State Review Panel Reports
2013

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Foreword

Recent and current reviews of Queensland’s senior assessment system highlight the important role of assessment in the teaching and learning process. Assessment is undoubtedly a contested area. There are many views about how it should be used to support student learning and on how to ensure reliability and validity of student outcomes.

Queensland’s system of externally moderated, school-based assessment for Years 11 and 12 involves processes which rely on a network of 50 state and 450 district review panels. Over 4000 experienced teachers work as panellists, peer reviewing other teachers’ judgments about the achievements of students to ensure they are accurate and comparable.

At the end of each year, state review panel chairs, in consultation with QSA officers, compile reports on the moderation process for each Authority subject offered by schools.

The reports outline:

- the implementation status of the syllabus
- the syllabus’s assessment requirements and features
- the application of achievement standards
- resources available to support implementation of the syllabus.

This document is a collation of those reports for subjects in general implementation in 2013. I am confident that it will help schools to continue to implement procedures that are consistent with Queensland’s current processes of assessment. But in the long term, we should anticipate some changes to the system.

In October 2013, the Queensland Parliament’s Education and Innovation Committee delivered its report no.25, *The assessment methods used in senior mathematics, chemistry and physics in Queensland schools*. Following direction by Minister for Education, Training and Employment John-Paul Langbroek, the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) is implementing several of the report’s recommendations related to professional development, inquiry-based assessment tasks, and the use of numerical marks to inform decisions about student achievement.

The Minister has indicated that the report’s recommendations related to the introduction of external exams will be considered as part of the Australian Council for Educational Research’s (ACER) *Queensland review of senior assessment, reporting and tertiary entrance processes*. ACER’s report is due to be submitted to the Minister by 31 July 2014.

I believe the two reports will provide the foundation for a revitalised senior assessment system that will successfully serve the young people of Queensland and draw on the professional expertise of teachers into the future.

Neil McDonald
Acting Chief Executive Officer

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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 fourth year of implementation.

Assessment design

In general, assessment packages have provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus dimensions across the range of standards.

Well-designed multimodal presentations and extended written responses for research assignments require students to provide supporting documentation of the inquiry process (syllabus, p. 33). Effective examples of such supporting documentation included research journals, annotated bibliographies, copies of interview questions, recordings of interviews and checklists used for evaluating sources. These examples were based on the Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies (May 2000) developed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and reproduced in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Handbook 2010.

Supporting documentation of the inquiry process in student responses demonstrated elements of:

- dimension 2: Managing and processing through critical inquiry, by:
  - observing and documenting cultural protocols
  - planning and using research processes
  - controlling the purpose and practice of time management
- dimension 3: Reflecting on perspectives and processes, by reflecting on and revising the decision-making processes throughout an inquiry.

In effective assessment packages, the supporting documentation for an inquiry process does not include a learning log. The learning-log technique is an assessment technique. Well-designed learning logs require:

- reflections on a wide range of topics and issues that do not revisit the information assessed in other techniques
- analysis and evaluation of sources of information
- consideration of own and others’ points of view
- conclusions about information that are clearly justified with a supporting argument.

Effective objective tests and response to stimulus tests drew on aspects of knowledge that are current in representation of policies, practices and issues impacting on Indigenous peoples. These techniques effectively deal with sensitive issues when cultural protocols are appropriately observed.
Application of standards

There was agreement about the appropriate application of syllabus standards for most sample folios. Evidence was found to support the matching of student responses to standards in dimension 1: *Knowing and understanding* and dimension 4: *Communication*. On-balance judgments that were not substantiated by the appropriate match of standards with evidence related to:

- dimension 2: *Managing and processing through critical inquiry* at standard A. Some student responses showed competent planning and use of research aligning to standard B rather than skilful planning and use of research necessary for standard A. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information was thorough, aligning to standard B rather than thorough and detailed required for standard A.

- dimension 3: *Reflecting on perspectives and processes* at standards A and B. Reflections on and revisions of the decision-making processes used in inquiry were uneven or minimal, aligning to standards D and E, rather than logical or well developed as required for standards A and B.

Support

Support materials for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 2009 syllabus available from the QSA website include:


- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Handbook 2010 at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3035.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3035.html) (see Resources)


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 senior syllabus is in its third year of implementation.

Assessment design

The syllabus dimensions and objectives inform the design of effective assessment instruments. 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 syllabus 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 and 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. Students must have a number of opportunities to demonstrate achievement in the dimensions and objectives of the course.

The most effective summative assessment programs provided a number of opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives of the dimensions. Under the Knowledge and procedural practices dimension, this can be achieved by creating a relationship between the three elements: knowledge, recording and processing; and selecting and organising data. An effective Knowledge and procedural practices instrument might require students to demonstrate the practical processes first, followed by questions about the practical processes to demonstrate their knowledge. Combining elements in this way allows students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of fundamental accounting concepts and procedures in routine situations.

When designing assessment instruments which assess the general objectives of the Interpretation and evaluation dimension through an extended written response (supervised or unsupervised), the stimulus should provide scope for students to interpret and analyse. For example, suitable stimuli may include property, plant and equipment registers; tables of data; ledger accounts or short business articles. The instrument should require students to draw information from the stimulus as required by the task. This information will form the basis of the argument which is developed to justify the conclusions, decisions, judgments or recommendations.

Schools are designing creative assessment tasks to assess the Applied practical processes dimension. This dimension requires students to solve complex accounting problems, and apply complex concepts and skills to organise, process and report accounting information. Schools are providing opportunities to demonstrate the organising, processing and reporting aspect of this dimension. Consideration should be given to designing tasks that pose a problem for students to solve. The analysis and synthesis required to solve the problem should be clearly evidenced so that a judgment can be made about this aspect.
Application of standards

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

There was significant agreement across the state about the application of standards. Each standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student work match the standards descriptors overall in each dimension; it is not necessary for students to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension. Folios in the lower range of an achievement level will typically demonstrate achievement at the lower standard in a dimension as per Awarding exit levels of achievement (syllabus, p. 21).

Where schools did not appropriately match standards to evidence, it was commonly related to the Interpretation and evaluation dimension. While responses demonstrated the students’ ability to draw conclusions and make decisions, judgments and recommendations, there was minimal evidence of the development of arguments. The quality of analysis and interpretation also did not always meet the requirements of the A or B standard awarded. ‘Thorough and effective’ analysis and interpretation is required at the A standard and ‘detailed’ analysis and interpretation is required for a B standard.

When making an on-balance decision about each dimension across a folio, the different aspects of each dimension need to be considered. For example, the Interpretation and evaluation dimension has three aspects:

- analysis of accounting data or information
- development of reasoned arguments to justify conclusions, decisions, judgments and recommendations
- clear communication of accounting information using appropriate modes for a variety of purposes.

If the student response demonstrates more A qualities than B in a particular dimension, the best, on-balance match across this folio for this criterion is to the standard A.

Support

Assessment workshops were conducted in Semester 1, 2013 in 13 districts across the state. The focus of the workshops was on the development of effective assessment.

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11034-assessment.html.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014 focusing on monitoring.

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.

Judith Beausang
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Aerospace Studies — A39

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

Syllabus

The Aerospace Studies 2011 syllabus is in its second year of implementation with the first cohort of Year 12 students studying the syllabus verified this year.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. These are grouped into three dimensions: Knowledge and understanding, Interpretation and communication, and Critical thinking (syllabus, pp. 5–6). Evidence at verification indicated that assessment instruments and instrument-specific criteria sheets typically address the objectives and standards using the language of the syllabus.

If an open book supervised written assessment is used, the assessment instrument must use technical, operational or regulatory manuals. Students should be provided with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to locate and use technical information for a purpose. Stimulus materials should be succinct enough to allow students to engage with the materials in the time provided.

Research responses, regardless of the mode chosen, should follow an inquiry approach and include:

- the establishment of a research question
- the generation and/or collection of primary and/or secondary data/information
- students’ independent collection of information/data from a variety of sources
- the sorting and analysis of data/information — examining and evaluating validity and value
- synthesis of data/information
- development of recommendations with justifications.

When developing research and extended-response instruments, schools should consider the length of student responses required to complete the task adequately and ensure that the task requirements can be met within the guidelines recommended by the syllabus (syllabus, pp. 19–21).


Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific standards from the syllabus standards descriptors for relevant dimensions (syllabus, p. 18). 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 standards that directly align with the syllabus standards descriptors, judgments are able to be made that directly match the evidence in student folios with the syllabus exit standards descriptors.

When using spoken or multimodal techniques, supporting documentation will be required to substantiate decisions; however, the focus for assessment decisions is the spoken or multimodal response rather than the technical features of the supporting written work.

**Support**

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

- assessment advice at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17016-assessment.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/17016-assessment.html) including:
  - Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom
  - Designing effective assessment instruments
  - Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools
  - Assessment program audit tool
  - Highlighted standards.


Jack Clark  
Acting State Review Panel Chair

Satu Cooper  
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 final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students.

In 2014, the Agricultural Science 2013 syllabus is to be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. The 2013 syllabus introduces the dimensions: Knowledge and understanding, Investigation and analysis, and Evaluation and communication. It requires evidence of incorporation of industry standards and four natural resource management units.


Assessment design

Sample folios showed that schools have designed effective assessment tasks that made use of school and regional resources, reflecting a variety of contexts — the syllabus is being effectively implemented in urban, regional and rural settings.

The extended writing tasks and extended agricultural investigations provided sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of standards across all the general objectives (syllabus, pp. 28–29).

When developing extended writing tasks or extended agricultural investigations, schools consider the length of student responses required to complete the task and ensure that the task requirements meet syllabus guidelines (syllabus, p. 26).


Extended written tasks should be designed to ensure opportunities for the demonstration of the A standard which requires ‘detailed recall, description and effective application in a wide range of familiar situations’ and ‘consistent and effective interpretation and analysis of complex problems and the detailed evaluation and synthesis of a wide range of information and concepts to produce extensively supported viewpoints, scenarios and /or proposals’ (syllabus, pp. 28–29).

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 from moderation processes demonstrated high levels of comparability across the state. Where evidence was not matched to syllabus standard descriptors, it was commonly related to the Problem solving and Communication criteria.

Standard A descriptors for Problem solving describe ‘thorough and efficient planning and organisation of activities’, ‘consistent and effective interpretation and analysis of complex problems and issues’ and ‘detailed evaluation and synthesis of a wide range of information and
concepts to produce extensively supported viewpoints, scenarios and/or proposals’. Standard A responses for *Communication* requires ‘relevant information from a wide variety of sources that have been selectively used and correctly referenced’, ‘clear, succinct, fluent and logically sequenced presentation of information and ideas according to the selected genre’, a ‘wide range of suitable terminology’ and ‘consistently correct language conventions’ (syllabus, p. 30).

**Support**

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

  - *Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom*
  - *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*
  - sample assessment products.

Support materials for the Agricultural Science 2013 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- advice, guidelines and resources to assist in the development and implementation of a course of study at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20318-teaching.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20318-teaching.html)
- assessment advice at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20318-assessment.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20318-assessment.html), including:
  - *Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom*
  - *Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools*
  - sample assessment products.

Panel training was conducted in 2013 with a focus on training and work program approval. Workshops were conducted throughout the state in 2013 to support schools in the design, planning and implementation of extended agricultural investigations within school settings.

Jacqui Schiller  
State Review Panel Chair

Juanita Jacobs  
Senior Education Officer
Ancient History — B38

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

Syllabus

The Ancient History senior syllabus is in its ninth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Moderation processes provided evidence that schools are developing a diverse range of effective assessment instruments.

Effective assessment provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the objectives across the full range of relevant syllabus standards descriptors. When developing instrument-specific standards matrixes, the genre and topic might be specified but the language of the standards descriptors should not be changed. Refer to the Highlighted standards in the Support section.

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence assessment requires students to address an unseen question or statement using sources provided by the teacher. A question focused on a specific historical issue allows students to develop a succinct historical argument within the 600–800 words recommended by the syllabus (p. 54).

Rather than a broad question about the breakdown of the Roman Republic, a question could focus on just one aspect of the inquiry, for example the reforms of Tiberius Gracchus, the First Triumvirate, the Civil War or Julius Caesar. This narrower focus allows students to engage with a set of sources that offer different perspectives about the one particular historical issue and to synthesise evidence to ‘justify insightful decisions’ (standard A, syllabus, p. 62).

Where students are required to engage with sources under test conditions in category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence and category 4: Additional test formats tasks, the number and length of unseen sources should be considered. Unseen sources should include both written and visual sources. Brief contextualising information for unseen sources should be provided to allow students to effectively interrogate the sources. This is particularly important for visual sources which may have limited use without some additional information. Sources should be clearly labelled as ‘seen’ or ‘unseen’.

Category 2: Written research assignments and category 3: Multimodal presentations

A wide variety of methods are being used to organise the research process for category 2: Written research assignments and category 3: Multimodal presentations instruments. The four aspects of the A-standard descriptors for criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process provide direction for teachers when developing guidelines for the research process (syllabus, p. 62).
Application of standards

Moderation processes provided evidence of very high levels of comparability across the state.

When making judgments about student responses teachers make an on-balance decision about the best match to the standards for each criterion. The different aspects of each criterion are indicated by the dot points in the syllabus standards (syllabus, pp. 62–65). At the A standard:

- criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process has four descriptors
- criterion 2: Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry has three descriptors, the first including a number of sub-points
- criterion 3: Communicating historical knowledge has three descriptors, with the second descriptor composed of six sub-points.

Instrument-specific standards matrixes need to match the organisation of and information in the syllabus standards. The inclusion of the different aspects of each criterion allows appropriate judgments to be made.

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
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs (including a new sample composite class work program) at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047-wp.html
- assessment advice at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2047-assessment.html, including:
  - Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom
  - sample assessment products

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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.

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

The Biology 2004 (amended 2006) syllabus is in its ninth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Evidence from moderation indicated that there was significant variety in the design of assessment tasks across districts. This allowed for the demonstration of the full range of standards across all criteria. The use of the syllabus exit standards in the writing of task-specific criteria sheets was evident in the sample folios.

When designing assessment tasks that assess Evaluating biological issues, a ‘biological’ issue must be the context for the task. A ‘biological’ issue would have the following features:

- a topic with no clearly defined single outcome or answer
- a point or matter for which a decision has a special or public importance
- an issue that is rich in ‘biological data’, providing students with opportunities to evaluate evidence
- an issue that is emerging, current or historical.

