EVALUATION OF THE CHINESE EXTENSION (TRIAL) SENIOR SYLLABUS 2010 IN QUEENSLAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

FINAL REPORT

Conducted for the Queensland Studies Authority
January 2011 to October 2011

Submitted to the
P–12 Curriculum Committee
Queensland Studies Authority, Queensland.

by
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EVALUATION DISCLAIMER

In the development of syllabuses, QSA commissions independent evaluations of its trial and pilot phases. This document is the report of one such independent evaluation. Its publication should not be taken as indicating agreement by the QSA with methods, interpretations or conclusions of the evaluation.
ABSTRACT

In 2011 the Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus 2010 was evaluated as it was implemented in four schools. The evaluation and associated report were commissioned by the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) as part of the process of developing a new syllabus. The Queensland LOTE Centre had promoted this venture to extend students beyond the existing Chinese Senior Syllabus 2008.

The report contains a review of the syllabus document, work programs, the implementation in schools and the resources available. Consideration is also given to the background of students and teachers.

The report concludes with recommendations about revising the syllabus.
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Four schools participated in the trial in 2011. At two of these schools, all students were background speakers and fee paying. Another school offers an immersion program in Chinese from Year 6. Students at this school had completed the “parent” senior Chinese course (based on the Chinese Senior Syllabus 2008) in 2009 and 2010. At the fourth school, students were completing the senior Chinese course at the same time as their Chinese Extension studies.

1. STUDENTS OF CHINESE EXTENSION

Of the 27 students studying the trial Chinese Extension course, 19 were background speakers of Modern Standard Chinese (Mandarin). Two of the four cohorts were international fee-paying students.

Even though students had enjoyed studying the interesting and relevant topics and had been most successful with their studies in the senior Chinese course, a significant number of non-background speakers struggled with the expected listening and written complexities. The language consultant reported that there were disparities between the background and non-background speakers in terms of their pronunciation and spontaneity. The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre stated the syllabus should cater for local non-background students.

Recommendation 1
It is recommended that the syllabus demands for increasing language complexity be reviewed to cater for the needs of local non-background speakers.

2. TEACHERS OF CHINESE EXTENSION

There were two background speaking and two non-background speaking teachers of Chinese Extension. Both the administrator and the head of department at one school indicated that being a non-background speaking teacher adds pressure in planning time and finding resources. All the teachers stated that they had studied Chinese in their pre-service training.

3. CHINESE EXTENSION SENIOR SYLLABUS

Our Language Consultant believes that the strengths of the syllabus lie in its rationale which reflects the widely accepted theories on second/foreign language teaching and learning and provides students with opportunities to achieve high levels of proficiency in Chinese.

When commenting on the syllabus, heads of department stated that they liked the flexibility and relevance of the topics. They also commended the opportunities provided to students to further develop their skills and interests. This statement was particularly important in the two schools catering for international students.

Throughout the trial, the Chinese Extension teachers stated that the syllabus was well written and supported incorporating the objectives under three dimensions. The teachers also liked the flexibility regarding the topics to be studied and they enjoyed the variety of assessment tasks outlined. Concern was expressed in the two schools with non-background speakers about the lack of
direction in the syllabus regarding the degree of language complexity expected.

The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre indicated that it was exciting that there was now a syllabus which allowed students to continue their studies in Chinese to a higher level but emphasised that the syllabus should cater for local students.

**Recommendation 2**

It is recommended that the syllabus clarify to teachers of non-background speaking students the degree of language complexity expected in the syllabus.

4. **WORK PROGRAMS**

Heads of department and teachers were generally satisfied with the way the syllabus had assisted them in writing their work program.

Three of the four teachers interviewed in March 2011 indicated that their work programs written on the Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus 2010 would meet the needs of their students. One teacher pointed out that the biggest selling point of the subject for his students was the gaining of Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) points while another highlighted the importance of small group work to individual development.

The State Review Panel Chair reported that school work programs were easy to approve provided they followed the guidelines of the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA). She indicated that schools were still requesting workshops on designing assessment instruments that meet the criteria laid down in the syllabus.

During July 2011 interviews, only one teacher reported that the school work program had been approved. One teacher expressed frustration with the slow process but the State Review Panel Chair had stated that delays had been caused because work programs had not been submitted on time.

In September 2011 the evaluators established that all work programs had been accredited. One teacher whose work program had only been accredited on 24 August stated that it would have been helpful for the development of assessment tasks if the process had been completed before monitoring.

