments and making judgments about student responses (syllabus, pp. 4–5).
Annotated samples of student responses, available on the website’s “Senior assessment hub”, have been designed to provide guidance to Legal Studies teachers about making judgments using the syllabus standards. This can be accessed from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html#assessment>.

Table 8.1 Awarding exit levels of achievement (syllabus, p. 49) should be used to determine exit levels of achievement. Some evidence of the incorrect application of the minimum combination of standards was observed.

Support

Support materials for the Legal Studies 2007 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, Highlighted standards and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

For information about future implementation workshops for the Legal Studies 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers are able to 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>.

Karyl Young Satu Cooper
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Marine Studies — A27

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

Assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across a range of standards. To enable more opportunities for students to demonstrate at an A standard in Knowledge and understanding, especially in the application of learned procedures and concepts, a variety of challenging as well as complex tasks are required.

Assessment instruments designed to gather evidence to make judgments in the Information processing and reasoning objective require open tasks that allow a broader range of responses. The closed nature of many instruments that assess Information processing and reasoning makes it difficult to provide responses that demonstrate critical analysis, drawing conclusions and justifying recommendations and decisions.

The descriptors used in instrument-specific criteria sheets are drawn from the syllabus standards (pp. 56–57). When qualifiers are adapted, changed or modified, judgments are not being made using the syllabus standards descriptors.

Marine investigations allow greater opportunities for students to demonstrate “planning and conducting investigations efficiently” and “collecting and organising information” (p. 60). Although there has been an improvement in the design of Information processing and reasoning tasks, opportunities need to be provided for greater complexity in relation to the number of variables being investigated so that more relationships and trend analysis can occur.

Application of standards

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

Where schools have created instrument-specific criteria that directly align with syllabus standards descriptors, judgments about student responses can be matched to the syllabus exit criteria and placements appropriately made. However, when schools develop instrument-specific criteria that do not align with the syllabus standards, teachers will not be using the syllabus standards descriptors to make judgments. The application of knowledge to find solutions across a range of complex and challenging tasks is an area of specific concern. Some student responses have not been matched to the appropriate standards.
Support

Support materials for the Marine Studies 2004 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1956.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1956.html#wp>

For information about future implementation workshops for the Marine Science 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

To receive regular updates on support materials, teachers are able to 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>.

Tanya Martin
State Review Panel Chair

Maurice Ware
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 fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_maths_a_08_syll_pdf>.

Assessment design

The most effective assessments instruments were those that provided the opportunity for students to demonstrate particular syllabus objectives across the full range of standards. Often the assessment instrument design explicitly used syllabus language to explain the instrument requirements. This allowed students to demonstrate and teachers to identify attributes of the criteria and standards. Other assessment instrument design allowed the incidental identification of syllabus objectives within tasks and this type of design should not be overlooked by the school when matching the evidence in the students’ work to the syllabus criteria and standards.

Effective assessment packages provided opportunities for students to display evidence of three principles of a balanced course: application, technology, and initiative and complexity (syllabus, pp. 5–6). Open-ended instruments such as extended modelling and problem-solving tasks and reports provide the opportunity for the incorporation of these principles. Evidence produced in the responses to these instruments contributes significantly to the decision-making process in each criterion (syllabus, p. 31).

Effectively designed assessment instruments are those that are congruent with the general objectives of the syllabus, the standards associated with exit criteria and the school work program; this congruence ensures the essential relationship between learning, teaching and assessment practices.

Approved work programs indicate the spiralling and integrated sequence that the school intends to follow in order to provide the appropriate range of learning experiences to enable the general objectives to be achieved (syllabus, p. 8). The design of the assessment package reflects the intended course sequence. Where the implementation of the course varies from the approved program, it is important that one topic area is not seen to be weighted over others by appearing in a disproportionally large number of assessment tasks within the package.

Schools continue to develop instrument-specific criteria sheets; these should:

- provide the basis for teacher judgment about student achievement
- be annotated to indicate student achievement
- provide students with the opportunity to develop self-evaluative expertise (syllabus, p. 30).
Application of standards

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

Feedback from districts indicated that there still seems to be an issue with the on-balance judgments at the Limited Level of Achievement and the threshold Sound Level of Achievement. In some cases, grading systems that aggregate results and/or use arbitrary cut-offs with no explicit links to criteria and standards descriptors, may disadvantage some students. When evidence in these 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 making on-balance achievement decisions across a folio of responses by matching the qualities in the student responses and the standard descriptors in the syllabus.