Across the assessment package students should be provided with opportunities to:

- recognise relevant past and present scientific and social issues
- explain the explicit and implicit meaning of information selected from a variety of sources
- evaluate and assess the reliability, authenticity, relevance, accuracy and bias of the sources and methods of the collection of information
- justify decisions and develop future-focused scenarios based on the interpretation and analysis of current information (syllabus, p. 5).

Students should gather information, predict outcomes and make and communicate informed decisions about the effects of human intervention on biological systems.

When assessing Evaluating biological issues, students should have the opportunity to evaluate sources and justify decisions/predictions. Extended experimental investigations that validly assess Evaluating biological issues are most successful when students are directed to appropriate topics in their initial planning phases.

When designing extended-response instruments, opportunities must be provided for students to demonstrate the skills of interpretation, analysis and synthesis. Opportunities to demonstrate the standards may be enhanced when the words of the syllabus standards are used to design tasks or items. For example, words such as design, implement, interpret, apply, formulate, analyse, evaluate, explore, justify may be used.
Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards. There was a high level of comparability in the matching of evidence across student responses with the syllabus standards descriptors.

There was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding a standard to each criterion. An on-balance judgment is a judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each criterion. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in a criterion (syllabus, p. 30).

Where evidence was not appropriately matched to the syllabus standards it related to Evaluating biological issues. Standard A responses for this criterion demonstrate gathering, critically analysing and evaluating information and data from a variety of valid and reliable resources. Gathering information and data from a variety of resources is the standard C descriptor.

On-balance judgments in Evaluating biological issues should be made using evidence matched to each of the objectives — some judgments focused on the critical analysis and evaluation of sources, with less evidence provided about making justified decisions or considering alternatives and predictions.

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
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1946-assessment.html.

Workshops were conducted throughout the state in 2013 to support schools in the design, planning and implementation of extended experimental investigations.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014 focusing on judgments and standards.

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.

Jim Brennan  Juanita Jacobs
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Business Communication and Technologies — B28

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

Syllabus

The Business Communication and Technologies 2008 syllabus is in its final year of implementation. In 2014, the Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus will be implemented with both Year 11 and Year 12 students.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments allow opportunities for students to engage with the general objectives and to demonstrate the full range of 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
- including tasks that allow students to respond to both aspects of Knowledge and understanding — tasks develop in complexity across the course and provide a number of opportunities to recall knowledge through defining and describing previously learned factual knowledge, and demonstrate understanding by illustrating, explaining and applying key concepts, principles, processes and practices related to business contexts
- using case studies and other stimulus materials that demonstrate a direct relationship to the tasks to allow students to demonstrate effective and consistent interpretation and analysis through extended written responses under the Reasoning processes criterion
- reducing scaffolding from Year 11 to Year 12 to allow students to better demonstrate interpretation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in Reasoning processes tasks
- developing instrument-specific standards matrices that clearly align to the task by selecting the relevant standards descriptors to match the criteria and general objectives that the task was designed to assess.

Implications for the Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus

The Investigating business issues dimension requires students to explore business data and information to identify and analyse business issues. Tasks should require students to interpret data and information (e.g. using case studies, statistics, and quotes) in order to identify and explicate relevant business issues. Consideration should be given to the exploration of the depth rather than the breadth of issues to enable students to demonstrate ‘discerning and effective’ selection, sequencing and organisation of data and information, and ‘accurate’ interpretation of significant and complex issues (standard A).

Under the Evaluating business decisions dimension, students are required to evaluate information using criteria to draw conclusions, reach decisions and make recommendations. Evaluating refers to assigning merit according to criteria. Therefore, students are required to make judgments about the performance of businesses. The criteria may be provided for students (appropriate in the earlier stages of the course) or developed by students. Examples of criteria include legislation, staff productivity, financial performance, social responsibility, and organisational policies and procedures.
Application of standards

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

There was significant agreement across the state about the application of standards. When awarding a standard, an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student work match the standards descriptors overall in each dimension is made. This means that it is not necessary for students to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension. Folios in the lower range of an achievement level will typically demonstrate achievement at the lower standard in one dimension as per the table Awarding exit levels of achievement (syllabus, p. 46).

Where evidence did not appropriately match standards, it was commonly related to the Reasoning processes criterion. While responses demonstrated the students’ ability to draw conclusions and make recommendations to business-related issues and problems, there was minimal evidence of the development of logically reasoned arguments to justify conclusions and/or recommendations.

When making an on-balance decision about each criterion in a folio of evidence, attention is drawn to the different aspects of each criterion, identified by the dot points in the standards. For example, Reasoning processes criterion has three aspects:

- interpretation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information
- development of reasoned arguments, conclusions and recommendations to business related issues and problems
- communication of information for a variety of purposes and audiences.

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.

Support

Support materials for the Business Communication and Technologies 2012 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18151-assessment.html.

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.

Rachael Jackson
Acting State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

**Syllabus**

The Business Organisation and Management 2007 senior syllabus is in its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students.

In 2014, the Business Management 2013 syllabus is to be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students.

**Assessment design**

Throughout the 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 of Knowledge and understanding, Reflection processes and Action skills.

In general, the instrument-specific standards were drawn from the syllabus criteria and the relevant standards descriptors (syllabus, p. 38).

The most effective assessment instruments:

- clearly stated the instrument requirements including the format or genre of the required response
- outlined the expectations of report genres used to assess Reflection processes so that evaluation of intentions was evident throughout the report; there was an emphasis on recommendations that allowed for the development of highly appropriate strategies for action
- provided opportunities for students to respond to the tasks within the word lengths outlined in Section 7.3 of the syllabus
- incorporated a variety of new and interesting information and communication technologies such as blog planners, podcasts, online applications, services and businesses
- allowed for variety in the ways evidence could be collected when assessing Action skills.

**Application of standards**

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

Evidence was found to support the match of the qualities of student responses in sample folios to the syllabus standards. When making judgments about the evidence in student responses, the standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of student achievement match the standards descriptors in each criterion across the instrument.

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 descriptors overall (syllabus, p. 37).
Some issues have arisen. These include:

- appendixes to business plans did not focus on providing supporting evidence for responses. Where appendixes are required, they should include relevant information and should be referenced in the report.

- when assessing Action skills, students should be directed to include documented evidence of action skills that meets the syllabus criteria (syllabus, p. 38). The length of the action skills responses, particularly for reflective journals, should be relevant to the instrument with consideration given to the length of the entire task.

**Support**

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


Support materials are also available for the Business Management 2013 syllabus being implemented with Year 11 students only in 2014. These materials include:


Assessment workshops for the Business Management 2013 syllabus will be held in Semester 2 of 2014.

Berenice Furlong
Acting State Review Panel Chair

Beryl McLachlan
Senior Education Officer
Chemistry — A44

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

Syllabus

The Chemistry 2007 syllabus is in its sixth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Schools are designing effective assessment programs that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives across the full range of standards by:

- ensuring appropriate coverage of the general objectives across all standards
- designing instrument-specific criteria sheets that use the terminology of the syllabus standard descriptors
- using the criteria appropriate to the assessment technique; for example:
  - for supervised assessments:
    - Knowledge and conceptual understanding 'linking and applying' is sometimes incorrectly matched to Investigative processes 'systematic analysis' or Evaluating and concluding 'analysing and evaluating'
    - where Investigative processes is assessed, it often does not allow for opportunities to assess the full range of standards — for example, graphing, identifying trends and patterns, or performing a calculation is not reflective of the A or B standard where systematic analysis is required
  - for extended experimental investigations, a collection of practical exercises that only loosely link together do not provide opportunities to design and refine which is required to demonstrate the A standard in Investigative processes
- ensuring the topics chosen for extended-response tasks are providing opportunities for students to demonstrate chemistry concepts. Topic selection varied depending on locations and resources, for example:
  - some extended-response tasks were based on industrial processes in the local region such as a zinc refinery; others investigated the application of redox reactions. These tasks allowed students to demonstrate the underlying chemistry concepts and provided more opportunities to respond to a chemical question, circumstance or an issue. The majority of topics allowed students to interpret, analyse and synthesise data, and to then evaluate and justify ideas as required by the syllabus
  - some topics such as forensic scenarios lacked the necessary chemistry related to complex scientific relationships or complex concepts, theories and principles to allow demonstration of the standards.
Application of standards

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

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 2014 quality-assurance procedures and processes.

When matching evidence to the syllabus standards, the stated syllabus standards must be applied appropriately and must not be changed. For example, for:

- **Knowledge and conceptual understanding**, the ‘comparison and explanation of concepts, processes etc.’ is not the same as ‘comparing and contrasting’

- **Investigative processes**, in supervised assessment items, ‘formulating a justified hypothesis to inform design’ is most effectively applied in its entirety, which is ‘formulation of justified significant questions/hypotheses which inform effective and efficient design, refinement and management of investigations’

- **Investigative processes**, the A standard for analysis of data requires ‘systematic analysis of data to identify relationships’; when a data sample is very small or drawing a graph is all that is required, the opportunity to provide evidence of this objective across the folio is limited.

Support

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


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 Chinese 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The Chinese Extension 2012 syllabus is in its second year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

**Comprehension: Listening and reading**

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary, grammatical structures and script expected was used. Texts reflected current situations in China unless a historical account was relevant to the task.
- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp. 47–48).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 33). Adequate time was provided for note taking and writing responses that demonstrated students’ comprehension.

**Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing**

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were concise and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce appropriate language such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Results indicated on a profile are merely a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched across a range of topics and text types, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information do not demonstrate the descriptors, neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p. 42). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues matches a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained, and at standard A, it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p. 49). Prepared and unprepared presentations require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

The standards must be demonstrated across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 300 characters is required (syllabus, p. 43).

A range of vocabulary and grammar is required. At standard A, a wide range is used effectively, including complex language, with ideas being conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures, and punctuation and word order must display a high degree of accuracy.

Support

Support materials for the Chinese syllabuses available from the QSA website include:


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. Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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 third year of implementation.

Assessment design

Assessment packages provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus objectives in Choreography, Performance and Appreciation and meet the mandatory syllabus requirements. Assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to successfully demonstrate the objectives when assessment task requirements, conditions, task purpose and context are clear and explicit.

For the most part, task design has allowed students opportunities to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards in responses.

Choreography

Choreography tasks are effective when the task has a clear purpose and requires students to state their choreographic intent and then to convey the intention through choreographic choices. The statement of choreographic intent is most effective when tasks require this to be formed at the beginning of students’ choreographic processes so that it informs and shapes the development of their choreographic choices and is clearly reflected in the product (syllabus, pp. 21–22).

Choreography tasks should focus on the movement components, particularly for genres such as postmodern and dance film. When resources are available, and they are relevant to the choreographic problem, students are encouraged to integrate non-movement components (syllabus, p. 22).

Performance

Similarly, effective Performance tasks are also based on a clear statement of intent no matter which genre, style or context is the focus of the task. Performance tasks that include appropriately complex and challenging movements that require the students to develop and demonstrate dance components and technical and expressive skills, and to interpret and communicate a choreographic intent, provide the opportunity to demonstrate the objectives across the range of syllabus standards (syllabus, p. 24).

Appreciation

Assessment instruments designed to assess the Appreciation dimension provide opportunities for students when they explicitly require the demonstration of all three objectives. Students are able to demonstrate the range of syllabus standards when the question specifically requires students to use dance terminology and referencing conventions, analyse and synthesise, as well as to evaluate and justify a conclusion. Students are able to evaluate effectively if the task clearly describes the criteria for students to use when evaluating. For example, ‘How clearly is the stated intent conveyed through the choreographer’s selection of dance components and skills?’
Appreciation tasks are effective when the dancework, chosen as the stimulus, is of an appropriate length and complexity to allow students to demonstrate the objectives of the course and be matched to the range of standards. The stimulus needs to contain complex and subtle interrelationships between dance components and skills in order for students to demonstrate the A standard of discerning analysis and insightful interpretation of these relationships.

Application of standards

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

Judgments about standards are made using the evidence in student responses, and considering the complete folio of student work. Refer to the syllabus Section 5.8.1 (pp. 29–31) for information about determining a standard, awarding exit levels of achievement, and for the standards matrix. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the syllabus descriptors in the standards matrix overall in each dimension.

When standards are appropriately matched to student responses in Appreciation, schools ensure that all aspects of the dimension — analysis, interpretation and evaluation — are evident in the student response and match the standards descriptors including referencing which is required for standards A, B and C.

Video evidence for Choreography and Performance support judgments and the match to standards when there is appropriately complex and challenging movement. Standards can be appropriately applied and supported when the required statement of choreographic intent for both Choreography and Performance instruments is included as this is integral to students demonstrating the standards A–D in both dimensions.

For moderation purposes, the visual samples should be clearly labelled and allow access to individual files. While a number of schools provided samples on DVD, other schools submitted samples on USB in MP4 or AVI formats which were easily accessible with each file individually labelled.

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10700-assessment.html.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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 Mullins
State Review Panel Chair

Shauna Bouel
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 its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time with Year 12 in 2014.


Assessment design

Assessment instruments are effective in providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the objectives when tasks are clearly and simply explained using the language of the standards with plainly stated conditions that match the syllabus guidelines.

Forming

The most effective Forming tasks clearly delineate the dramatic style(s), allowing students to demonstrate the appropriate skills of performance and conventions of the style related to a particular purpose and context. The task description is specific and nominates a particular skill of performance such as directing, scriptwriting or devising. The instrument should clearly indicate whether it is practical or written, the documentation required and the appropriate conditions (syllabus pp. 29–31). Improvisation tasks are the only tasks that can be completed as a group.

When the skill of performance chosen is directing, this is the only skill of performance required in the task. Effective directing tasks require students to demonstrate their ability to direct a section of published playtext rather than a student-devised text, and focus on directing skills to manage and apply the dramatic languages and to explore ideas to create, shape and interpret dramatic action and meaning. Tasks that focus on developing acting skills such as an actor’s preparation exercises do not provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate directing skills. The documentation should be clear and include a script with relevant annotations, i.e. annotations that relate to decisions about shaping the dramatic languages to realise dramatic action and meaning (syllabus, p. 25).

Successful scriptwriting tasks indicate the style and conventions to be applied and require a particular context, purpose and intended audience.

