

General subject syllabuses

Syllabuses in the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system



About the new General subject syllabuses

The suite of new and redeveloped General subject syllabuses (currently known as Authority subjects) forms the foundation of the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system. These syllabuses:

- define course content
- inform teaching
- specify standards
- outline assessment requirements.

Each syllabus features:

- a focus on 21st century skills
- principles of literacy and numeracy
- pedagogical frameworks unique to each discipline but shaped by a taxonomy of learning based on the work of Marzano and Kendall (2007)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- learning objectives and assessment requirements.

The aim is to introduce students to the knowledge, skills and habits of mind for success in further education, work and life.

A new taxonomy of learning

Queensland's new senior curriculum is influenced by Robert Marzano and John Kendall's taxonomy which describes the levels of mental processing involved in learning and separates various types of knowledge from the mental processes that operate on them. Marzano and Kendall organise knowledge into three **domains**:

- information
- mental procedures
- psychomotor procedures.

The cognitive, metacognitive and self systems act on these **domains**.

- The **cognitive system** describes a student's ability to retrieve, comprehend and analyse and use information.
- The **metacognitive system** describes a student's capacity to set goals and design strategies for accomplishing those goals.
- The **self system** describes the active decision of a student to engage in a learning experience.

The outcomes mapped in subject syllabuses guide students towards mastery of the foundational concepts in a discipline, including its skills, dispositions and knowledge.

21st century skills

To prepare students for future opportunities, teaching, learning and assessment must respond to economic and social conditions. The new syllabuses incorporate the skills identified in research as essential for living, learning and working in the 21st century and build on skills explored in the P–10 Australian Curriculum.

In General subjects, students will have many opportunities to learn and practice 21st century skills, and to demonstrate achievement in them.

Literacy and numeracy skills

The new syllabuses increase emphasis on making sure students have high level literacy and numeracy skills, embedding them in each subject syllabus. This complements the focus on 21st century skills.

- **Literacy** refers to the knowledge and skills about language and texts essential for understanding and conveying information.
- **Numeracy** refers to the knowledge and skills students need to use mathematics in a range of situations, and recognise and understand the role of mathematics in the world.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded in the core learning and elective topics listed in each subject syllabus. This approach supports the Queensland Government's vision that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have:

- their cultures affirmed
- their heritage sustained
- the same prospects for health, prosperity and quality of life as other Queenslanders.

Pedagogical and conceptual frameworks

The new General syllabuses include a pedagogical and conceptual framework that reflects contemporary understandings of teaching and learning in particular disciplines. The framework shows teachers how to align curriculum, teaching and assessment. The approach is part of a renewed focus on the role of quality pedagogy in supporting students to master foundational skills and knowledge.

Learning objectives

The new taxonomy of learning, 21st century skills, literacy and numeracy skills, and pedagogical frameworks have informed and shaped syllabus objectives. Syllabus objectives inform unit objectives (and subsequently subject matter), which provides the basis for day-to-day teaching in classrooms.

Assessment

In General subjects, senior students' learning will be assessed using three assessment instruments developed by schools (internal) and one subject-specific state-wide external assessment instrument. These instruments will be mapped to unit objectives.

Further information

- Endorsement information paper
- Confirmation information paper
- External assessment information paper.

For the most up to date information on the new QCE system, visit the QCAA website:
<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/new-snr-assessment-te>