Support

Support materials for Mathematics A 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.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 fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_maths_b_08_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Assessment packages from across the state clearly demonstrated opportunities for students to meet the full range of the syllabus standards.

Key concerns from a small but significant number of assessment packages were:

- An extended modelling and problem-solving task is described in the syllabus as one where “students may provide a response to a specific task or issue that could be set in a context that highlights a real-life application in Mathematics”. For some schools, an extended modelling and problem-solving task was interpreted as a series of unrelated take-home questions. Attention should be drawn to the singularity of the task or issue described in the syllabus extract above.

- Tasks should be designed that specifically allow students to demonstrate particular aspects of the general objectives. In Modelling and problem solving, these aspects include “identify assumptions (and associated effects), parameters and/or variables during problem solving, analyse and interpret results in the context of problems to investigate the validity (including strengths and limitations) of mathematical arguments and models” (syllabus, p. 4). In Communication and justification, these aspects include “develop and use coherent, concise and logical supporting arguments, expressed in everyday language, mathematical language or a combination of both, when appropriate, to justify procedures, decisions and results” (syllabus, p. 5). These tasks should involve situations that range from simple routine to complex non-routine and be applicable to the topic being assessed.

Application of standards

The match between syllabus standards and the evidence in student folios was found to be in significant alignment.

A concern about a small but significant number of level of achievement decisions arose when decisions were not made using on-balance judgments. Where a mechanical or formulaic method was used to determine standards in a criterion, there was little alignment to the specific standard descriptors. An on-balance judgment should be used to determine the standard awarded in each criterion. Schools should always match student work to the syllabus standards descriptors, no matter how assessment data is collected. This concern was identified particularly at the interface between Sound Level of Achievement (SA) and Limited Level of Achievement (LA).
Support

Support materials for Mathematics B 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1892.html>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1892.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, *Highlighted standards* and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1892.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp.

Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Peter AntrobusWayne Stevens
State Review Panel ChairSenior Education Officer
Mathematics C — A38

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

Syllabus

The Mathematics C 2008 syllabus is in the fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_maths_c_08_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Assessment packages from across the state clearly demonstrated opportunities for students to meet the full range of the syllabus standards.

The key concerns from a small but significant number of assessment packages were:

- Tasks should be designed that specifically allow students to demonstrate particular aspects of the general objectives. In Modelling and problem solving, these aspects include “identify assumptions (and associated effects), parameters and/or variables during problem solving, analyse and interpret results in the context of problems to investigate the validity (including strengths and limitations) of mathematical arguments and models” (syllabus, p. 4). In Communication and justification, these aspects include “develop and use coherent, concise and logical supporting arguments, expressed in everyday language, mathematical language or a combination of both, when appropriate, to justify procedures, decisions and results” (syllabus, p. 5). These tasks should involve situations that range from simple routine to complex non-routine and be applicable to the topic being assessed.

- Assessment in Dynamics should bring together the concepts from both vectors and calculus. The tasks will then allow evidence to be gathered across many of the aspects of the Modelling and problem solving and Communication and justification general objectives. The extent of such evidence will be severely diminished by the use of a formulaic approach to the topic.

Application of standards

The match between syllabus standards and the evidence in student folios was found to be in significant alignment.

A concern about a small but significant number of level of achievement decisions arose when decisions were not based on on-balanced judgments. Where a mechanical or formulaic method was used to determine standards in a criterion, there was little alignment to the specific standard descriptors. On-balance judgments should be used to determine the grade awarded in each criterion. Schools should always match student work to the syllabus standards descriptors, no matter how assessment data is collected. This concern was identified particularly at the interface between Sound Level of Achievement (SA) and Limited Level of Achievement (LA).
Support

Support materials for Mathematics C 2008 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1885.html>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1885.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, Highlighted standards and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1885.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Bevan Penrose
       Wayne Stevens
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
Modern History — B39

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

Syllabus

Assessment design
Moderation processes provided evidence that teachers and students are engaging effectively with each of the four categories of assessment.