Presenting

Presenting instruments are effective when tasks require students to communicate dramatic action and meaning through the use of performance skills and conventions of the style after planning, rehearsing and polishing the performance. When the instrument is student-devised performance, successful tasks specifically refer to the Presenting objectives rather than the devising of the script which is Forming and will occur separately before the rehearsal process begins. Equitable opportunities are provided for all students when texts of appropriate length are chosen to ensure performances match the syllabus guidelines.

Responding

Responding tasks elicit the best responses when in response to professional live theatre (syllabus, p. 27) and are framed through a dramatic style and conventions. These serve as a
frame of reference for the analysis of the dramatic action, particularly the effectiveness of the conventions of that style and other relevant factors in creating dramatic meaning.

Effective Responding tasks provide opportunities to refer to the scope of dramatic languages — not just the elements of drama. Questions that focus students on skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis enable students to unpack moments of dramatic action and synthesise how the dramatic meaning has been created by the interconnection of dramatic languages. Tasks that begin with quotes are successful only when the quote relates to the question in the task. Research-based questions may not provide opportunities to demonstrate the match to standards.

**Application of standards**

Evidence from sample folios indicated that the decisions about the match of the qualities of student responses with the syllabus standards were mostly supported. Standards could not be supported when responses did not match the descriptors or when there was not appropriate documentation for practical responses. The syllabus requires that each folio must provide sufficient material to validate level of achievement decisions (syllabus, p. 36).

In order for student responses to match an A standard, the responses must address the range of dramatic languages inclusive of skills of performance, style(s) and conventions, text, context and elements of drama as well as the dramatic perspectives. The A standard in Forming and Responding requires extensive knowledge and understanding of dramatic languages and perspectives rather than a focus on a few elements of drama.

Matching standards in Presenting requires evidence saved on a DVD or USB that clearly identifies the student representing the standard, and includes the marked standards matrix and scripts with the parts highlighted. Performance of published playscripts provides the best opportunity for students to demonstrate the range of standards (syllabus, p. 36).

Responses that match a C standard in Responding communicate a viewpoint or thesis based on application of knowledge of dramatic languages and perspectives. Retelling of the plot and description of action and meaning match to a D standard, whereas conveying an opinion with some description of the plot matches the E standard.

**Support**

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

Support materials for the Drama 2013 syllabus include:
- teaching resources, including information about DVD resources at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20325-teaching.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20325-teaching.html).

Assessment workshops will be conducted in Semester 1 of 2014 focusing on designing effective assessment for the 2013 syllabus.

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

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

Syllabus

The Earth Science 2000 senior syllabus is in its thirteenth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Across the state there was evidence of a wide variety of assessment instruments which successfully allowed for the demonstration of syllabus general objectives and exit criteria and standards. Assessment packages require a balance of assessment instruments and several opportunities to demonstrate the full range of exit standards over the course. The A-standard exit descriptors provide guidance for teachers developing assessment instruments (syllabus, pp. 31–33).

Extended laboratory or field-based investigations must provide students with opportunities to:

- recognise and identify investigation questions
- plan investigations
- identify and use scientific techniques
- collect and organise data
- assess and critically evaluate the validity and adequacy of the data.

Each of the three general objectives should be demonstrated across a range of simple-to-complex subject matter (syllabus, pp. 6–8). The exit standards for the Knowledge, conceptual understanding and application, and Working scientifically criteria specify that students should respond to a range of novel and/or complex situations and problems (syllabus, pp. 31–32).

To assist in the evaluation and refinement of assessment instruments, teachers may wish to use the Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools support material (see Support section). This resource assists teachers to align their assessment tasks with the general objectives and exit standards being assessed.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with instrument-specific criteria and standards drawn from the syllabus standards. There was evidence in most sample folios of the match of the qualities of student responses to the syllabus standards and to support school judgments.

On-balance judgments are made using evidence addressing all aspects of the criteria. Evidence of A standard responses in Knowledge, conceptual understanding and application can best be demonstrated in student work when the assessment tasks provide a range of opportunities to cover each of the aspects of the criterion. These aspects include:

- recalls extensive knowledge in most areas
- demonstrates a clear understanding of concepts in depth in most areas
- recognises and explains relationships amongst straightforward and complex concepts comparing and contrasting them where appropriate
• successfully applies knowledge and concepts in most situations, including many that are novel and/or complex

• evaluates both the relevance and scientific merit of information provided in or derived from earth science contexts (syllabus, p.31).

Judgments become more difficult to support when they are focused upon the recall of knowledge with limited opportunities to consider the other aspects of the criterion where knowledge is applied and used to demonstrate understanding or explain complex relationships.

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

• work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954-wp.html

• assessment advice at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1954-assessment.html including:
  – Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom
  – Quality assuring senior assessment instruments: A tool for schools
  – Highlighted standards
  – annotated instruments and sample assessment products.

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.

Workshops were conducted throughout the state to support schools in the design, planning and implementation of extended laboratory or field based investigations.

Di Nichols Juanita Jacobs
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Economics — B29

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

Syllabus

The Economics 2010 syllabus is in its third year of implementation.

Assessment design

Moderation processes identified that the majority of assessment instruments were designed effectively. As a result, most school assessment packages provided students with opportunities to demonstrate each of the three syllabus dimensions across the full range of standards (syllabus, pp. 31–32).

A supervised written assessment instrument can be constructed using one or more items (syllabus, p. 24). These items may require the use, interpretation or analysis of data, statistics, graphs, tables or diagrams. Paragraph responses (50–250 words) also provide opportunities to maintain, develop and justify ideas in order to demonstrate the general objectives within dimension 1: Knowledge and understanding and dimension 2: Investigation. However, if an extended piece of writing is chosen, it is best if this is the only item used when implementing the supervised assessment technique. This will better allow students to demonstrate the full range of standards for the three dimensions that the item assesses (syllabus, p. 24).

The research assessment technique is used to assess the research abilities of students and the outcomes of the application of that research (syllabus, p. 26). While not restricted to research, the Economics inquiry process (syllabus, pp. 16–17) was incorporated into the most effectively designed assessment instruments. This provided opportunities to establish a research question or economic problem, examine data, analyse economic relationships, synthesise by drawing on a variety of ideas and appraise ideas through using implicit or explicit criteria to draw conclusions. In addition, the most effective assessment instruments allowed students to be able to respond within the length requirements as stated in the syllabus (pp. 25–27).

Application of standards

Across the state, there was significant agreement about the application of standards and within the majority of sample folios there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding a standard to each dimension. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each dimension. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension (syllabus, p. 29).

Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was generally associated with the evidence within sample folios related to dimension 3: Synthesis and evaluation. The A standard in this dimension includes a discerning use of a comprehensive variety of viewpoints, economic ideas and decisions to construct complex and substantiated economic understanding. In addition, economic ideas are appraised through the critical use of implicit or explicit criteria, to draw valid and supported conclusions. When the research technique is used, these qualities are able to be demonstrated through the research process and the mode or combination of modes chosen for presentation.
For spoken or multimodal responses, supporting documentation for decisions may include visual evidence, notes, palm cards and teacher annotations on the instrument-specific standards. However, the focus for assessment decisions is the spoken or multimodal response (syllabus, p. 26), rather than the technical features of written work provided by students.

**Support**

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


Panel training will be conducted in 2014. This will focus on documenting advice using the language of the syllabus and moderation.


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 third year of implementation.

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 that each dimension is assessed at least twice in Year 12 before verification (syllabus, p. 26).

Effective tasks encourage modelling and simulation of engineering principles and applications. The technical engineering report provides an opportunity for students to achieve across all three syllabus dimensions and to apply the engineering design process to solve an engineering design challenge.

Effective task design encourages students to interpret and analyse engineering knowledge and data, and to propose engineering solutions to a range of problems within an engineering context. Solutions to engineering design problems take the form of prototypes that are tested and evaluated with the aim of communicating conclusions and recommendations (syllabus, pp. 3–4).

Extended-response tasks assess students’ application of higher-order cognition and may be used in association with the technical engineering report. When designing an extended-response task, the syllabus conditions associated with the assessment technique should be met.

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.

Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by matching the evidence in student responses with the syllabus standards. Across the state, there was significant agreement about the application of standards and within the majority of sample folios there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding a standard to each dimension. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each dimension. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension.

Where evidence did not support school judgments of the match of qualities of student responses with the syllabus standards descriptors, it was commonly related to the use of school-developed, task-specific criteria sheets that were not sufficiently drawn from the syllabus exit standards (syllabus, pp. 29–31). Instrument-specific standards matrices should align with the assessment task and requirements. Teachers should use the syllabus standards descriptors to develop instrument-specific standards matrices.
Some judgments for the technical engineering report were not substantiated by the match of evidence in the responses with the qualities at the A standard for dimension 2: *Investigative and analytical processes*. Student work for the standard A should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- effective interpretation and thorough analysis of relevant engineering data
- efficient and mathematically validated engineering solutions based on engineering principles and techniques are proposed
- solutions are analysed in depth and detail from multiple perspectives to identify relevant engineering principles.

**Support**

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


Tony Muller  
State Review Panel Chair

Brad Walmsley  
Senior Education Officer
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.

**Assessment design**

Assessment instruments should provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevant objectives for all three dimensions. Effective instruments are carefully contextualised in terms of purpose and audience to provide opportunities for students to use genre patterns and conventions, establish roles and relationships, use textual features for particular purposes and create and evaluate meaning. Instruments such as responses to stimulus where students are not given contextual information regarding genre, purpose and audience, might limit opportunities for students to demonstrate syllabus standards. Similarly, specifying a particular approach to the instrument by, for example, listing expected generic conventions or expected subject matter, might limit opportunities for students to demonstrate, in particular, the dimension 1, standard A descriptors: ‘exploitation of genre patterns’, ‘discerning selection of subject matter’ and ‘manipulation and control of roles and relationships’. In order to provide opportunities to demonstrate dimension 3 objectives, schools should use the objectives to frame assessment instruments. For example, expository instruments which require students to ‘discuss’ or ‘explain’ meaning found in texts might not provide opportunities for students to ‘analyse’ and ‘evaluate’ how this meaning is constructed.

Instrument-specific standards matrixes align with instrument demands and should include objectives from each of the dimensions that relate to the task. For example, in a spoken or signed assessment instrument, in dimension 2, teachers include the relevant mode-appropriate features.

Decisions about including relevant objectives for dimension 3 should be made by determining the focus and purpose of the instrument. If students are required to analyse and evaluate meaning in texts produced by others, the ‘evaluating meaning’ objectives should be used. The analytical exposition in response to the in-depth study of a complete literary text will assess student analysis and evaluation of the meaning (ideas, attitudes and values communicated by perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places) in the specified literary text. Teachers make judgments about the evidence of contextual and textual features in the student response by matching evidence in the response to the objectives in dimensions 1 and 2.

If students are creating or constructing meaning (ideas, attitudes and values) in their own texts, then relevant ‘creating meaning’ objectives are included. Imaginative responses which require students to analyse or evaluate the meaning in another’s text will not provide sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate the ‘creating meaning’ objectives in dimension 3 which require them to ‘use’ ideas, attitudes and values, ‘create’ perspectives and representations and ‘use’ aesthetic features for purposes. Likewise, requiring students to perform a section of a published script does not allow students to demonstrate dimension 1 which requires students to apply their knowledge of text structures and purposes to produce their own texts (syllabus, p. 3) and dimension 2 which requires students to use grammar, language structures, cohesive devices, vocabulary and mode-appropriate features for particular purposes. Analysing a dramatic performance might be appropriate for an expository response, but is unlikely to meet the imaginative category or the ‘creating meaning’ objectives of dimension 3.
In dimension 3, schools ensure that students have the opportunity to both use aesthetic features to achieve purposes (‘creating meaning’) and evaluate the effects of aesthetic features in others’ texts (‘evaluating meaning’). How students are expected to demonstrate this objective is indicated on the assessment instrument.

Application of standards

In making judgments about student achievement, schools match qualities of student responses with the syllabus dimensions and standards descriptors. The syllabus standards are mid-range 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. On-balance judgments are made by matching evidence in student responses with syllabus standards, taking into account that there may be qualities in the responses that match with more than one standard.

Relative achievement decisions at verification and exit 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

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703.html
- two new sample assessment instruments with annotated student responses, added to the website in 2013 (www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11703-assessment.html). These responses demonstrate how teachers make an on-balance decision about student achievement when qualities in the student response match a range of standards.

In 2013, assessment workshops for the English 2010 syllabus were conducted and focused on the assessment design process with a particular emphasis on making decisions about the relevant objectives for dimension 3.

Panel training will be conducted in the thirteen districts in 2014.

Edna Galvin Jo Genders
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
English Extension — B37

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

Syllabus

The second cohort of Year 12 students studying the English Extension 2011 syllabus was verified in 2013.

Assessment design

The syllabus dimensions and objectives inform the design of effective assessment instruments. 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.

Assessment packages must meet the requirements specified in the assessment overview in Section 4.6 of the syllabus. The three assessment instruments address particular purposes and provide complementary coverage of the syllabus objectives and requirements.

Assessment instrument 1 requires students to produce two distinct texts: a reading and a defence. Readings are produced when students make meaning of the text by applying interpretive or meaning-making strategies associated with particular theoretical approaches to interpret a text. The reading must include direct and indirect references to the selected text. The defence requires students to 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 defence analyses and evaluates the chosen theoretical approach used to produce the reading.

Assessment instrument 2 requires students to select a literary text suitable for a complex transformation. They select and apply aspects and strategies from theoretical approaches to intervene in the base text. The transformation is complex when the rewritten text makes available alternative and/or resistant readings other than those the base text seems to invite. These readings require an ideological shift that moves beyond inversion. The defence of the complex transformation requires the identification of 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. Students evaluate how the application of theoretical understandings allows the rewritten text to offer readers alternative positions and 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, at the expense of other aspects of the defence, 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. Students establish an effectively theorised proposal for an exploration and evaluation through a sharply focused question for investigation. The focus question is developed through an iterative process to revisit and refine the question, as students evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical approaches and how they complement and/or clash in producing close readings of literary texts. Focus questions that are not specific in respect to the aspect(s) of the text, or the theories applied to the text, may not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate ‘discerning application of theoretical approaches’, ‘thorough and discriminating evaluation of theoretical approaches’ or ‘thorough and discriminating evaluation of own interpretations’.
Responses to assessment instrument 3 are informed by an understanding of the complexities and subtleties of particular theoretical approaches and the diverse range of interpretive practices categorised within an approach demonstrated through the selection of appropriate theories or theoretical concepts as tools for investigating the focus question applied to a text or texts. Tasks may be ineffective when focus questions do not require a close reading and analysis of the texts or are underpinned by broad theoretical approaches which limit opportunities to acknowledge the overlap and interrelatedness of literary theories due to syllabus time constraints and other guidelines. Literary texts must be sufficiently complex to sustain depth of analysis, and the application and evaluation of the effectiveness of the selected theoretical approaches.

