

Recognising new non-Authority school-based courses

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) acknowledge that schools need to offer their students a range of study options. Through its certification, accreditation and recognition functions, the QCAA supports schools, subject associations or other interested entities if they want to develop new school-based courses that encourage young people to continue to learn and achieve.

For new school-based courses to be recognised, they must be equivalent in length to a semester of learning in a senior secondary subject. This is typically 55 hours. The courses developed may not be a component of a training package, an accredited VET course or a course approved or accredited by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA).

The QCAA will use the following criteria to guide its decisions about recognising new non-Authority school-based courses.

Criteria for recognition	Description
Meaningful certification	Inclusion of a result for a course of study adds value to a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) in terms of further education, training, employment or community engagement.
Coherence	Categorising the different courses into Core, Preparatory, Enrichment and Advanced can be further augmented by using generic names for similar areas of learning, e.g. school-based maths or science courses.
Rigour	Each course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes learning opportunities that, in the opinion of the QCAA, is of senior secondary standard and enhances further learning, employment or community engagement • includes details about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what learning experiences the learner will undertake – what evidence of achievement is required – the processes and principles used to make reasonable, accountable and transparent decisions about achievement – the time component for completion of the course • is compliant with legislative requirements.
Flexibility	The course offers different delivery modes, such as a 12-month course over two years or six months or; choice of subject matter, e.g. core and elective options.
Connectedness	Evidence that course developers (and the provider offering the course) have considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what learners may already know (prerequisites) • what else the learner is learning (issues like relevance and repetition) • how and when the learner can take up or leave the course, e.g. different entry, such as during Year 10 or after Year 11, and exit points, like before Year 12).
Continuity	Evidence shows that the course developer has considered where the learner is coming from (in an education and personal growth sense) and where they intend to go (how this course will help them get there).

More information

If you would like more information, please email the QCAA Curriculum Services Division at recognition@qcaa.qld.edu.au, phone (07) 38630395 or visit the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au and search for 'Recognition of non-Authority courses'.