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence
Effective Category 1 questions are clearly focused on a historical issue, rather than a broad topic. For example, in response to an inquiry topic on the Indian Independence movement, a Category 1 question could focus on just one contentious aspect of the broader inquiry topic.

Sources are also carefully selected to offer a range of perspectives, and provide the opportunity for students to construct a historical argument that is derived “mainly by reference to sources supplied” (syllabus p. 49). Brief contextual statements accompanying the sources assist students in their interpretation, analysis, corroboration and evaluation of sources. Because students need to work with the sources under test conditions, consideration should be given to the number and length of seen and unseen sources.

Category 2: Written research tasks, and Category 3: Multimodal presentations
The aspects of inquiry are an integral part of the Modern History syllabus (pp. 19–20, 26–43, and 57–59) and provide a framework for student inquiry. Student research questions that are developed from the aspects “Backgrounds, changes and continuities: motives and causes” and “Effects, interests and arguments” establish an appropriate focus for student inquiries.

There are many different ways student records of research may be structured and organised to demonstrate the four parts of the Criterion 1 standard. Some students will work effectively in a research booklet, others in a less restrictive framework. The syllabus (pp. 50–51) also states that “consultation and feedback on research process should be provided judiciously, gradually diminishing with student experience”. An effective research process will enable students to form and communicate a historical argument in their final response. The syllabus (pp. 50–51) and support documents accessed through the Senior assessment hub (see Support section) provide more information about the characteristics of Category 2 and 3 assessments.

Category 4: Additional test formats
The design of response to stimulus items (as stand-alone tasks or as a part of a combined short response and response to stimulus test) must provide enough scope for students to demonstrate analysis, interpretation, corroboration and evaluation of sources and decision making. The number and scope of sources and questions needs careful consideration as this category of assessment is completed under test conditions.
Application of standards

There was evidence of significant agreement across the state in the application of standards. It is noted that the standards for each level of achievement are mid-range descriptors. Folios in the lower range of an achievement level will typically demonstrate achievement at the lower standard in one criterion as per the table of Minimum requirements for exit levels of achievement (syllabus, p. 55–56).

When making an on-balance decision about each criterion in a folio of evidence, attention is drawn to the different aspects of each criterion, as signalled by the dot points in the standards. If the student response demonstrates more A qualities than B qualities in a particular criterion, the folio on-balance is best matched to the A standard for this criterion. For example, Criterion 3 — Communicating historical knowledge has three parts:

- accuracy and relevance of the historical knowledge communicated in responses
- communication of that historical knowledge, which includes vocabulary, conventions of the genre, incorporation of historical evidence, and referencing
- scope of the response.

Support

Support materials for the Modern History syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, annotated instruments and responses, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html#assessment>.

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

The QSA Connect newsletter also provides educators with important updates. Subscribe at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/664.html>.

Kevin McAlinden
State Review Panel Chair

Lyn Sherington
Senior Education Officer
Music — B26

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

Syllabus


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 tasks are most effective when students are provided with clear and definite instructions which require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills such as hypothesising, deconstructing, evaluating, synthesising, and justifying. If this assessment technique is undertaken in exam conditions the most effective opportunities are provided through providing one or two focus questions. In this way students have the opportunity to demonstrate the standards.

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).

Effective Performing assessment tasks provide students with an authentic context in which to present their music. This allows students to interpret and communicate the music to an audience through a convincing performance and demonstrate the Performing criterion.

The syllabus provides specific guidance on the conditions for assessment tasks (p. 27). It is important to note that as student performances are assessed using audiation, it is imperative that individuals within an ensemble can be heard clearly.

Application of standards

There was a very high level of consistency in the application of syllabus standards to student responses.

Where there was an issue it related to the application of the Performing standard. In some instances Performing responses demonstrated a higher standard than those awarded.

The standards for Performing make no reference to time requirements; rather they relate to the manipulation and interpretation of musical elements. The conditions for Performing responses are outlined in the syllabus (p. 27).

While there is an increasing range of styles and genres being presented in composing, there is great consistency in the standards awarded.

Section 6.7 of the syllabus (pp. 31–32) describes 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 describes 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 one of the criteria” (p. 29). The student’s achievement in this task will contribute to their overall achievement in that one criterion and it does not replace previous information provided at verification. An on-balance judgment about the student’s overall achievement within the one criterion of the selected task is made. Consideration is then given as to how this impacts upon the student’s exit placement.