**Application of standards**

In making judgments about responses, schools match the qualities of the work with the syllabus standards. When making decisions about qualities in responses matched to syllabus standards, teachers consider the whole descriptor. For example, in dimension 1, students understand literary texts and their social, historical and cultural contexts to produce informed interpretations. In dimension 3, students evaluate their own interpretations, making explicit the theoretical approaches that underpin them.

The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about the best match to the syllabus standards descriptors across the three dimensions. It is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a judgment of a particular standard to be made.

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 about student achievement in all the dimensions across the assessment 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. While each instrument has a different purpose and focus, all three responses represent the fullest and latest information about which the exit standards may be applied. As all of the assessment is summative in a two-semester course of study, selective updating will not apply unless a task is revisited due to an atypical or unrepresentative response.

**Support**

Support materials for the English Extension 2011 available from the QSA website include:


Panel training will be conducted for district and state review panels in 2014.


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 eighth year of implementation. A number of schools submitted amendments to work programs to allow for:

- review of Design tasks
- review of the focus and number of the key concepts assessed.

Assessment design

Moderation processes provided evidence that schools had developed a range of effective assessment instruments allowing students to demonstrate the general objectives of the course.

The key concepts are integral to Film, Television and New Media. Specific advice on assessing the key concepts is provided in the syllabus (pp. 29–33). By restricting the assessment of key concepts to one or two in each task, students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards and key concepts. Careful consideration should be given to the most appropriate key concepts for the task. The key concepts should be embedded in the explicit language of the task to develop a clear link between the task expectations and the instrument-specific standards.

In Design, the information in the pre-production formats should demonstrate explicit film language in relation to the selected key concepts, context and task. For example, screenplays alone that follow an industry model limit students’ ability to demonstrate an explicit understanding of film languages to construct the key concepts being assessed. Screenplays are best supported by a treatment or use of a script model that allows the inclusion of key film language. Storyboards in the Design criterion also need to reflect the nature of the syllabus and should contain the explicit film languages used to demonstrate knowledge of the key concepts being assessed, and should go beyond the basic inclusion of shot type and angle to include more detailed shot information (syllabus pp. 30–31). It is also important to remember that storyboards are part of the pre-production process and images for storyboards should not be screen shots from actual productions.

The inclusion of explicit and detailed film language and suitable drawings or images allows students the best opportunity to demonstrate the full range of the syllabus standards.

When assessing Production, student responses should employ stylistic constructs and reflect more challenging styles of film making and films produced, rather than a random selection of shots or a music video (Section 6.4.3 of the syllabus).

Group production tasks should clearly reflect the syllabus conditions (p. 41) and should specify either the formal roles students will undertake or that students will complete a segment of the production. The individual contribution is then the assessable component as there are no group grades allocated.

When assessing Critique, tasks should have a clear focus that allows students the opportunity to analyse and evaluate moving image media rather than print media and context of use (Section 6.4.4 of the syllabus). Tasks that do not have a clear focus limit opportunities to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards while meeting syllabus conditions. Some oral assessment in Critique requires students to submit a written copy of the critique analysis and the oral may be
just a reading of the written response. In these instances, schools should reconsider the purpose of the oral component.

The syllabus (pp. 37–43) outlines the suggested guidelines for task conditions. These are guidelines of expectations, and schools need to include task conditions that best suit the context of the task, especially if it is a Design task that leads to a Production.

**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.

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

The syllabus exit standards describe the characteristics of the general objectives and the qualifiers distinguish the standards from A–E. Instrument-specific criteria sheets should reflect the syllabus standards and include the key concepts being assessed.

The syllabus explicitly outlines the Production roles that are assessable. The individual’s contribution to a group production can be demonstrated in formal roles such as cinematographer, editor, sound technician or by completing a segment of the film (syllabus, p. 41). Time codes, or the overlaying of a student’s name as a title, are ways schools can clearly identify an individual student’s film segments. Student responses are judged using instrument-specific criteria and clearly identify the individual’s contribution to a group production.

Some Critique tasks require students to do research as part of the response. In these instances accurate referencing of research material used within the response is essential in order to validate standards awarded for student responses.

**Support**

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


Keri Church                     Beryl McLachlan
State Review Panel Chair       Senior Education Officer
French — B02

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

Syllabus

The French 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The French Extension 2009 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

Comprehension: Listening and reading

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.

- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary and grammatical structures expected was used. Texts reflected current situations in French-speaking countries unless a historical account was relevant to the task.

- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp.38–39).

- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.

- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.

- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.

- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 33). Adequate time was provided for note taking and responding.

Speaking and writing

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.

- Task descriptions were short and clear.

- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.

- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.

- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are merely a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched across a range of topics and text types, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading
Information plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or information do not demonstrate the descriptors; neither does the inclusion of students' personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking
All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p. 34). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues match a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained, and at standard A, it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p. 40). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing
Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 200 words (syllabus, p. 35) is required.

A range of vocabulary and grammar is always required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas being conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures. Standard A spelling, punctuation and word order also has to display a high degree of accuracy.

Support
Support materials for the French syllabuses available from the QSA website include:


Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the Senior moderation hub at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/586.html. Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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

The Geography 2007 syllabus is in its sixth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Short-response test

Short-response tests that best facilitated demonstration of criterion 1 across the range of standards had the following qualities:

- application of each of the key questions of geographical inquiry to the focus unit being assessed (syllabus, p. 4)
- questions based on specific case studies across a range of scales (syllabus, p. 7)
- questions requiring paragraph-length responses, providing an opportunity for comprehensive coverage of information at standard A
- spatial knowledge questions that required more than labelling of maps or drawing of spatial diagrams, and which provided opportunities for students to demonstrate spatial knowledge that was thorough or detailed for standards A and B. For example, ‘Describe the distribution of the incidence of malaria in sub-Saharan Africa’.

Stimulus response essay

The most effective instruments had the following qualities:

- discrete sections that separated analytical and decision-making processes enabling students to demonstrate quality and rigour in their responses
- provision of alternatives for evaluation that clearly related to the issues identified in the analysis section of the task
- a range of specific geographical data in the stimulus, e.g. aerial photos, maps, graphs, tables and statistics that provided opportunities for students to interpret and transform data, identify and explain patterns and processes, and identify and explain simple and complex relationships.

Report

The most effective instruments had the following qualities:

- discrete sections where students were required to analyse primary data collected in the field (syllabus, p. 69) and then make decisions based on the evaluation of alternatives
- integration of maps, diagrams and tables of data or statistics into the body of the analysis section (syllabus, p. 70). This provides opportunities for students to identify and explain patterns, processes and relationships
- a requirement that nonwritten data be communicated according to geographic conventions.
Practical exercises
The most effective instruments had complex datasets that when manipulated, provided students with the opportunity to identify and explain patterns and identify and explain complex relationships required for standards A and B.

Application of standards
Student responses in the sample folios general matched appropriately to syllabus standards. On-balance judgments were made across folios. Responses provided evidence from across the range of topics and assessment techniques.

- Criterion 1: Knowledge at standard B student responses must show detailed, accurate and relevant spatial knowledge.
- Criterion 2: Analytical processes at standard B needs to demonstrate detailed identification and explanation of patterns, effective transformation, interpretation and extrapolation of information and mostly accurate identification and significant explanation of simple and complex relationships. This is best demonstrated when material is nonwritten or data is measured and collected in the field.
- Criterion 3: Decision-making processes at standards A and B needs to demonstrate evaluation of alternatives which is detailed or comprehensive and a decision about the alternatives which is justified by a supporting or well-reasoned and logical argument.
- Criterion 4: Research and communication at standard B should demonstrate appropriate use of geographic conventions and effective integration of maps, diagrams and statistics.

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2053-assessment.html.

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.

Jo MacDonald          Jackie Dunk
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
This report is based on information gathered from districts and at statewide comparability.

**German — B03**

**Syllabus**

The German 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The German Extension 2009 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation.

**Assessment design**

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

**Comprehension: Listening and reading**

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary and grammatical structures expected was used. Texts reflected current situations in German-speaking countries unless a historical account was relevant.
- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp. 47–48).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 34). Adequate time was provided for note taking and writing responses that demonstrated students’ comprehension.

**Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing**

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were short and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are merely a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched ‘across a range of topics and text types’, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information do not demonstrate the descriptors; neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p. 35). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues match a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained, and at standard A, it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p. 41). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 200 words (syllabus, p. 36) is required.

A range of vocabulary and grammar is required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures. standard A spelling, punctuation and word order has to display a high degree of accuracy.

Support

Support materials for the German syllabuses available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4910.html) (German) and [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1832.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1832.html) (German extension)


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

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

Syllabus

The Graphics 2007 syllabus is in its sixth and final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time with Year 12 in 2014. The Graphics 2013 syllabus will begin general implementation with Year 11 in 2014. The timeline for submitting work programs developed for the 2013 syllabus is outlined in QSA memo 006/13, Senior syllabuses for general implementation, available at https://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act?year=2013.

Assessment design

Schools have developed a wide and varied range of contextually-based assessment instruments that align with the syllabus requirements and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives. However, the following issues have been identified:

- scaffolding of assessment tasks limited the student demonstration of the full range of syllabus standards, especially minimising an opportunity to display standards A and B across the syllabus criteria
- 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
- context-based folios should provide opportunities for the documentation of the reasoning behind the planning, refinement and production stages of the implementation model (syllabus, p. 28).

The syllabus (p. 28) 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. This aligns with the planning, analysis, evaluation and refinement aspects of the Reasoning criterion as outlined in the standards associated with exit criteria (syllabus, p. 31).

Some instruments direct students to produce written information about the design or modification of a product rather than focus on how to graphically represent the product for a particular audience. Therefore, student responses provide insufficient evidence of the Reasoning criterion related to planning, analysis, evaluation and refinement of graphical representations for an intended audience.

Reference should be made within the assessment instrument to a target audience, with the task emphasis being to create a purposeful and focused graphical representation. Effective instruments require students to investigate a range of varied approaches to set graphical problems, rather than be confined to preconceived ideas or a specified or provided set of drawings. Extensive scaffolding of assessment instruments limits opportunities for students to efficiently interpret the needs of the target audience and to develop an appropriate set of graphical representations. Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to document aspects of the implementation model of the syllabus specified in Planning and Refinement (p. 7) and to demonstrate the full range of syllabus standards (p. 31).
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 Graphics 2007 syllabus standards.

Across the state, levels of achievement decisions were appropriately made using the syllabus requirements for determining exit levels of achievement. It was evident that schools were appropriately matching student responses within sample folios, to syllabus standards descriptors.

Where evidence did not support school judgments of the match of qualities of student responses with descriptors, it was commonly related to the use of school-developed, task-specific criteria sheets that were not reflective of the syllabus exit standards (p. 31) and the standard A and B 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.

Instrument-specific standards matrixes align with assessment instruments and requirements. Teachers should use the syllabus standards descriptors to develop instrument-specific standards matrixes.

Support

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


Support materials for the Graphics 2013 syllabus available from the QSA website include:


Wayne Van Den Bos Brad Walmsley
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 third year of implementation.

Assessment design

The most effective assessment instruments provide the opportunity for students to respond to a selected focus of a health issue, while allowing for the demonstration of the full range of dimensions and standards. Focusing assessment on a specific element of a local health issue allows students to produce evidence of discerning and thorough analysis; insightful interpretation, application and synthesis; and critical evaluation, as required to achieve standard A (syllabus, pp. 23–25). Moreover, assessment instruments which have required students to consider a broad range of information, or to solve the entirety of a health issue, tended to limit responses to the demonstration of simple analysis, interpretation, application and evaluation.

When refining assessment to address a specific element of a health issue within a local community context, the following should be considered:

- research a current health issue to establish the significance of the issue on a global scale
- consult with health professionals within the local community to explore how the health issue manifests within the community/target population
- consider the information and data gathered to contextualise the health issue to the local community. For example, take into account the:
  - significance of the health issue, the direct stakeholders involved and the health concerns for these individuals or groups within the local community
  - relevant social determinants and the injustice within the local community that contribute to the manifestation of the issue within the target population
  - predictions that can be made about the health outcomes of the target population if social justice aspects involving health promotion, prevention and/or treatment are not considered when developing and recommending strategies for action
- develop assessment that provides an opportunity for students to:
  - analyse information including primary and/or secondary data on the local health issue
  - apply relevant health theories, concepts and strategies in the development of decisions and solutions that address the identified injustice
  - evaluate data and provide recommendations based on the identified injustice
  - provide recommendations, conclusions, strategies and/or actions that encompass one or two Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion Action Areas
  - justify recommendations with evidence-based practice that reflects the theories and concepts outlined in the syllabus (p. 8).

Refining assessment to address a specific element of a health issue within a local community context will assist students to respond within the assessment conditions outlined in the syllabus because the focus narrows the scope of the task and, consequently, the length of the response.
In addition, action research projects are process-driven and provide the opportunity for students to work through practical approaches to health issues. In completing an action research project, students should develop a planned course of action, implement the campaign/intervention, and subsequently evaluate the process of design and implementation. Information that can inform the evaluation of an action research projects may include:

- the percentage and representativeness of individuals engaged in the campaign/intervention
- the impact of the campaign/intervention on the targeted outcomes. For example, measures of success such as behaviour or policy change based on evaluation and/or predictions justified by primary and/or secondary data
- barriers and facilitators experienced in the design and implementation of the campaign/intervention, reasoned through health frameworks.

**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. Across the state, there was significant agreement about the appropriate application of standards and evidence in sample folios that substantiated on-balance judgments made by schools.

Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was generally associated with the evidence of dimension 2: *Application and analysis*. The standard A in this dimension requires discerning and thorough analysis of relevant information, including primary and secondary data on health issues. In addition, it requires insightful interpretation and application of relevant theories, concepts and strategies. Evidence of this dimension is best demonstrated within student responses when current and relevant information is used in analysing the health issue.