5. **QUALITY OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

5.1 **Students’ opinions**

There was a mixed response from students regarding what they had enjoyed about their Chinese Extension program. Two groups of students highlighted the topics being studied while the other groups focused on the skills they are developing with the inquiry approach.

Whereas the background speaking students stated writing in English and Chinese as the most challenging aspects of the course, non-background speakers identified listening and speaking. One group of students, mainly non-background speakers, in the Chinese immersion program expressed their disappointment in their performances in Chinese Extension mainly because they could not fully comprehend the language being used in resources such as Chinese films. These students had done extremely well in the senior Chinese course but now found difficulties in meeting their own high expectations.

5.2 **Views of teachers and other stakeholders**

In July 2011 all teachers stated that their program was progressing satisfactorily. All heads of department and administrators indicated that they were satisfied with the way the subject was being taught.

Three teachers stated that they had enjoyed teaching the trial syllabus with the fourth reporting that it was sometimes enjoyable. One teacher went on to say that their 2012 program would improve following the experiences they had during the trial.

Most of the teachers indicated they had used the inquiry approach effectively. One school with all background speakers adopted an online method for the delivery of most of the school program. A teacher in another school stated that non-background speakers need more support and structure.
The principal of one school expressed a concern regarding small group calculations for Chinese Extension during Overall Position procedures and the negative impact this could have on student numbers in future years. The evaluators raised this concern at the Languages Learning Area Reference Committee meeting and were assured by a QSA officer that the school misunderstood the procedures and their concern was unfounded.

Recommendation 3
It is recommended that the Queensland Studies Authority inform all participating schools of the method used in small group calculations for Chinese Extension.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Students’ opinions about assessment in Chinese Extension

Students are mostly satisfied with the variety, amount and timing of assessment. When commenting on the difficulty of assessment, one group of background speakers stated that their assessment was as difficult as other subjects while a group of non-background speakers who were doing the Chinese and Chinese Extension courses concurrently stated that assessment was challenging but enjoyable. Another group that included background and non-background speakers concluded that assessment tasks were more difficult for the non-background speakers.

6.2 Teachers’ opinions about assessment in Chinese Extension

Following monitoring, there were mixed reports from teachers on assessment. The teachers in schools with only background speakers were satisfied with their assessment tasks and the students’ response to the challenges posed in them. However, the two schools with non-background speakers reported that their assessment tasks and the students’ responses were generally not seen by the review panel as meeting the criteria in the syllabus.

At the March 2011 teachers’ conference, several teachers questioned whether non-background students could achieve the standards stated in the syllabus even though the syllabus states it is for both background and non-background speakers. One teacher asked if the “A” standard was achievable by non-background speakers.

During July interviews the two teachers in schools with non-background speakers once again expressed concerns about the standards. One teacher suggested an immediate workshop to discuss and clarify the standards and to review assessment tasks set for Semester 2.

6.3 Heads of department opinions about assessment in Chinese Extension

Heads of departments expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by the students in Chinese Extension.

Following monitoring feedback, heads of department in the two schools with non-background speakers raised concerns about the expected standards for Chinese Extension.

6.4 State Review Panel Chair and Language Consultant opinions about assessment

Following monitoring, the State Review Panel Chair reported that even though some assessment tasks were quite good and appropriate others were of concern especially in the area of listening/reading.

The State Review Panel Chair stated that teachers were generally trying to use the criteria in the standards but were inconsistent on how these were applied. The Language Consultant was impressed with some of the work presented by students. She stated some of the students had obtained a high level of proficiency and would be able to complete advanced tertiary studies in Chinese. She noted disparities between the students especially regarding pronunciation and spontaneity.

Recommendation 4
It is recommended that the standards matrix be reviewed to ensure that the criteria are appropriate for both background and non-background speakers.

Note:
It should be noted that the evaluators completed this report before verification. As a result, the difficulties mentioned in this
section may have been accommodated or may still need to be resolved in the future. Other assessment issues may be identified during verification.

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers reported that they had received most of their professional development on Chinese Extension at QSA conferences. Even though teachers expressed satisfaction with the material discussed and presented at the conferences, there were still two teachers who requested assistance with assessment related issues.

Teachers set a high priority on maintaining and enhancing their Chinese language proficiency. Most travelled to China regularly.

There was general endorsement of the conferences by administrators. One administrator expressed a concern on the lack of support from QSA officers since the March conference.