Support

Support materials for the Music 2004 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, annotated instruments and responses, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Helen Leyden  Andrew Reid
State Review Panel Chair 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 fourth year of implementation. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_music_ext_08_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Effective Investigating of music sources tasks provide opportunities to undertake explicit analysis, exploration, and synthesis of music sources. The Investigating tasks can be presented in a variety of ways which are outlined in the syllabus Section 7.5.2. Investigating tasks which centre on a topic or argument provide succinct direction. This type of task elicits a greater depth of response and thorough demonstration the standards.

An increasing diversity of compositional genres was evident in samples. Most compositions were presented as score and recording but some were presented as performances.

Composition tasks should allow for a student to respond in any genre and/or style and for this reason the standards should be awarded comparably regardless of genre or style (syllabus p. 23).

Application of standards

There was a very high level of consistency in the application of syllabus standards to student responses 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 was evident 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.

Audiovisual documentation of performances should allow the performer to be seen and heard clearly and be clearly annotated to indicate identified students. The syllabus outlines guidelines for audiovisual documentation in Section 7.5.4.

Support

Support materials for the Music Extension 2008 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936.html#assessment>.
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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Margaret Overs
State Review Panel Chair

Andrew Reid
Senior Education Officer
Other Languages — B32

This report is based on information gathered from moderation processes.

Syllabus

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

Assessment design

Assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the range of standards. Effective assessment design included:

- where a topic was assessed in more than one macroskill, each assessment focused on different aspects of the topic; in the topic of school, for example, both speaking and writing tasks did not require a comparison of the educational systems
- providing a variety of tasks to ensure demonstration of the range of syllabus standards across a range of topics and text types
- tasks appropriate to the stage of the course reached, e.g. after two or four semesters
- syllabus assessment conditions on the assessment instruments.

Instruments that effectively assessed listening and reading:

- included questions that allowed for the demonstration of the standards of analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions
- required students to draw information from texts and present writers’ perspectives
- ensured that contextual details provided in questions did not answer other questions
- provided "authentic listening texts differing in length, purpose and style, based on familiar material"; these texts were "clearly articulated in the standard variety, spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance" (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus) were not excessively long, and did not assess memory
- used a "variety of authentic texts that differ in length, purpose and complexity" (Section 8.3.2 of the syllabus) for reading
- included texts that were sufficiently complex to allow students to demonstrate Standards A and B.

Assessment instruments that effectively assessed speaking provided opportunities for the demonstration of topics studied. Teacher input prompted students to extend and elaborate on their responses.

Effective writing tasks:

- provided opportunities to "demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammar and to convey … ideas with flexibility and originality" at Standard A (Table 4.4 of the syllabus)
- complemented formulaic text types with other tasks requiring different text types
- precisely stated the text type and what students should do
• were "set in an authentic social context, with a specific audience nominated and a realistic purpose" (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus)

• required at least one writing task of approximately 200 words

• ensured stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted the conveying of meaning.

Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched appropriately to syllabus standards. Teachers made on-balance judgments about student responses, indicating on instrument-specific standards matrices or criteria sheets what standards have been demonstrated.

Student responses were matched to the standards “across a range of topics and text types” (tables 4.1–4.4 of the syllabus). As assessment programs are developmental, “fullest and latest information” for four-semester courses of study came “from Year 12” (Section 8.1 of the syllabus). On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and text types that had been assessed.

For listening and reading assessment, student responses demonstrated:

• comprehension of “familiar and complex language” as well as “detailed analysis and thorough evaluation” at the Standard A

• a match with reasoning and responding descriptors through direct references to information from the text in the assessment.

When judgments were made about student responses to speaking tasks:

• “spontaneous language use in realistic situations” was required; prepared talks were accompanied by questions that allowed for the demonstration of “flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance” as well as “conversation” that “is initiated and sustained” (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus)

• conversations were typically with a teacher; demonstration of initiating conversation included students analysing issues from more than one perspective, presenting two sides of an argument, extending and elaborating on topics, changing the direction of the conversation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

For writing responses, students demonstrated flexibility and originality in sentence structure, a wide range of vocabulary and grammar, use of complex language and a high degree of accuracy across a range of topics and text types.