**Support**

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


Panel training will be conducted in 2014.


Shane Roberts  
State Review Panel Chair

Maree Peppin  
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 fourth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Assessment instruments are effective in providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the dimensions and objectives when they include concise task requirements using the language of the objectives and plainly stated conditions.

Successful supervised written instruments must assess dimension 1: Knowledge and understanding and aspects of dimension 2: Reasoning and communicating processes. This technique provides opportunities for dimension 1 when questions require students to describe, explain and apply information related to the key concept in the units. Supervised written assessment requires the description of facts, definitions and procedures relevant to the key concepts of the units.

Supervised written instruments may provide opportunities to demonstrate one, two or all three objectives from dimension 2. In order to demonstrate an A standard in this dimension, the stimulus material selected must allow students to:

- analyse significant and relevant information
- demonstrate discerning and detailed evaluation of evidence
- justify and support solutions or conclusions.

Effective research tasks are based on issues that are significant to the wellbeing of individuals, families or communities; are contemporary and relevant to students, the locality and experiences of the school or community; and avoid value-laden statements and the perpetuating of stereotypes. Effective issues are focused and require a conclusion to be drawn. Standard A requires thorough analysis and discerning evaluation of evidence in order to justify and support the conclusion, rather than simply researching a topic or the accuracy of a statement.

Performance and products assessments assess dimension 1: Knowledge and understanding and dimension 3: Practical performance and may also assess dimension 2: Reasoning and communicating processes. Performance and products tasks are effective when they clearly identify the dimensions and objectives being assessed and are based on a design challenge that provides opportunities to demonstrate these dimensions and objectives. These tasks clearly require students to, in dimension 1, for example, explain and apply knowledge of key concepts related to practical decisions and suitability for the intended purpose, or in dimension 2, to evaluate evidence to justify and support the solutions or decisions.

Effective design challenges identify constraints and require students to refine a variety of practical skills to produce a product for an intended purpose that solves a problem related to the wellbeing of individuals, families and/or communities. Performance and product assessment instruments successfully allow students to demonstrate the objectives in dimension 3 when they require planning, management and reflection throughout the process to solve the design challenge. The task clearly describes the evidence and documentation needed for process journals. Tasks that include a clear requirement that planning occurs before implementing a course of action (as well
as during the process), and include annotated photographs in the process journal, will help students complete the reflection during the process. Refer to Section 5.5.3 of the syllabus.

**Application of standards**

Evidence from sample folios indicated that the decisions about the match of the qualities of student responses with the syllabus standards were mostly supported.

On-balance judgments about student achievement are made by matching the qualities in student responses in a folio with the exit standards. An instrument-specific standards matrix is used to make judgments about individual responses. This matrix includes descriptors selected from the exit standards that match the objectives being assessed by that instrument. Only syllabus standards are used; other descriptors should not be added.

Judgments for dimension 1 are made on balance across the folio of evidence based on responses to instruments from each assessment technique. When folios are matched to the A standard, the evidence will demonstrate the description of a comprehensive range of significant facts and thorough explanation and application of relevant key concepts, across the folio. When making a judgment about dimension 1 for an individual assessment instrument such as a supervised written assessment, judgments are made across the response to the instrument rather than item by item.

A variety of practical skills was demonstrated in a range of ways to suit different school contexts and design challenges ranging from refining components of one product to producing a number of products. The A standard for the *Practical performance* dimension requires evidence of:

- thorough planning, effective and efficient management and perceptive reflection
- refined variety of practical skills and a product for an intended purpose.

To support judgments, process journal documentation needs to provide evidence of these qualities and could include observation sheets for evidence of application of knowledge, management and performance of practical skills and to assist students with reflection.

**Support**

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


Assessment workshops were offered in all districts in the state in Semester 2, 2013.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.


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 and final 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 implemented with the Year 11 cohort in 2013. This syllabus does not contain vocational education and training (VET) components.

Assessment design

Effective assessment provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives across the full range of syllabus standards. Students must be provided with a number of opportunities to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the course. Providing these opportunities will allow students to address a range of subject matter, concepts, key ideas and principles relevant to the hospitality industry. Effective assessment instruments provide students with opportunities to develop understandings and skills to be able to meet the general objectives of each dimension.

When designing assessment instruments teachers will use the language of the syllabus objectives and standards to ensure these opportunities are provided. Instruments which assess criterion 2: Reasoning are more effective when they provide opportunities to ‘respond to hospitality issues by analysing information, developing arguments supported by evidence to draw conclusions and communicate in appropriate forms using appropriate language conventions’ (syllabus, p. 56). Schools ensure that students have the opportunity to demonstrate ‘use and sustained control of genre and language conventions to communicate ideas’ which will contribute to an on-balance judgment in this criterion.

In supervised written assessment, stimulus materials may be provided to support the assessment instrument and presented in a wide variety of forms; tasks set using these materials may vary in length. Stimulus materials that are succinct will allow students to engage with those materials in the time provided; if they are lengthy, students may be allowed to access them before the assessment. Students should have opportunities to become familiar with the assessment techniques that will be used to make summative judgments, including opportunities to respond to unseen tasks and use appropriate communication strategies.

In criterion 3: Practical performance, schools ensure that students have the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to ‘make and justify decisions and perform skills in the planning, implementation and delivery of quality products and services in a hospitality industry context’ (syllabus, p. 57). Effective assessment instruments require students to evaluate and reflect on planning, implementation and outcomes of the hospitality event or function. Students implement an event by creating products and/or providing services, following plans and procedures and adhering to workplace health and safety practices.
Application of standards

Judgments about student achievement are made by using evidence of the match of the qualities of the student responses with the syllabus criteria and standards descriptors. For each assessment instrument, schools develop an instrument-specific standards matrix from the syllabus standards. Syllabus standards descriptors are not modified other than to include the genre of the communication, the issue and the context of the hospitality event. For example, the genre of the communication may be changed to research report or multimodal presentation and the hospitality event to coffee shop or client dinner. The qualitative descriptors of the syllabus standards or matrixes are not changed.

Across the state, there was significant agreement about the appropriate application of standards and evidence in sample folios that substantiated on-balance judgments made by schools. Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was generally associated with the evidence of criterion 2: Reasoning. Demonstration of an A standard requires ‘analysis of information from a wide range of sources and development of well-reasoned arguments supported by detailed evidence to draw conclusions and make relevant recommendations’ (syllabus, p. 56). Judgments about student responses should be made on-balance with ‘consistent and effective communication’. Schools should not privilege any one aspect of the criterion/dimension when making on-balance judgments.

In criterion 3: Performance, video/DVD evidence needs to clearly demonstrate the match between the qualities in the student evidence and the standards descriptors of the syllabus. The accompanying commentary should identify the qualities of the specific aspects of the performance products and services that match the A 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/dimension.

When implementing the Hospitality Studies 2012 syllabus, evidence to support judgments about student responses in the dimension 3: Performing will be made by matching the qualities of the responses with the syllabus standards. Video evidence will support judgments for this dimension and should illustrate the typical A and C standards.

Support


Support materials for the Hospitality Studies 2012 syllabus available from the QSA website include:
- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18155.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18155-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18155-assessment.html.

The introduction of the Hospitality Studies 2012 syllabus was supported by assessment workshops in in Term 2 this year. Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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.

Penny Braithwaite Jo Butterworth
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Indonesian — B06

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

Syllabus

The Indonesian 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation. The Indonesian Extension 2009 syllabus is in its fourth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

Comprehension: Listening and reading

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary and grammatical structures expected was used. Texts reflected current situations in Indonesia unless a historical account was relevant to the task.
- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp. 39–40).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 34). Adequate time was provided for note taking and responding.

Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were short and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are merely a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched across a range of topics and text types, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information do not demonstrate the descriptors; neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p. 35). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues matches a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained, and at standard A, it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p. 35). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 200 words (syllabus, p. 36) is required.

A range of vocabulary and grammar is required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures. Standard A spelling, punctuation and word order has to display a high degree of accuracy.

Support

Support materials for the Indonesian syllabuses available from the QSA website include:


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. Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

Kath Symmons
State Review Panel Chair

Lester Ford
Senior Education Officer
Information Processing and Technology — 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 third year of implementation.

Assessment design

Moderation processes identified effective assessment instrument design. The majority of school assessment packages provided students with opportunities to demonstrate each of the three syllabus dimensions across the full range of standards (syllabus, pp. 39–40). Effectively designed assessment instruments allow students to be able to respond within the length requirements as stated in the syllabus (syllabus, pp. 31–36).

When designing an assessment instrument for the supervised written technique, it can be constructed using one or more items (syllabus, p. 31). These items may require the use, interpretation or analysis of data, statistics, graphs, tables or diagrams and the application of algorithms to demonstrate mathematical calculations and problem solving. Paragraph responses (50–250 words) also provide opportunities to maintain, develop and justify ideas in order to demonstrate the assessable general objectives (syllabus, pp. 2–3). However, if an extended piece of writing is chosen, it is best if this is the only item used when implementing the supervised assessment technique. This will better allow students to demonstrate the full range of standards for each of the dimensions which are assessed (syllabus, pp. 39–40).

The purpose of the extended response technique is to assess the sustained application of higher-order cognition (analysis, synthesis and evaluation) to known and provided materials, stimuli and concepts. However, the focus of this technique is not research (syllabus, p. 33). In addition, if a response to a case study is required, an effectively designed assessment instrument contributes to the assessment of human–computer interaction and incorporates all stages of the information literacy cycle (syllabus, p. 33).

Finally, for the product assessment technique, the stages of the software development cycle or the information development cycle were evident within the assessment design of most major projects. This aligns with the design–develop–evaluate approach to problem solving as referred to in the syllabus (syllabus, pp. 19–20) and provides an opportunity for students to apply a practical solution a problem.

Application of standards

Across the state, there was significant agreement about the application of standards and within the majority of sample folios there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding a standard to each dimension. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each dimension. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension (syllabus, p. 38).
Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was generally associated with the evidence in folios related to dimension 3: *Evaluation and communication*. For example, within this dimension, both the A standard and B standard include the testing of processes and solutions, application of prescribed criteria, reasoning and evidence to draw conclusions and making supported conclusions. However, for the A standard, testing is comprehensive with the application of prescribed and self-determined criteria typically characteristic of student work (syllabus, p. 40). Evidence of testing within responses includes the application of metrics and protocols to test solutions, evaluation of processes for identified products and solutions and construction of documentation using the information literacy, software or information systems development cycles (syllabus, p. 3).

**Support**

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


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.

In 2014, the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus will be implemented with both Year 11 and Year 12 students.

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 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
- allowing 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
- reducing scaffolding from Year 11 to Year 12 to allow students to better demonstrate analysis and synthesis across the range of standards in the Problem solving criterion
- developing contextualised instrument-specific standards matrixes that selected the relevant standards descriptors to match the criteria and general objectives that the task was designed to assess.

Implications for the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the dimensions and objectives. The 2012 syllabus has three dimensions: Knowledge and communication, Design and development, and Implementation and evaluation. Schools decide which objectives of the dimensions are applicable to assessment tasks ensuring that a number of opportunities for all objectives are provided across the course of study.

Under the Knowledge and communication dimension, students are required to demonstrate information technology (IT) knowledge through defining, explaining and using IT terms, concepts and principles, and communicate and document this knowledge using appropriate modes, genres and language conventions. Tasks assessing this dimension should, wherever possible, use the language of the objectives.

The product assessment technique provides the best opportunity for students to demonstrate the project development model (design–develop–evaluate) as the method of inquiry that underpins the problem-solving process (Section 4.5.3 of the syllabus). This technique provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate the objectives from all three dimensions, but in particular, the Design and development dimension and the Implementation and evaluation dimension. Tasks developed to combine the objectives of these dimensions provide opportunities for students to fully demonstrate the design–develop–evaluate cycle.

Under the Implementation and evaluation dimension, students focus on the quality of the solution. The quality and effectiveness of the solution is evaluated against the client needs and the defined criteria formulated during the design and development phase. Students demonstrate their ability
to use technical skills and resources to present and evaluate their solution against the defined criteria using contexts, inputs, processes and products (CIPP) model of evaluation (syllabus, p. 6).

Decisions about levels of achievement are made using the table: ‘Awarding exit levels of achievement’ on page 20 of the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus. The minimum combination of standards outlined in the 2012 syllabus considers each dimension as making an equal contribution to the overall level of achievement, a change from the approach in the 2006 syllabus.

**Application of standards**

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

There was significant agreement across the state about the application of standards. The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student’s work match the standards descriptors overall in each criterion. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in each criterion. Folios in the lower range of an achievement level typically demonstrate achievement at the lower standard in the Communication general objective as per the table ‘Awarding exit levels of achievement’ (syllabus, p. 43).

When making an on-balance decision about each criterion in a folio of evidence, attention is drawn to the different aspects of each criterion, identified by the dot points in the standards. For example, the Problem solving criterion has three aspects:

- identification, classification and description of unrehearsed problems
- development of solutions to unrehearsed problems
- evaluation of contexts, inputs, processes and products against appropriate criteria.

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.

**Support**

Support materials for the Information Technology Systems 2012 syllabus available from the QSA website include:


Panel training focusing on verification will be conducted in 2014.


Col Thompson
State Review Panel Chair

Robyn Bergmansons
Senior Education Officer
Italian — B04

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

Syllabus
The Italian 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design
Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

Comprehension: Listening and reading
- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary and grammatical structures expected, was used. Texts reflected current situations in Italian-speaking countries unless a historical account was relevant.
- When vocabulary help was provided with texts, it did not prevent the demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ being ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp. 39–40).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 33). Adequate time was provided for note taking and responding.

Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing
- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were short and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched ‘across a range of topics and text types’, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information does not demonstrate the descriptors; neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p. 34). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues match a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained, and at standard A, it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p.41). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 200 words is required (syllabus, p. 35).

A range of vocabulary and grammar is required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures. Standard A spelling, punctuation and word order has to display a high degree of accuracy.

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4912.html

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.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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

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

Syllabus

The Japanese 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

**Comprehension: Listening and reading**

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and a number of questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation, conclusions and decisions.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary, grammatical structures and script expected, was used. Texts reflected current situations in Japan unless a historical account was relevant to the task.
- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (syllabus, pp. 46–47).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (syllabus, p. 40). Adequate time was provided for note taking and writing responses that demonstrated students’ comprehension.

**Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing**

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were short and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course of study. Responses to individual tasks may not demonstrate all the standards descriptors, so the data provided by responses to all tasks completed across the year need to be taken into account when determining a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched across a range of topics and text types, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information do not demonstrate the descriptors; neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (syllabus, p.41). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues match a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B, conversation is generally sustained and at standard A it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (syllabus, p. 48). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 400 kanamajiri is required (syllabus, p. 42).

A range of vocabulary and grammar is required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures. Standard A spelling, punctuation and word order has to display a high degree of accuracy, while an extensive range of kanji is to be correctly formed and appropriately used (syllabus, p. 49).

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/4833.html

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.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

Paul Dyer                  Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Legal Studies — B21

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

Syllabus

The Legal Studies 2007 senior syllabus is in its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students only.

In 2014, the Legal Studies 2013 syllabus is to be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students.

Assessment design

Evidence from moderation processes indicates that schools are designing effective assessment instruments. The instrument-specific standards for each assessment instrument were drawn from the syllabus criteria and standards (syllabus, p. 50).

Selection of topics is critical in providing students with opportunities to demonstrate the general objectives across the range of standards. Assessment instruments should focus on depth rather than breadth of a topic. This provides opportunities for students to respond within the recommended word length. It is also important that the focus be on legal issues, positions, and rights and responsibilities, rather than the social aspects of the issue. Students should be directed to the methodology in the syllabus (p. 6) as a problem-solving strategy for their investigations.

The independent study requires students to undertake an in-depth investigation of a current legal issue facing Australian society (syllabus, p. 39). Therefore, students should not choose international law to make connections with Australian issues.

Considerable progress has been made with the removal of ‘enabling’ criteria on criteria sheets. Students are given opportunities to succeed when given one clear set of instructions in the task and including only the syllabus criteria and standards on the instrument-specific criteria sheet.

Application of standards

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

Evidence provided through the moderation process indicates that schools are making informed decisions about the match between the qualities in student responses and the standards descriptors in the syllabus. Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was often associated with the evidence related to Evaluation, and to some extent, Investigation.

Student responses to the Investigation criterion must demonstrate the ability to ‘examine legal situations and issues’, rather than ‘retrieving and comprehending information’, which demonstrates the Knowledge and understanding criterion (syllabus pp. 3–4).

Using case studies in assessment instruments limits opportunities to undertake Evaluation. Some tasks require students to analyse, apply and identify a legal response which demonstrates Investigation. The use of short answer, multiple choice and true/false items in short-response tests also limits the opportunity to critically review the law’s attempts to ‘achieve just, fair and equitable outcomes to issues’ (syllabus, p.4).
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
• assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1535-assessment.html.

Support materials are also available on the QSA website for the Legal Studies 2013 syllabus for implementation with Year 11 students in 2014. These include:

• syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20322.html
• work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20322-wp.html
• assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20322-assessment.html.

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.

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

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

Syllabus

The Marine Studies 2004 syllabus is in its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students. The Marine Science 2013 syllabus will begin general implementation with Year 11 students in 2014. The timeline for submitting work programs developed for the 2013 syllabus is outlined in QSA memo 006/13, Senior syllabuses for general implementation, available at https://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/qsa_secure/memos.act?year=2013.

Assessment design

The syllabus general objectives inform the design of effective assessment instruments. Teachers make decisions about which general objectives will be assessed and which standards descriptors will be selected for use in making judgments about student achievement. To design effective assessment, teachers use the language of the general objectives to frame assessment instruments and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevant objectives for all standards. Students must have a number of opportunities to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives of the course.

Schools select assessment techniques that will provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. When selecting an assessment technique that would enable students to demonstrate achievement in Information processing and reasoning, schools should ensure that students have the opportunity to:

- plan and conduct investigations
- interpret and evaluate information and ideas
- communicate information and ideas.

Application of standards

Where schools have developed task-specific criteria and standards that directly align with syllabus standards descriptors (syllabus, pp. 59–61), judgments about student responses can be readily and appropriately matched to the relevant standards. To develop task-specific criteria for an assessment task, teachers select the objectives that relate to the task demands and requirements. The qualitative descriptors in the syllabus standards provide discriminators for teachers to use to make judgments; these qualitative descriptors should not be changed when designing task-specific criteria and standards.

In order to make a judgment about student achievement, there must be sufficient evidence to match with the relevant syllabus standards descriptors. The QSA policy for Late and non-submission of student responses to assessment instruments in Authority and Authority-registered subjects provides further information about the need to gather evidence upon which to base a judgment, including particular references to the awarding of standard E (A–Z of Senior Moderation, Policy 1.1, QSA 2013, Senior moderation hub, www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10773.html).
Support

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


Support materials for the Marine Science 2013 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20319.html

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.

Tanya Martin  David Madden
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Officer
Mathematics A — A36

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

Syllabus

The Mathematics A 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate the syllabus objectives across the full range of standards. Assessment of student achievement is part of the developmental learning process and is integrated with the learning experiences. Therefore, students who are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate initiative, without being explicitly guided, can produce evidence within their responses of the characteristics outlined in the standard A and B descriptors (syllabus, pp. 36–37).

While it is appropriate to use the syllabus language when designing assessment, in a number of cases the level of specific, detailed instruction provided by schools guided students through each stage across the range of complexity. This limited the opportunity for students to demonstrate initiative across the range of complexity and to develop and apply strategies in non-routine situations, as required for the achievement of standard A and B (syllabus, pp. 36–37).

The syllabus explains:

**Initiative**

‘Learning experiences and the corresponding assessment must provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their capability in dealing with tasks that range from well-rehearsed (routine) through to those that require demonstration of insight and creativity (non-routine)’ (syllabus, p.6).

**Complexity**

‘Students must be provided with the opportunity to work on simple, single-step tasks through to complex tasks. Complexity may derive either from the nature of the concepts involved or from the number of ideas or techniques that must be sequenced in order to produce an appropriate conclusion’ (syllabus, p. 6).

Extended modelling and problem-solving tasks provide an opportunity for the demonstration of the A and B standards across the syllabus criteria (syllabus, pp. 36–37) and for the incorporation of the principles of application, technology, initiative and complexity (syllabus, pp. 5–6).

When students undertake an extended modelling and problem-solving task for the first time, scaffolding may be provided to help students complete the assessment. However, if the task is intended to demonstrate high-level initiative, complexity and the associated syllabus criteria and standards, then the scaffolding provided should not specify the procedures, or lead the students through a series of steps to reach a solution. In some cases, the extended modelling and problem-solving tasks comprised a series of items which could more appropriately be assessed using the supervised test technique outlined in the syllabus (p. 33).
Application of standards

The syllabus standards descriptors are used to make judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the course. Across the state, there was significant agreement about the appropriate application of standards and that evidence within the sample folios substantiated the on-balance judgments made by schools.

When schools design assessment that does not explicitly use the syllabus language, or that reduces scaffolding to provide an opportunity for the demonstration of initiative, this does not mean that attributes required in the syllabus standards descriptors cannot be identified within student responses. When making an on-balance judgment about student achievement, evidence is found in the student responses and matched to the appropriate syllabus standard descriptors.

In addition, a standard can be only be awarded when evidence is available. In cases of non-submission of student responses, standard E cannot be awarded where there is no evidence. Further information about the need to gather evidence upon which to base a judgment can be found in the policy for *Late and non-submission of student responses to assessment instruments in Authority and Authority-registered subjects* (A–Z of Senior Moderation, Policy 1.1, QSA 2013, Senior moderation hub, www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10773.html).

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888-wp.html
- assessment advice, including *Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom* and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1888-assessment.html.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014 focusing on the panel training core, including attributes of an effective panellist related to general reviewing practices.

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 its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate the syllabus objectives across the full range of standards. Assessment of student achievement is part of the developmental learning process and is integrated with the learning experiences.

Assessment packages from across the state clearly provided opportunities for students to meet the full range of the syllabus standards and covered the full range of general objectives across topics. Tasks that were explicitly designed around syllabus criteria provided better opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus objectives, especially at Sound Achievement.

Standard C in Knowledge and procedures requires students to demonstrate ‘recall, access, selection of mathematical definitions, rules and procedures in routine, simple situations’ (syllabus, p. 34). Evidence of this may be found as part of student responses to complex tasks. In student folios at threshold Sound Achievement and Limited Achievement, this evidence was more commonly found when students were provided with specific opportunities to respond to routine, simple tasks. However, these tasks should be provided across the breadth of subject matter; some assessment packages showed an undue focus on a particular topic (e.g. differentiation), providing numerous items that varied only slightly from one item to another.

Topics such as simple interest, binomial distribution formula and trigonometric proofs should not be included in assessment as they are not part of the Mathematics B 2008 subject matter. Mathematics B topics are outlined in Section 5 of the syllabus.

Application of standards

The syllabus standards descriptors are used to make judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the course. Across the state, there was significant agreement about the appropriate application of standards; evidence within the sample folios substantiated the on-balance judgments made by schools.

A variety of practices were used by schools to successfully match evidence in student folios with syllabus standards. Some schools developed items to provide opportunities to address particular standards descriptors and labelled these items accordingly. Other schools looked across complete responses to identify evidence that matched the standards wherever that evidence had been presented.

Mismatches between evidence and standards, although infrequent across the state, were more common at Sound and Limited Achievement. Schools that effectively matched evidence to standards at these levels used all student work, including responses intended to demonstrate Modelling and problem-solving standards, to find evidence to match the Knowledge and procedures standards. Some mechanical or formulaic methods of grading student work failed to identify this evidence because judgments about achievement in Knowledge and procedures were restricted to items specifically designed to demonstrate these standards.
In order to demonstrate a Sound Achievement, evidence of numerical calculations and selection and application of mathematical definitions, rules and procedures must be found across a range of syllabus topics to provide evidence of a C standard in Knowledge and procedures.

Evidence of each school’s capacity to make judgments is demonstrated through the submission of folios that comply with the required sampling pattern. Atypical folios must be included as samples if they are folios needed as part of the sampling requirement to demonstrate, for example, threshold levels of achievement.

**Support**

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


Panel training will be conducted in 2014 focusing on the panel training core and the application of standards and making judgments.


Peter Antrobus  
State Review Panel Chair

David Madden  
Senior 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 its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Across the state, it was evident that schools are designing more effective assessment instruments with opportunities to gather information on the extent to which students demonstrate achievement in the general objectives. There was a noticeable improvement in the quality of assessment instruments.

Extended modelling and problem solving tasks, facilitated by the design of more open-ended investigations, demonstrated improved opportunities for students to:

- 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).

Furthermore, there has been an increase in the number of schools teaching Dynamics from a vector and calculus perspective rather than a formulaic approach. The tasks then allow evidence to be gathered across many of the aspects of the Modelling and problem solving and Communication and justification general objectives.

Assessment packages provided a better balance of simple routine questions to non-routine questions. This balance has provided opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the general objectives across all 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. There was significant agreement across the state about the application of standards. 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. 39).

Where evidence was not matched to the syllabus standards, it was related to matching the evidence to the C-standard descriptors in all three criteria requiring:

- evidence of application of mathematical definitions, rules and procedures in routine, simple life-related or abstract situations
- interpretation of results in the context of routine, simple problems
- translation of information from one representation to another in simple routine situations and justification of procedures, decisions or results.

Improvements have been noted in the application of the A standard in Modelling and problem solving in both supervised tests and extended modelling and problem-solving tasks, especially
identifying assumptions and associated effects, parameters and/or variables and investigating
and evaluating the validity of mathematical arguments including strengths and imitations of
mathematical arguments and models.

Schools are reminded that the non-submission of an assessment task cannot be graded as an E.
It must be recorded as a non-submission. The QSA policy for Late and non-submission of student
responses to assessment instruments in Authority and Authority-registered subjects provides
further information about the need to gather evidence upon which to base a judgment, including
particular references to the awarding of standard E (QSA 2013, A–Z of Senior Moderation,

Support

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

- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample

Information relating to moderation and quality-assurance processes is available from the

Bevan Penrose
State Review Panel Chair

Susan Scheiwe
Senior Education Officer
Modern History — B39

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

Syllabus

The Modern History 2004 senior syllabus is in its ninth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Moderation processes provided evidence of effective assessment design for each of the four categories of assessment. Assessing the full range of relevant syllabus standards descriptors in each assessment instrument provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the objectives.

When developing instrument-specific standards matrixes, the genre and topic might be specified but the key language of the standards descriptors should not be altered.

Category 1: Extended written response to historical evidence

Category 1 instruments require students to address a specific unseen question or respond to an unseen statement by using historical sources that have been supplied by the teacher. The syllabus (p. 49) states that in Year 12 the historical sources must be ‘contestable’, allowing students to employ ‘evaluation and application of perspectives’.

An effective question or statement is focused on a specific historical issue. This question needs to be aligned with sources that are selected to allow students to weigh up differing positions and standpoints surrounding the issue.

Category 2: Written research task, and category 3: Multimodal presentation

In category 2 and category 3 assessment, inquiry questions drive the research process. Effective research questions are those that align closely with the aspects of inquiry, especially aspects 3 and 4. Questions centred around ‘background’, ‘changes and continuities’, ‘motives’, ‘causes’, ‘effects’, ‘interests’ and ‘arguments’ allow students to engage with ‘conceptually complex issues for investigation’ (standard A).

Table 1: Focus questions for inquiry topics (syllabus, p. 27) may be used as a resource to assist students in the development of suitable questions for their own inquiries.

Category 4: Additional test formats

Where criterion 2 is assessed in a category 4 instrument, the task must provide enough scope for students to deal adequately with analysis, interpretation, corroboration, evaluation and decision-making skills.

Sample instruments: Russia under Stalin is a sample short answer and response to stimulus test which shows one possible way to develop a category 4 test (QSA 2012, www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055-assessment.html).

The length and number of sources provided should be carefully considered to ensure students have the opportunity to frame considered responses under test conditions.
Application of standards

Moderation processes provided evidence of very high levels of comparability across the state. When making judgments about student responses, teachers need to make an on-balance decision about the best match to the standards for each criterion. The different aspects of each criterion are identified by the dot points in the syllabus standards (syllabus pp. 57–60).