8. RESOURCES

Having adequate and appropriate resources for Chinese Extension was a concern for a couple of teachers. Concerns centred on speaking topics and literary criticism resources being at an appropriate level of English for background speakers. One school struggled to find appropriate resources for non-background speakers that had not been previously used in their P–12 Chinese school program.

In response to a question on resources for Chinese Extension, the Language Consultant indicated that there were adequate online resources available but expressed a concern about the time required to access them and the language competence required of the teacher for the selection of appropriate materials.

The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre acknowledged the importance of having appropriate resources for the delivery of Chinese Extension and reported that QSA would develop a resources package in the latter part of 2011 ready for 2012.

Recommendation 5
It is recommended that appropriate resources be developed/identified to assist the delivery of the syllabus and to meet the specific needs of both non-background and background speaking students.

9. CONCLUSION

Teachers were generally satisfied with the program they had developed based on the trial syllabus. They endorsed the syllabus' inquiry mode of delivery and the flexibility of topics to be studied. The interesting topics incorporated into their programs engaged and challenged their students.

However, student outcomes were mixed. Background speakers were generally producing a high level of proficiency while high achieving non-background speakers found it difficult to reach the expectations of the “A” level set down in the standards matrix.

Teachers generally made good progress with applying the new assessment categories. Provision of sample annotated students’ scripts will help teachers develop their knowledge and skills in this area.

Recommendation 6
It is recommended that the Chinese Extension Senior Syllabus proceed to general implementation provided the needs of non-background speakers are addressed.
LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the syllabus demands for increasing language complexity be reviewed to cater for the needs of local non-background speakers.

2. It is recommended that the syllabus clarify to teachers of non-background speaking students the degree of language complexity expected in the syllabus.

3. It is recommended that the Queensland Studies Authority inform all participating schools of the method used in small group calculations for Chinese Extension.

4. It is recommended that the standards matrix be reviewed to ensure that the criteria are appropriate for both background and non-background speakers.

5. It is recommended that appropriate resources be developed/identified to assist the delivery of the syllabus and to meet the specific needs of both non-background and background speaking students.

6. It is recommended that the Chinese Extension Senior Syllabus proceed to general implementation provided the needs of non-background speakers are addressed.
1. DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION

1.1 THE NATURE OF THE CHINESE EXTENSION (TRIAL) SENIOR SYLLABUS 2010

Languages are seen as contributing to an individual student’s intellectual, social and affective development, and as a national resource which serves communities within Australia, enriches Australian society as a whole and enables the nation to engage in artistic, commercial, diplomatic and industrial enterprises on an international scale.

Chinese Extension emphasises the importance of experiencing language in context, based on students’ background knowledge, skills and attitudes. It sees language learning as a means of further developing communicative abilities to interpret, express and negotiate meaning through oral and written texts.

The study of Chinese Extension should enhance analytical, creative and critical thinking. 
*Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus* (p. 1)

The stated objectives of this subject are grouped in three dimensions:
- Dimension 1: Knowing, understanding and using
- Dimension 2: Reasoning and responding
- Dimension 3: Creating meaning.

The trial syllabus also states: “by the conclusion of the course, students should be able to communicate in Chinese at an advanced level of proficiency, in accordance with the exit standards. This will be evident through the depth and breadth of language use — the range of language and expressions used and the versatility, adaptability and spontaneity of language use.”

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) indicated that the purpose of the trial was to assist with the development of the syllabus to ensure it conveys its educational proposals in such a way that teachers can prepare effective work programs with confidence and efficiency.

As evaluators of the Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus 2010, we were asked specifically to analyse:
- the internal consistency of the components of the syllabus
- the degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers
- the suitability of the breadth and depth of the syllabus requirements
- the appropriateness of the assessment requirements of the syllabus
- relevance of the subject to the students
- the resources found to be useful in the trial schools
- the development of appropriate standards in trial schools.
1.3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A number of features of the evaluation methodology should be noted. Firstly, the evaluators maintained an issues orientation throughout. The evaluation brief provided a number of questions that were investigated. Other issues arose throughout the evaluation. The data collection methods and reporting were focused around these issues in an endeavour to maintain clarity of purpose in the evaluation and utility in its findings.

To ensure the evaluation’s continuity and overall direction, and to avoid fragmentation by its issues orientation, a general framework was adopted so that the issues to be considered could be placed in the context of the overall development and implementation of the Chinese Extension program.