Support


Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1, 2013. Details are available at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

Assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, annotated instruments and responses, and Highlighted standards at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18874.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


Assessment design

Assessment instruments in most submissions provided evidence of sufficient coverage of syllabus subject matter, topics and treatment of electives and allowed students to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives.

Most instruments included in monitoring and verification submissions provided opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives and across the full range of standards. In some cases, further consideration could be given to developing a course and assessment which allows students to maximise their opportunities to demonstrate the criteria and standards.

Effectively designed criteria and standards matrixes were those that:

- aligned to the syllabus criteria and standards
- were specific to the assessment instrument
- clearly indicated which aspects of the criteria and standards descriptors were being assessed.

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. Verification provided advice to schools about school judgments on syllabus standards descriptors based upon evidence within sample folios. Evidence was found to support schools’ decisions regarding the match between the qualities of student responses and the syllabus 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 (syllabus, p. 44). There was evidence of an alignment between effectively designed assessment that allowed opportunities for the general objectives and the range of standards; effectively designed criteria and standards matrixes; and the school’s ability to make judgments using the criteria and standards.

Where there was an issue with making judgments, it usually correlated with assessment design that did not provide opportunities and the application of criteria and standards that were not drawn from the syllabus criteria and standards (syllabus, p. 44).
Subject support

Support materials for the Philosophy and Reason 2004 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools and Assessment program audit tool at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057.html#assessment>.

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

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 2010 senior syllabus is in its second year of implementation. All schools now have approved work programs and several have sought minor amendments to better use the features of the new syllabus in their school contexts.

As schools continue to develop their programs, the syllabus must be used in conjunction with the school work program to ensure learning experiences and assessment programs align with the syllabus general objectives and requirements.

Assessment design

Effective assessment programs and instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards across the three dimensions of the syllabus. Across the state, schools designed effective assessment by:

- following syllabus guidelines to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do and by clearly stating on tasks what is to be demonstrated
- developing instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets for all assessment tasks; for physical performance, teachers use criteria sheets to annotate the match of the qualities of the performance with the task requirements
- developing assessment tasks that focus on the objectives of the Evaluating dimension to allow students to demonstrate A standard descriptors such as in-depth, appropriate and discerning
- allowing students to demonstrate independence in research, as required at the A standard descriptors for both Applying and Evaluating; by using the appropriate research practice, students locate and use information beyond the data that they have been given and the knowledge they currently have — therefore, a student would demonstrate independence by providing evidence of the outcomes of research to justify evaluation, solutions and recommendations
- in Focus Area C, requiring students to address issues about equity and access to exercise, sport and physical activity in Australian society, Figueroa’s framework is a useful tool for examining the sociocultural factors influencing equity and access; for this reason, Figueroa’s framework may be used to examine issues of equity and access that relate to the students’ personal experiences in physical activities, rather than examining the framework itself
- clearly identifying the audience and the particular purpose in written, spoken and multimodal responses, as:
  - audience and purpose influence the text type, language features and textual features
  - purpose may vary to include analysing, persuading, arguing, informing, presenting findings, proposing solutions or recommendations
  - multimodal responses use a combination of at least two modes to communicate a response to an audience for a particular purpose.
Application of standards

In general schools demonstrated the capacity to appropriately match syllabus standards to the qualities in student responses. The few issues that cropped up are described here:

- When identifying the match of evidence in physical responses to A standard descriptors: Visual evidence and commentary must identify and explain the qualities and actions of a typical Standard A response across the three dimensions. While video evidence should be succinct, evidence must demonstrate consistency across the three dimensions. The results of physical responses for each of the three assessments must also be included.

- In making judgments about “insightful analysis and application of information” (syllabus, p. 30): Student responses that demonstrate perceptive links between terminologies, principles and concepts and the physical activity provide evidence of this A standard descriptor.

- When making judgments about “discerning and convincingly justified evaluations, solutions and recommendations” (syllabus, p. 31): In responses to research assessment, students demonstrate their ability to be convincing by selecting primary and/or secondary data which enhances the justification. It is in the selection of relevant, appropriate and substantial data that discernment is demonstrated.