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

There are four parts to criterion 1. The first descriptor of criterion 1 is concerned with the issue under investigation (conceptually complex, significant or straightforward) and the appropriate nature of the research questions formed to undertake an investigation of the issue. Evidence to make a judgment about this descriptor may be found throughout the research process but is signalled in the rationale, initial hypothesis, research questions and sub-questions. Typically, the complexity of an inquiry will develop during the research process.

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

When making an on-balance decision about achievement in criterion 2 consideration must be given to the three parts of this criterion. The first descriptor includes a number of sub-points and is concerned with using sources to comprehend, analyse, interpret and corroborate evidence.

**Criterion 3: Communicating historical knowledge**

There are three parts to criterion 3. Attention is drawn to the word scope in the third descriptor of criterion 3. The scope of the task is set by the framing of the historical inquiry (the theme and the particular issue under study) within other parameters such as conditions, length and genre. Effective responses that meet the scope of the task will be succinct and focused, engage with the theme under study, and accomplish the aims of the task within the parameters provided.

**Support**

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


Panel training will be conducted in 2014.


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

The Music 2004 syllabus is in its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students.

In 2014, the Music 2013 syllabus is to be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. The Music 2013 syllabus is available from the website at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20324.html.

Assessment design

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

Analysing repertoire

Analysing repertoire tasks are most effective when students are provided with clear and definite instructions that require them 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 given by providing one or two focus questions. In this way students have the opportunity to demonstrate the standards. Where the option of more than one question is offered to students, all questions should allow students to demonstrate the objective and standards. Questions that have students respond to an evaluative statement (agree or disagree) by referring to the repertoire can give students an opportunity to evaluate.

Thorough demonstration of the Analysing repertoire standards occurs when students make direct reference to the repertoire to further enhance the depth of their response.

Composing

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

Performing

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, individuals within an ensemble should be clearly heard.
Application of standards

Evidence was found to support a very high level of consistency of the match of qualities of student responses in the sample folios to the syllabus standards.

The standards of the 2004 syllabus are to be used to make judgments about achievement for Year 12 students in 2014, while judgments about student achievement for Year 11 students will be made using the dimensions and standards of the 2013 syllabus.

While there is an increasing range of styles and genres being presented in Composing, there is a high level of consistency in the standards awarded.

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).

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

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1249-assessment.html.

Support materials for the Music 2013 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20324.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20324-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20324-assessment.html.

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 fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

A wide variety of investigating tasks and topics was evident in sample folios, with the majority of responses presented as essays. Table 1 of the syllabus provides the range of assessment techniques and conditions of assessment for the Investigation of music sources criterion, including extended response, multimedia presentations and oral presentations.

Investigating tasks that centre on a topic or argument provide succinct direction, and effective samples of student responses occur when there is a clear link between the music sources and the analysis of the sources. Effective responses were also characterised by a correlation between the topic and the best suited techniques of presentation for the topic. Effective Investigating tasks provide opportunities to undertake explicit analysis, exploration, and synthesis of music sources.

While there was a diversity of compositional genres evident in samples, there were far fewer threshold samples from the Composition specialisation this year. Most compositions were presented as score and recording, with a smaller number 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).

In some instances, the assessment techniques and conditions for the Performance specialisation were not met. These are detailed in Table 4 of the syllabus (syllabus, p. 25).

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 the small number of instances across the state where the evidence did not match the standard awarded in Realisation of the work, the disparity did not have an impact on the overall level of achievement.

There were an increasing number of multi-instrumentalists or instrumentalists/vocalists undertaking the Performance specialisation. At comparability there was a high level of consistency in the application of standards to student achievement across responses to both assessment instruments.

The response to the Investigating task is a significant part of the folio on which judgments about student achievement are made. For most of the threshold Very High Achievement and Sound Achievement sample folios, the investigating response demonstrated a lower standard than responses for Realisation of the work. This means that achievement in this dimension often plays a key role in making judgments about levels of achievement.
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
• work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936-wp.html
• assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/5936-assessment.html.

Panel training focusing on standards will be conducted in 2014.

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

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

Syllabuses

The Korean, Latin, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese 2008 syllabuses are in their fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design starts with the identification of the cognitive skills that students need to demonstrate in each macroskill. These are found in the wording of the syllabus objectives and standards. Items and tasks in assessment instruments across the state generally provided students with opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and range of standards. Those instruments had the following features.

Comprehension: Listening and reading

- Texts of appropriate complexity were sourced and questions crafted to elicit the demonstration of specific aspects of the standards, e.g. analysis, evaluation.
- A variety of text types of appropriate length and complexity, containing the breadth of vocabulary and grammatical structures expected was used. Texts reflected current situations in the target countries unless a historical account was relevant.
- Vocabulary help provided with texts still allowed demonstration of ‘plausible interpretations of unfamiliar language’ to be ‘drawn from context’ (Tables 4.1 and 4.2 of the syllabus).
- Task scenarios or contexts were realistic and to the point.
- Task wording reflected syllabus objectives and standards descriptors.
- Questions were varied, some requiring specific information and some requiring synthesis of overall ideas from the text or texts. Questions did not provide clues for other questions, and could not be answered without reference to the texts.
- Listening texts were ‘spoken in the slower range of normal background speaker rate of utterance’ (Section 8.3.1 of the syllabus). Adequate time was provided for responding.

Conveying meaning: Speaking and writing

- Tasks and contexts were realistic for students who had not been overseas.
- Task descriptions were short and clear.
- Stimulus material neither impeded nor assisted.
- When choices of topics were given, they were of comparable complexity.
- Tasks were open-ended, allowing students to easily demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices across a variety of topics. Tasks prompted students to produce language appropriate to the task such as giving personal opinions and experiences, hypothesising, explaining a process.
Application of standards

Student responses were generally matched to syllabus standards, and criteria sheets clearly indicated how student work matched the standards descriptors.

On-balance decisions are made using the fullest and latest evidence (all Year 12 responses for students exiting after four semesters). Language learning is developmental: students engage with language through tasks and texts which increase in complexity over the course. Responses to individual tasks may not cover all the standards descriptors; responses to all summative tasks are used to determine a result for a macroskill.

Standards indicated on a profile are a record of students’ achievement; student work in a folio is the evidence. Collecting all the evidence, and indicating the qualities of the responses on the criteria sheets, allows teachers to determine which descriptors have been matched across a range of topics and text types, and therefore the standard attained.

Listening and reading

Information that is plainly stated in texts does not allow for the demonstration of Reasoning and responding, which requires analysis of information and ideas in, or alluded to, in texts. Responses including external or background information do not demonstrate the descriptors, neither does the inclusion of students’ personal opinions of the topic in the text.

Speaking

All tasks require demonstration of spontaneous language and students must not receive the questions beforehand (Section 8.3.3 of the syllabus). Students need time to elaborate on their answers, without the teacher leading the conversation. Speaking that relies on prompts and cues matches a standard C, e.g. simple questions and answers. At standard B conversation is generally sustained and at standard A it is initiated and sustained. Students who simply read from a script, or are fixed in a formulaic roleplay, do not demonstrate flexibility, spontaneity and relevance (Table 4.3 of the syllabus). Prepared and unprepared presentations/responses require a number of impromptu questions for students to be able to demonstrate all descriptors.

Writing

Students must demonstrate the standards across a range of topics and text types. At least one extended passage of approximately 200 words (Section 8.3.4 of the syllabus) is required.

A range of vocabulary and grammar is always required. At standard A, it is a wide range used effectively with complex language, and ideas being conveyed with flexibility and originality. This requires more than formulaic language and drilled structures; and, spelling, punctuation and word order also has to display a high degree of accuracy.

Support

Support materials for the Korean, Latin, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese 2008 syllabuses available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1823.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products, at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1823.html.

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.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

George Orfanos            Lester Ford
State Review Panel Chair  Senior Education Office
Philosophy and Reason — A14

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

Syllabus

The Philosophy and Reason 2004 syllabus is its ninth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Assessment packages in the majority of 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 assessment instruments that allow students to maximise their opportunities to demonstrate the standards across all three criteria: Knowledge, Application, and Communication.

Some assessment instruments did not require the students to respond to critical reasoning, deductive logic or philosophical concepts, therefore providing limited opportunities for the students to demonstrate the criteria and standards.

Effectively designed instrument-specific criteria and standards were those that:

- aligned to the syllabus criteria and standards (syllabus, p. 44)
- were specific to the assessment instrument
- clearly indicated which aspects of the syllabus criteria and standards descriptors were being assessed.

Application of standards

The syllabus standards descriptors are used to make judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the syllabus. Advice provided to schools at verification focused on school judgments using syllabus standards descriptors matched to evidence within sample folios. Evidence was found to support schools’ on-balance judgments 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 of:

- effectively designed assessment that allowed opportunities for the general objectives and the range of standards
- effectively designed criteria and standards matrixes
- each school’s ability to make judgments using the criteria and standards.

Where there was an issue with making judgments, it was usually because the criteria and standards were not drawn from the syllabus or judgments were made using criteria that the instrument had not actually provided opportunities to demonstrate.
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
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2057-assessment.html.

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.

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 third year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment instruments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the dimensions and objectives of the syllabus. Schools select a variety of assessment techniques and conditions that are prescribed in the syllabus to allow students to demonstrate achievement across the dimensions and standards. Where schools are effectively using the principles of assessment design, opportunities are being provided for students to ‘evaluate using information, understandings and skills previously gained in acquiring and applying to make decisions, reach conclusions, solve problems and justify solutions and actions’ (syllabus, p.4).

Assessment instruments that address Focus Area C will identify an issue related to ‘equity and access to exercise, sport and physical activity in Australian society’ (syllabus, p.13). Personalisation would be established by considering how the issue relates to the students’ personal experiences, enabling students to make meaning of and explore connections with their real-life contexts. Students may demonstrate an understanding of Figueroa’s Framework through their examination of factors influencing equity and access. The framework should not be the focus of the analysis and evaluation.

Multimodal responses to research instruments require a clear focus on dimension 3: Evaluating. Focusing on dimension 3 will allow students to demonstrate qualities of the A-standard descriptors such as in-depth, appropriate and discerning. As the students evaluate knowledge and understandings through a physical activity, there will also be opportunities to gather evidence about achievement in dimension 1: Acquiring and dimension 2: Applying.

The syllabus requires that scaffolding be reduced from Year 11 to Year 12 to allow students to better demonstrate independence in research (syllabus, p. 24). This quality of independence is required in both the A-standard descriptors in Applying and Evaluating dimensions. Where scaffolding is provided it should assist students to undertake the research process and gather appropriate information to be used in the response. Where additional expectations are presented through scaffolding, student responses tend to deviate from the requirements of the task.

Application of standards

Across the state, there was general agreement about the appropriate application of standards and evidence in sample folios that substantiated on-balance judgments made by schools. Where there was an issue with on-balance judgments, it was generally associated with the following aspects of evidence:

- visual evidence of an A and C standard across the three dimensions for physical performances. Visual evidence in authentic contexts should substantiate that student responses demonstrate decision making, reflection, initiation of change and/or modification of personal and/or team strategies to solve problems. Teachers make judgments on student performance in a variety of authentic performance contexts. Teachers draw from this evidence to illustrate the school’s judgments about application of standards to physical performances.
Visual evidence of the A and C standards across the three dimensions does not require students to perform in the same context. Commentary that refers to the qualities described in the syllabus standards provides direct evidence of the school’s decisions about student performances.

- Evidence of the communication objectives across the three dimensions. On-balance judgments about the quality of the communication in written, spoken and multimodal student responses should be made using the final objective in each dimension. To demonstrate an A standard requires ‘sustained and accurate use of textual features; purposeful and effective selection, sequencing and organisation of relevant and substantial subject matter; and discerning and effective choice of communication strategies’ (syllabus, p. 29–31). Schools should not privilege any one aspect of these objectives when making on-balance judgments.

- Evidence of dimension 3: Evaluating in performance and aesthetic physical activities. Visual evidence of ‘consistent and discerning reflection and decision making that enhances physical responses’ and the ‘consistent and effective initiation of change or modification of personal and/or team strategies’ can be demonstrated ‘in’ continuous assessment opportunities rather than single, point-in-time performances (syllabus, p. 31 and p. 25). Standard A evidence in the Evaluating dimension can also be enhanced when the students demonstrate these actions and cognitive processes ‘about’ the authentic performance contexts.

Support

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

- Syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366.html
- Assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11366-assessment.html.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014.

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.

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

The Physics 2007 syllabus is in its sixth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment design involves providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the syllabus general objectives, described as the syllabus standards A–E. Opportunities to demonstrate the standards may be enhanced when the words of the syllabus standards are used to design tasks or items. For example, words such as interpret, compare, explain, apply, formulate, analyse, evaluate, explore, justify may be used.

When developing extended experimental investigations, the syllabus states, ‘teachers should negotiate with students to ensure the possibility of success’ (syllabus, p. 22). In particular, teachers should guide students towards investigations that will provide opportunities for Investigative processes, standard A, ‘systematic analysis of primary data to identify relationships between patterns, trends, errors and anomalies’ (syllabus, p. 30).

In supervised assessments, items that effectively assess Investigative processes usually provide opportunities for systematic analysis of secondary data. In order to assess Evaluating and concluding, supervised assessment tasks and items usually provide opportunities for evaluation of complex interrelationships and/or exploration of scenarios with justification of conclusions.

The syllabus has clear direction about the provision of scaffolding in extended experimental investigations and extended research tasks including that it ‘should be reduced from Year 11 to Year 12’ (syllabus, pp. 22 and 25). In supervised assessments, standard A descriptors (pp. 30–31) such as ‘linking and application of algorithms in complex and challenging situations’ (Knowledge and conceptual understanding), ‘systematic analysis’ (Investigative processes) and ‘exploration of scenarios’ (Evaluating and concluding) require evidence that students are able to carry out a number of steps or processes without guidance. However, it may be necessary to include some items that allow students to demonstrate the standard C–E descriptors in these criteria where, for example, situations are 'simple' or algorithms are 'given'.