The framework comprises the key elements of the curriculum development and implementation process which are instrumental in achieving effective outcomes; namely the syllabus, work programs and the school program. It also includes four factors which influence the effectiveness of some of these elements — the characteristics of the teachers, students, school and available resources.

The components shown in Figure 1 require some elaboration. The outcomes of Chinese Extension in schools are seen as the direct result of the Chinese Extension program implemented in the school. This model highlights the principal factors which influence its effectiveness. The school’s program is considered to be influenced primarily by five factors: characteristics of teachers, students, school setting, work programs and resources. The work program, which is an authorised program written by the Chinese Extension teacher at the school, is seen to be influenced by three factors: the Chinese Extension syllabus, teachers and resources.
With these considerations in mind, the more important variables are seen as:

**Student characteristics**
- Student gender
- Students’ motivation for studying Chinese Extension
- Students’ future occupational and study plans
- Students’ academic ability

**Teacher characteristics**
- Pre-service and in-service education
- Proficiency in teaching Chinese Extension
- Proficiency in developing a work program
- Teaching experience

**School characteristics**
- Attitudes of school administration
- Expectations about students
- Facilities

**Chinese Extension syllabus**
Adequacy of the syllabus:
- for developing a work program
- to guide in the selection/formulation of appropriate learning experiences
- to guide teachers in assessing students

**Work program**
- Quality of work programs
- Development process
- Adequacy of the learning experiences
- Adequacy of assessment practices in the work program

**School programs**
- Assessment procedures
- Adequacy of the learning experiences
- Content selection

**Teacher resources**
- Availability of teaching resources
- Access to professional assistance
- Access to professional development

**Outcomes**
- Students and parents’ attitudes to Chinese Extension
- Students’ perceptions of their ability
- Students and teachers’ perceptions of the outcomes

The nature of a trial is somewhat fluid; any problems are dealt with by the various employing authorities and QSA. Evaluators monitor the progress of the program in schools and advise QSA accordingly.

A feature of this evaluation was the involvement of representatives of the various interest groups in all aspects of the study. As part of the tender process, we were asked to have a Language Consultant with expertise in Chinese as part of our evaluation team. Our team therefore included a lecturer of Chinese from Griffith University. As well, representatives of the P–12 Curriculum Committee, State Review Panel members and QSA personnel had the opportunity to raise matters of concern with the evaluators, provide input to the data collection devices, access the data collected, and respond to the various evaluation reports submitted.

Progress reports were to be provided as part of the evaluation. Three reports for Chinese Extension were provided to the Languages Learning Area Reference Committee (LARC) during 2011. The progress reports gave summaries of the data collected by interviews and questionnaires. The final report contains the professional judgments of the evaluators based on the information collected from the various participants in the evaluation.
1.4 DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTATION

Information was obtained from teachers, students, heads of department, administrators, QSA personnel associated with Chinese Extension, the Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre and a Chinese Language Consultant. Interviews and questionnaires were the primary means of collecting data. Copies of all Chinese Extension instruments are included in Appendix 2 and are available from QSA.

1.5 REPORTS

Three progress reports were presented to the Languages Learning Area Reference Committee. These represented the findings from the questionnaires and interviews conducted during the trial and can be found in Appendix 1.

The final report was presented to QSA in October 2011.

1.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluators wish to thank administrators, heads of department, teachers and students of Chinese Extension and the Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre who gave their time to complete questionnaires and interviews. As well, the evaluators wish to thank QSA personnel, who were always obliging.

We would also like to thank our Language Consultant, Ms Julia Han, for her contributions to the evaluation. Ms Han is a lecturer in Chinese at Griffith University. Her expertise allowed judgments to be made about the standard of Mandarin Chinese achieved by Chinese Extension students.
2. THE SETTING OF CHINESE EXTENSION

2.1 HISTORY AND NATURE OF THE CHINESE EXTENSION SYLLABUS

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) released the Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus in 2010.

Four schools participated in the trial in 2011. At two of these schools, all students were background speakers and fee paying. Another school offered an immersion program in Chinese from Year 6. Students at this school had completed the “parent” senior Chinese course (based on the Chinese Senior Syllabus 2008) in 2009 and 2010. At the fourth school, students were completing the Senior Chinese course at the same time as their Chinese Extension studies.

There were 27 students enrolled in the trial Chinese Extension classes in 2011.