- When making judgments about multimodal responses: For multimodal responses, teachers apply the standards to the entire response, that is, to all modes used to communicate the response. Research presented as a spoken/multimodal response requires supporting evidence to substantiate teacher judgments. Supporting evidence may include:
  - a recording of the response (on DVD or USB), such as a presentation combining speaking with PowerPoint slides; a seminar combining speaking with visual prompts (e.g. posters, brochures, handouts); an interview or debate
  - a digital presentation or documentary combining images, sound bites, blog entries and embedded videos
  - research
  - notes or annotations
  - a summary of findings.

Support

Support materials for the Physical Education 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html#syllabus>

- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html#wp>

- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html#assessment>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Ross Stewart Jo Butterworth
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Physics — A45

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

There has been improvement in the quality of the assessment design across the state. Most assessment packages provided opportunities for students to demonstrate A-standard descriptors across all three general objectives while still allowing all students to engage with the tasks.

Some schools are implementing assessment instruments that are beyond what the syllabus requires in terms of length. Lengthy student responses to these assessment instruments have not provided additional evidence of demonstration of standards. There has been an over-emphasis by some students on detailed descriptions of extended experimental investigation methodology and theory. Effective tasks in these techniques require student responses that focus on and demonstrate analysis of data, evaluation and conclusions. The full range of syllabus standards can be achieved within the syllabus word recommendations for extended response tasks and extended experimental investigations.

Lengthy supervised assessments, some of three hours duration, are beyond the syllabus recommended times of 1½–2 hours (p. 21). Excessive word lengths and test times do not contribute to a demonstration of the standards; a focus on the design of effective tasks provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do.

In general, syllabus requirements, particularly in supervised assessment and extended experimental investigation tasks, were met and instrument-specific standards matrixes or criteria sheets were aligned with the syllabus exit standards.

Across the state, the design of the tasks aligned with the specific general objectives being assessed.

Application of standards

Schools appropriately applied the standards to determine student achievement. Achievement decisions were based on student demonstration of the Knowledge and conceptual understanding, Investigative processes and Evaluating and concluding criteria.

There was some evidence of the A and B standard descriptors in the Investigative processes and Evaluating and concluding criteria not being appropriately matched to responses. There was a lack of evidence in some student responses of systematic analysis to identify relationships between patterns and trends. The misapplication of standards included identify versus describe, and analyse versus analyse and evaluate. To assist with understanding the differences in the Standards A–E, highlighted versions of the syllabus exit standards are available on the QSA website.
Support

Support materials for the Physics 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1964.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1964.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1964.html#assessment>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

David Austin  Susan Scheiwe
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Science21 — A43

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

Syllabus

2012 is the first year in which the Science21 2010 syllabus has been implemented for a Year 12 exiting cohort.

The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_science21_10_syll.pdf>.

Assessment design

Across many assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives across the range of standards. Within the syllabus (pp. 3–4), these are grouped into three dimensions: Knowledge and conceptual understanding, Investigative processes, and Issues and impacts. In general, it was also evident that for each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards were drawn from the syllabus dimensions and the relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, pp. 35–36).

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 an instrument-specific 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 give students opportunities to produce responses that demonstrate syllabus objectives across the full range of 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, schools need to carefully consider the qualifiers of the syllabus standards when making judgments. For example, the differences between “description” and “explanation”, and “description” and “comparison” in the
Knowledge and conceptual understanding dimension; and the differences between “identification”, “description”, “explanation” and “analysis” in the Issues and impacts dimension. When a school’s application of the qualifiers has been inconsistent, 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 Science21 2010 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html#assessment>.

In 2012, panel training was undertaken for Science21 district panels.

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>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.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 fourth year of implementation of the Study of Religion 2008 syllabus. The syllabus is available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_study_religion_syll_08.pdf>.

Assessment design

Across most assessment packages, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives of the syllabus across a range of standards.

In order to authenticate student work for multimodal presentations, students should present the results of their inquiry individually rather than in groups. As this technique allows students to communicate their responses across a range of modes, instruments that required students to submit more than written scripts, such as digital recordings or copies of slide shows, provided the best demonstration of Criterion 3 — Research and communication.