Application of standards

When making judgments about the extent to which students have demonstrated the general objectives of the syllabus, the syllabus standards descriptors are used. Across the state, there was general agreement about the appropriate application of syllabus standards, particularly in the criterion Knowledge and conceptual understanding. There was evidence in sample folios that substantiated on-balance judgments had been made by schools. However, specific explanations about the application of standards are required to ensure more consistent understandings about the match with some qualities in responses:

- Investigative processes at a C standard typically require evidence of analysis of data. The term ‘analyse’ is defined in the syllabus as ‘examine in detail to determine the nature of; look more deeply into and detect the relationships between parts’ (syllabus, p. 38). A graph plotted without a trend line or curve of best fit does not provide evidence of analysis, rather ‘identification of obvious patterns’ which is a standard D descriptor. Quantitative determination
of the equation of a line of best fit is typically required as evidence of ‘analysis of data to identify patterns and trends’ (*Investigative processes: standard B*)

- *Investigative processes* at a D standard describes use of equipment to implement a familiar, given investigation. There must be evidence of the formulation of a question or hypothesis, and selection of equipment and management of the investigation to demonstrate above standard D

- in *Evaluating and concluding*, descriptions of scientific interrelationships, scenarios and possible outcomes and statements of conclusions are qualities associated with standard C. Standards A and B require evidence of analysis and/or evaluation, explanation/exploration and discussion or justification of conclusions.

**Support**

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


David Austin
State Review Panel Chair

David Madden
Senior Education Officer
Science21 — A43

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

Syllabus

The Science21 2010 syllabus is in its third year of implementation.

Assessment design

Schools are designing effective assessment programs that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the general objectives across the full range of standards by:

- ensuring appropriate coverage of the general objectives across all standards
- using syllabus terminology such as explain, compare, synthesise, analyse and interpret within the task instructions to improve the alignment of tasks to the syllabus standards
- designing instrument-specific criteria sheets developed from the syllabus standards descriptors for the relevant dimensions to ensure the reliability of application of the standards when matching the evidence in student responses
- structuring questions in supervised written assessments that include relevant scientific concepts at a suitable level of complexity which provides opportunities for students to generate, at the A standard in Knowledge and conceptual understanding, reasoned explanations of real-world phenomena
- designing suitably complex tasks needed to demonstrate the A standard for the general objective Issues and impacts, and ensuring openness by requiring students to:
  - identify and explain issues
  - evaluate scientific impacts
  - draw conclusions and express opinions that are scientifically and technologically informed
  - analyse a range of factors and influence the development of scientific knowledge.

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.

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

- altering the cognition required in the standards descriptors. For example, in Knowledge and conceptual understanding, ‘comparison and explanation of concepts, processes, etc.’ is not the same as ‘comparing and contrasting’
- covering the Investigative processes criterion. Drawing a graph is in itself not enough to meet the requirements of this criterion. It only touches on the gather data and information aspect of the descriptor, without addressing assessment and management of risk; safe selection and use of equipment and technology; or enhance the reliability of data and information. More emphasis should be placed on the systematic analysis and interpretation of data and information using quantitative and qualitative techniques to identify trends, relationships and anomalies
• a lack of balance of coverage in responses of the general objective: Issues and impacts. Students need to be directed to analyse a range of factors influencing the development of scientific knowledge.

Support

Support materials for the Science21 2010 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/11362-assessment.html.

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.

Ian Stewart  Susan Scheiwe
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

The Study of Religion 2008 syllabus is in its fifth year of implementation.

Assessment design

Effective assessment packages integrated the three core components of the course, described in Section 4.1.2 of the syllabus (syllabus, p. 7). Across the collection of assessment instruments there was evidence of assessing:

- a variety of world religions
- the religious landscape within Australian society
- the role of religion in cultural, political and historical phenomena.

Effective assessment packages also provided opportunities for students to demonstrate each of the three criteria across the full range of standards (syllabus pp. 62–63).

The assessment of criterion 1: Knowledge and understanding, under supervised examination conditions, in techniques such as responses to stimulus material and short responses, was most effective when questions explicitly identified:

- familiar and unfamiliar stimulus material or
- familiar and unfamiliar contexts to which knowledge and understanding of religious ideas and concepts could be applied.

This provided students with opportunities to demonstrate Knowledge and understanding at standards A and B.

Effectively designed research assessment instruments, for example multimodal presentations and research assignments, required students to:

- identify and select a religious issue or phenomenon for inquiry
- frame and record inquiry questions about the religious issue or phenomenon, based on each of the four steps of the inquiry process described in Section 5 of the syllabus (syllabus, pp. 10–11), that is, framing, investigating, reasoning and judging
- gather information from sources relevant to the scope and context of the inquiry
- summarise information in the form of referenced research notes or annotations to a bibliography.
Application of standards

There was significant agreement about the application of standards and evidence in sample folios supported on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding standards to each criterion.

Where evidence was not matched to syllabus standards it 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 A. Student responses demonstrated analysis of diverse explicit and implicit information about religion, formation of hypotheses and synthesis of complex ideas about religion aligning to standard B. Standard A requires critical analysis of diverse explicit and implicit information about religion, formation of hypotheses and synthesis of complex and divergent ideas about religion.

- criterion 3: Research and communication at standard B. Student responses demonstrated identification of issues and framing of relevant research questions and evidence of establishing the validity of relevant sources aligning to standard C rather than identification of a range of issues and framing of well-constructed research questions and evidence of establishing the validity of a wide range of sources at standard B.

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
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2063-assessment.html.

Panel training, focusing on the application of standards and making judgments, will be conducted in 2014.

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.

John Thomas Jackie Dunk
State Review Panel Chair 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 thirteenth and final year of implementation. In 2013, the Year 12 cohort of students was the final group to exit using this syllabus.

In 2013, the Study of Society 2012 syllabus was implemented for the first time with Year 11 students. Schools were required to submit work programs for this syllabus during 2013.

Assessment design

Moderation processes identified that the majority of assessment instruments were designed effectively. As a result, most school assessment packages provided opportunities to demonstrate each of the four criteria across the full range of standards (2001 syllabus, pp. 60–61). In addition, the most effectively designed assessment instruments allowed students to be able to respond within the length requirements (2001 syllabus, pp. 53–54).

The design of assessment instruments requiring research were characterised by students investigating social issues, theories or topics through a process of social science inquiry (2001 syllabus, p. 15). This is also relevant to the design of research assessment instruments when implementing the 2012 syllabus as this provides opportunities to demonstrate the objectives within each of the three dimensions (syllabus, pp. 2–3).

Using the inquiry process in Study of Society (2012 syllabus, p. 8), the design of most research assessment instruments (pp. 16–17) will include the:

- establishment of a research question
- generation and/or collection of primary and/or secondary data/information
- independent collection of information/data from a variety of sources
- sorting, analysis and synthesis of data/information
- development of conclusions with justification.

The purpose of the extended response technique is to assess the sustained application of higher-order cognition (analysis, synthesis and evaluation) to known and provided materials, stimuli and concepts (2012 syllabus, p. 19). Effectively designed extended-response assessment instruments may involve students solving a problem, expressing and justifying a viewpoint, explaining and evaluating an issue and applying concepts or theories to a situation. However, its focus is not on research. The assessment may occur over a period of time, in class, and possibly in students’ own time (2012 syllabus, p. 19).
Application of standards

There was significant agreement about the application of standards (2001 syllabus, pp. 6061) and within the majority of sample folios there was evidence to support the on-balance judgments made by schools when awarding a standard to each criterion. An on-balance judgment is made by matching the qualities of the student work with the standards descriptors in each criterion. This means that it is not necessary for the student to have met every descriptor for a particular standard in a criterion; the standard awarded should be informed by how the qualities of the work match the descriptors overall.

For the Study of Society 2012 syllabus, when the research or extended response technique is implemented, the mode of presentation may be written, spoken or multimodal. To assist in making judgments and to substantiate decisions, written responses may be supported by notes, drafts, references, the collection and sorting of data and, where appropriate, tables of data, diagrams and flowcharts. For spoken or multimodal responses, supporting documentation may include visual evidence, palm cards, student notes and teacher annotations on the instrument-specific standards. However, the focus for assessment decisions is the spoken or multimodal response (2012 syllabus, p.17 and p. 20), rather than the technical features of written work provided.

For the 2012 syllabus, the standards are described in the same dimensions as the objectives of the syllabus (pp. 23–24). These dimensions are Knowledge and understanding, Critical processes and Communication.

Support

Support materials for the Study of Society 2012 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18156.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18156-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/18156-assessment.html.

Panel training will be conducted in 2014, focusing on the application of standards and making judgments when implementing the Study of Society 2012 syllabus.

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.

Allen Bennett                      John Langer
State Review Panel Chair           Senior Education Officer
Technologoy Studies — A23

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

Syllabus

The Technology Studies 2007 syllabus is in its final year of implementation. It is to be used for the last time in 2014 with Year 12 students only.

In 2014, the Technology Studies 2013 syllabus will be implemented for the first time with Year 11 students.

Assessment design

Assessment should be designed to engage students in activities that support a range of intellectual challenges and the use of higher-order thinking skills (syllabus, p. 1). The Technology Studies 2007 syllabus prescribes that teachers develop design tasks that facilitate student engagement with a design process, which requires the identification of needs, wants and opportunities, the use of relevant subject matter drawn from the three areas of study and the creation of product solutions (syllabus, p. 8).

Schools have developed a wide range of design tasks with a diverse set of problem situations, which require a product solution. The following issues have been identified:

- assessment tasks should minimise scaffolding of responses within the design process, to maximise opportunities for students to display evidence of standards A and B across the syllabus criterion
- assessment tasks should provide a context within which a design problem provides an opportunity for the creation of innovative and sustainable or appropriate and insightful design solutions (syllabus, p. 28), rather than focus students towards appropriate and functional design solutions that satisfy design briefs (syllabus, p. 28).

Within the project proposal and development, students document evidence of the development and testing of ideas in response to a design brief drawn from a particular design situation within a context (syllabus, p. 24). Assessment tasks should provide students with an opportunity to document evidence of idea development in the form of annotated sketches that display an authentic and logical engagement within a design process and the use of higher-order thinking skills. Design tasks that overly scaffold student responses, or that lead students towards obvious and superficial solutions to design problems result in insufficient evidence of the Knowledge and application and Reasoning processes criteria (syllabus, p. 28).

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, levels of achievement decisions were appropriately made using the syllabus requirements for determining exit levels of achievement. It was evident that schools were appropriately matching student responses in sample folios to syllabus standards descriptors.
Where evidence did not support school judgments of the match of qualities of student responses with descriptors, it was commonly related to the use of instrument-specific standards matrices that were not reflective of the exit standards (syllabus, p. 28) and the standard B descriptors for Knowledge and application and Reasoning processes within the documentation of a design project, including:

- the effective application of knowledge to the planning, development and production of products
- the thorough analysis of contexts, design situations and products, effectively relating elements to the planning, development and production of products
- the creation of appropriate and insightful design solutions that satisfy design briefs
- meaningful reflection shown in all stages of the design process to check the accuracy and suitability of decisions
- the evaluation of contexts, design solutions and products, and clear communication of valid judgments and justified recommendations.

Support

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2161-assessment.html

Support materials for the Technology Studies 2013 syllabus available from the QSA website include:

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20323.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/20323-assessment.html

Panel training focusing on the Technology Studies 2013 syllabus implementation will be conducted in 2014.

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.

Tim Osborne Brad Walmsley
State Review Panel Chair Senior Education Officer
Visual Art — B14

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

Syllabus
The Visual Art 2007 senior syllabus is in its sixth year of implementation.

Assessment design
Effective Appraising tasks provide students with the opportunity to develop and express a viewpoint that extends beyond analysis and interpretation of the visual language used in specific artworks. In this way, students are able to explore interrelationships between concepts/focuses and contexts in the works of others. The critical analysis of these artworks that relate to students’ concepts/focuses allows for the development of individual resolved works. The A standard for Appraising requires students to demonstrate critical analysis, and viewpoints that are substantiated by comprehensive research, development, resolution and reflection.

A successful body of work in the Year 12 course integrates both Making and Appraising tasks (syllabus, pp. 9 and 19).

The inquiry learning model provides a scaffold to the process of investigation as students develop a body of work. The syllabus does not require that the inquiry learning model is followed in a linear and sequential way. Commencing a body of work by engaging in the development and resolution of an artwork and then reflection on how these works respond to the concept/focus being explored may be an effective way to offer more concrete and tactile opportunities to explore and experiment with the application of materials and techniques to construct meaning.

Demonstration of researching as outlined in the inquiry learning model may be evident in experimental and resolved artworks, not only in written work or annotations. Treating these investigation processes in a more interrelated way in Making can offer more opportunities for broad and innovative explorations within a nominated focus (syllabus, p. 19) resulting in more time and opportunity to develop a personal aesthetic in resolved artworks.

Application of standards
While there was general comparability in the awarding of standards and levels of achievement in sample High Achievement, Sound Achievement and Limited Achievement folios, there was less comparability at the Very High Achievement threshold. This was due to sample folios at this level demonstrating a lower standard than that awarded for Making.

The application of standards for Making involves the consideration of both Visual literacy and Application together. In some instances, student achievement in Visual literacy is treated with greater significance than achievement in Application. The determining of standards in Visual literacy and Application involves the interrelatedness of these two criteria.

Within Making, Visual literacy and Application are both concerned with communicating meaning through visual forms. The resolved artwork(s) is the primary source of evidence in the awarding of standards for both Visual literacy and Application. Determining standards in Visual literacy is not informed by how methodically the research, development and reflection of a visual problem has been documented, or how the intent or promise of resolution has been expressed in written forms.
The qualities and characteristics of standards awarded for Visual literacy and Application should be able to be identified in experimental and resolved images and artworks produced. Within an experimental or resolved artwork there is substantial evidence of how relevant the work is to the concept/focus being explored, how effectively meaning is communicated through the use of visual language and degree to which there is research, development and resolution in the solution of visual problems initiated by the chosen concept/focus.

Many schools use artefacts such as visual diaries, journals and data presentations to document student research, development and reflection throughout a body of work. These formats may support the inquiry learning process but are not the sole source of evidence in the awarding of standards for Visual literacy and Application. Evidence of the defining of visual problems, the purposeful selection of materials and research, development and reflection can be documented through the production of a range of experimental and resolved images and objects created throughout the body of work.

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

- syllabus information at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263.html
- work program requirements, checklist and sample work programs at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263-wp.html
- assessment advice, including Assessment: From the syllabus to the classroom and sample assessment products at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1263-assessment.html.

Panel training focusing on standards will be conducted in 2014.

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.

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