The evaluators commenced their work with schools with an administrative survey conducted in February 2011.

Table 1

Year 12 enrolments in Chinese Extension
February 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Number of classes</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coomera Anglican College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawana Waters State College</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Pauls Anglican College</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varsity College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 STUDENTS OF CHINESE EXTENSION

2.2.1 Gender

There were 15 boys and 12 girls studying Chinese Extension in 2011.

2.2.2 Student background

A majority (19 out of 27) of the students were classified as Modern Standard Chinese (Mandarin) background speakers. A background speaker is “a person who has been born, raised and lived in an environment where the language is a major language of communication. They have had sustained formal education in that language and speak and write that language at home and/or outside the classroom in a sustained manner with other background speakers for purposes of communication” (Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus 2010, p. 35). Two students spoke Cantonese.

2.2.3 Students’ expectations of studying Chinese Extension

Over half of the students (15 out of 27) indicated that the main reason for choosing Chinese Extension was because they believed this subject would help them obtain a higher OP score.

Other common reasons for selecting Chinese Extension included:
• doing well in the senior Chinese course. (20 out of 27)
• being useful or needed in a future job. (11 out of 27)
• being the best subject available on the subject choice line. (10 out of 27)

When asked why other students who had completed or who were completing senior Chinese had not opted for Chinese Extension in 2011, students thought that other students:
• were not interested in doing an additional subject (16 out of 27)
• needed to do other subjects to get a high OP score (15 out of 27)
• did not have the ability to do this subject (10 out of 27)
• needed to do other subjects for job reasons (9 out of 27).

2.2.4 Students’ satisfaction with studying Chinese Extension

During July 2011 interviews held with Year 12 students, two groups indicated that the main benefit of doing the subject was associated with gaining a better OP. The other two groups highlighted the importance of improving career pathways and of giving them a cultural understanding for the workplace.

Non-background speaking students expressed concern about the difficulty of the subject. One group believed Chinese Extension would not be used in their OP calculations at the end of the year as they had not performed well in the subject.

2.3 Teachers of Chinese Extension

The teachers who were involved with the trial syllabus in Chinese Extension in 2011 were a fairly experienced group. Three of the four teachers had 10 or more years of teaching, with the other teacher having less than 5 years’ experience.

Two of the four teachers were Chinese background speakers and all of them had studied Chinese in their pre-service education. Three of the teachers had completed a Bachelor of Arts (Language and Linguistics) with two teachers spending some time studying at a Chinese university.
3. COMMENTS ON THE CHINESE EXTENSION (TRIAL) SENIOR SYLLABUS 2010

3.1 OPINIONS OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Throughout the evaluation, teachers expressed an overall satisfaction with the Chinese Extension (Trial) Senior Syllabus 2010.

At the March 2011 teachers’ conference, teachers stated that they were impressed with the flexibility given in the syllabus regarding topics to be studied. They also indicated their satisfaction with the variety of assessment tasks and the emphasis on inquiry and the higher-order thinking approach. There was unanimous support for grouping the objectives under three dimensions.

During the same interview, the teachers’ initial concern with the syllabus focused on having the resources to deliver the stated expectations.

There was a concern that non-background speaking students may not have the ability to reach the “A” standard as stated in the standards matrix of the syllabus, especially if the students are doing both senior Chinese and Chinese Extension in the same year. The syllabus (p. 1) states:

The students will have considerable Chinese language background already and well-developed communicative skills in Chinese to enable them to undertake in-depth language work.

During July 2011 interviews, teachers and heads of department in three schools stated that the syllabus had assisted them adequately with the writing of their work program. Relevant personnel in the other school were unsure as the school had yet to receive feedback on their submitted program of work. Once again the teachers and heads of department endorsed the opportunities given to students to explore areas of interest and the emphasis placed in the syllabus on higher-order thinking that enhances all learning.

Concerns with the syllabus during the July interviews came mainly from the schools with non-background speaking students. In these schools, the two teachers expressed a view that they needed more guidance on the degree of language complexity expected in this course. One teacher stated that the current expectation seems to be third-year level in Chinese studies at university and was too difficult for non-background speaking students. In the Chinese immersion program, non-background speakers expressed their concerns about the high expectations of the syllabus even though they had completed the senior Chinese course the previous year with distinction. This issue did not surface in those schools that had all background speakers.