Extended written responses were most effective when the task was framed around an inquiry question as this required students to formulate and test a hypothesis. Effective tasks were limited to a specific issue or phenomenon within the context of a single world religion, for example, investigating how Buddhist ritual surrounding death is expressed through Theravada, Mahayana or Tibetan experiences. This type of task ensured that students were provided an effective opportunity to demonstrate divergent knowledge and understanding, and critical analysis across the range of standards.

Research assignments provided effective opportunities to demonstrate Criterion 3 when students framed or constructed research questions around the four steps of inquiry outlined in Section 5 of the syllabus. Reasoning and judging questions as well as framing and investigating questions ensured that student research questions were well-constructed and pertinent rather than just rudimentary.

Carefully selected relevant stimulus material required students to respond to a question or series of questions by explicitly referencing the stimulus material provided. Effective stimulus material was:

- clearly reproduced with a variety of familiar and unfamiliar material
- of appropriate length to be interpreted within the time conditions of the task
- carefully selected to demonstrate a divergent range of issues and phenomena which could be analysed and synthesised.

Application of standards

In most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments about levels of achievement. Issues about judgments were associated with evidence related to:

- Criterion 1 — Knowledge and understanding at Standard A. Student responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding of religious information drawing on a
diverse range of material aligning to Standard B, rather than a divergent range of material at Standard A.

- **Criterion 2 — Evaluative processes at Standard C.** Tasks where students responded to a given hypothesis aligned to Standard D rather than Standard C. Standard C requires the formation of straightforward hypotheses. Hypotheses need to be formed at Standards A and B.

- **Criterion 3 — Research and communication at Standard C.** Student work that demonstrated use of sources aligned to standard D rather than Standard C. Standard C also requires the validation of relevant sources, Standard B the validation of a wide range of sources and Standard A the validation of a wide range of diverse sources. Evidence of use of questions is required across all standards.

**Support**

Support materials for the Study of Religion 2008 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063.html#assessment>.


John Thomas  
State Review Panel Chair

Jackie Dunk  
Senior Education Officer
Study of Society — B11

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

Syllabus

The Study of Society 2001 syllabus is in its twelfth year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2013 with Year 12 students only.


Assessment design

Through the monitoring and verification moderation processes, it was evident that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. This provides opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. Within the 2001 syllabus, these have been defined as the four criteria of Knowledge and understanding, Critical processes, Research and Communication (pp. 5-7).

In general, it was also evident that for each assessment instrument, the instrument-specific standards were drawn from the syllabus criteria and the relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, pp. 60–61).

Across most assessment packages, the opportunity to apply social theory was incorporated into the design of assessment instruments. This provides a systematic means of reflecting on issues (syllabus, p. 21) and to discuss a facet of society from the perspectives provided by sociology, anthropology and social psychology (p. 3). 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.

The design of assessment instruments requiring research were characterised by a process of social inquiry. This provides a model for investigating issues, theories or topics. It involves students deciding on the research issue, making judgments and conducting the research (syllabus, p. 15).

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 most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools on the standard awarded to each criterion.

Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was often associated with the evidence within sample folios related to Criterion 3 — Research. The Standard A within this criterion includes the selection of issues that allow complex and challenging investigation. It also includes the systematic gathering and organisation of information from a variety of sources (syllabus, p. 62). To assist in making judgments, evidence of research should include the issues identified for investigation, framed research questions or hypotheses, and the data and information gathered. This also applies to extended writing — research assignments and reports — as well as non-written presentations (syllabus, pp. 53–55).
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. The standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the syllabus standard descriptors overall (syllabus, p. 57).

**Support**

Support materials for the Study of Society 2001 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2065.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2065.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including *Designing effective assessment instruments*, *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2065.html#assessment>.

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/jsp/memoSubscriptionAdmin.jsp>.

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the “Senior moderation hub” tab on the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html>.

Allen Bennett
State Review Panel Chair

John Langer
Senior Education Officer
Technology Studies — A23

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

Syllabus


Assessment design

Technology Studies design projects provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives and the product design sequence described in Section 4.4 of the syllabus (p. 7). Effective tasks direct students to solve a problem through the product design. Students apply the design process to solve clearly identified problems. Tasks are designed to encourage innovative and creative design solutions to real, identified design problems. The realisation of a prototype to confirm the design solution may be undertaken in a much shorter time than the actual designing.

The syllabus describes the requirements for an investigative analysis assessment. Teachers use the syllabus requirements as a guide when developing appropriate tasks for students. Year 12 investigative analysis tasks provide students with a clear focus, for example, a social issue affecting a particular technology. The tasks identify the response as a persuasive text. Students form and state an opinion based on the investigation of an issue, draw conclusions and propose recommendations.

The log book of production is not an assessment instrument. It is the evidence used to support the standards awarded in the product design realisation. The log book should contain sketches, photos and annotations of key stages where design decisions have been made during the realisation phase of the design process. It is not a procedural journal of each lesson’s activities. The use of digital devices such as cameras, mobile phones and tablets may assist in recording the design process undertaken in the workshop. The log book allows students to demonstrate evidence of why they made a change to a product, rather than what they did.

The syllabus provides an opportunity for students to choose the context for one of the Year 12 design projects. This does not mean that the student chooses a product that they would like to manufacture for themselves. The design situation, brief and design criteria must validly relate to a real design problem within the chosen context. Effective assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives of the course are provided when 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 standards matrixes 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 responses in sample folios.

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
Knowledge and application. In reasoning, the issues were commonly associated with a lack of “Thorough evaluation of contexts, design solutions and products, and effective communication of valid judgments and well justified recommendations” (syllabus, p. 28).

Supporting school judgments about Production requires photographic evidence to be provided. A log book should include photographic evidence for all the key stages of production with annotated justifications.

Support

Support materials for the Technology Studies 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html#assessment>.

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

For information about future implementation workshops for the Technology Studies 2013 syllabus refer to the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3323.html>.

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 seventh year of implementation. An amendment to the work program is necessary when there is a permanent change in any of the following:

- the school-selected concepts or focus
- change in assessment instrument, e.g. formative body of work to replace an experimental folio
- any major structural changes that impact on the significant change of time related to a unit, e.g. two concept units in Year 11 to replace three or four.

Work program amendment details are available from the QSA website at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html#wp>.

Using the syllabus’s Inquiry learning model diagram (pp. 6–7) can be very effective when developing teaching and learning experiences.

Assessment design

Effective Making and Appraising assessment tasks are designed to show a clear link to the inquiry learning model in the syllabus (p. 6). Through the inquiry learning model, students are required to solve visual design problems related to the concepts/focuses, using visual language and expression with selected media and contexts. The alignment between the inquiry learning model and the general objectives of the subject will ensure that students have the opportunity to address the criteria.

Assessment is effective and provides opportunity for students where there is an interrelationship between the chosen focuses, contexts and media relevant to the concepts. In Appraising, it is helpful for students where the interrelationship is explicit and evident in the assessment instrument. Effective Appraising tasks require students to apply the inquiry learning model to critically reflect on and challenge meanings, purposes, practices and approaches of artworks and artists. Students must be provided with the opportunity to demonstrate an independent and informed viewpoint through analysis and evaluation.

Application of standards

In most sample folios, there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments which were made by schools on the standard awarded to each dimension. Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was often associated with the evidence within sample folios related to inconsistencies in the match at Very High Achievement (VHA) threshold level. Bodies of work often appeared fragmented and lacked a cohesive thread that reflects the inquiry learning model and resolution for this level of achievement.

Judgments in the Making general objective are made by looking at the demonstration in the student response of the Visual literacy and application criterion, using all the evidence across a body of work. Specifically, determinations around the Visual literacy criterion need to reflect an understanding and awareness of the inherent Visual literacy in/of artworks.

Communication of meaning occurs not only through the research and development phase of the inquiry learning model, but also is evident in resolution and reflection. A response
that reflects the A standard should demonstrate creative resolution and an innovative process. A well-informed, explicit approach to communicating meaning can be evidenced through student choice.

The manipulation and exploitation of media, visual language and expression should be apparent in resolved artworks as well as developmental works and should equally evidence mastery of skill and technique connected to concept. This exploitation of visual language should be evident across both aspects of the Making general objective.

Support

Support materials for the Visual Art 2007 syllabus available on the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html#syllabus>
- work program requirements, checklists and sample programs at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html#wp>
- assessment advice through the QSA website’s “Senior assessment hub” including Designing effective assessment instruments, Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools, and annotated instruments and responses at <www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html#assessment>.

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

Janelle Williams
State Review Panel Chair
Susan Hollindale
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