Closely associated with this previous concern was a need to review the standards criteria to better cater for non-background speaking students. One head of department stated the need for workshops where the full meaning of the current standards matrix could be unpacked while another highlighted the difficulty Cantonese speakers have to do well in writing tasks with using the simplified scripts.

3.2 OTHER OPINIONS ON THE CHINESE EXTENSION SYLLABUS

Julia Han, lecturer in Chinese at Griffith University, indicated that the rationale of the syllabus reflects the widely accepted theories on second/foreign language teaching and learning and that the syllabus provided students with the opportunity to achieve an advanced level of proficiency. However, she expressed a concern about the high degree of difficulty this syllabus posed for non-background speaking teachers and students.
The State Review Panel Chair stated that the syllabus needed no changes before it proceeded to general implementation.

Tamara Romans, Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre, stated that the syllabus has provided students with the opportunity to reach a level above the senior Chinese course and to make meaning of the language. Her concerns centred on teachers’ understanding the meaning of the syllabus and whether the syllabus caters for both background and non-background speakers.
4. **SUBMISSION OF WORK PROGRAMS**

4.1 **Opinions of teachers and heads of department**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, teachers were generally satisfied with the way the syllabus supported them with the writing of their school work program.

In July 2011 the four Year 12 Chinese Extension teachers reported that their work program had been submitted but only one of them had been approved. In one school, both the teacher and the head of department expressed their disappointment in not having received any feedback on their program to date.

Two teachers reported that they had no difficulties in writing their program. One of these teachers reported that she found the skeletal format less useful than previously encountered and preferred the former style of work program where all units were planned.

Concerns expressed by the other two teachers centred on designing appropriate learning experiences for the classroom, using appropriate assessment tasks for their students, and finding relevant and useful resources to deliver their program.

The evaluators made a final check on the status of work programs in September 2011. All programs had been approved. One school reported that they had submitted their work program in April and had received their first feedback on 11 August indicating that it was not approved. The work program was finally approved on 24 August. The teacher stated that it would have been helpful for the process to have been completed before monitoring to allow for assessment tasks to be adjusted.

4.2 **Opinion of the State Review Panel Chair**

The State Review Panel Chair reported to the evaluators that work programs were fairly easy to approve provided the school followed guidelines given by QSA officers. Delays in the system were caused by schools not submitting work programs on time.
5. **CHINESE EXTENSION IN SCHOOLS**

5.1 **CHINESE EXTENSION IN THE SCHOOL SETTING**

The four schools participating in the trial were all quite different in the way they operated and the students’ ability to handle the course varied considerably.

School A has all fee-paying background speaking students. They have one period of contact per week with the teacher and the rest of the time the students complete their work online.

School B is another school where all the students are fee paying and background speakers. At this school, students have normal face-to-face contact with the teacher even though it is out of normal school hours.

School C offers a Chinese immersion program, in which there is a mixture of background (three) and non-background speakers (five). Chinese Extension was offered on the Year 12 timetable as senior Chinese had been studied in Year 10 and Year 11. Only students who had done well in the “parent” senior Chinese course opted to do this subject in Year 12.

In School D, students are all non-background speakers and are completing the Year 12 component of senior Chinese and Chinese Extension at the same time. All the students involved in this school have studied Chinese since Year 1 and have all done extremely well with their Senior Year 11 Chinese studies.

5.2 **TEACHING CHINESE EXTENSION**

5.2.1 **Students’ reaction to the subject**

In a telephone interview in March 2011, Year 12 Chinese Extension teachers reported that the students found the subject challenging but the topics engaging. One teacher reported that the students enjoyed looking at issues from different cultural backgrounds. Three of the four teachers were confident that a program based on the trial Chinese Extension syllabus would meet the needs of their students.

By July 2011, interviews revealed marked differences in how the students were reacting to the subject. In the two schools with background speakers only, students were enjoying their studies and they were achieving some outstanding results. On the other hand, in the two schools with non-background speakers, even though the students were still enjoying the topics being studied, they reported difficulty with the complexity of language use expected in the listening and writing components of the course.

5.2.2 **Teachers’ opinions about Chinese Extension**

Three of the teachers stated that they enjoyed teaching the new trial syllabus in Chinese Extension with a similar number indicating that they had used the inquiry approach in the delivery of the trial syllabus effectively. One teacher expressed concern about using this inquiry approach with non-background speakers as it was believed that these students need more structure.

When reporting on what had gone well in delivering this subject, the teachers identified:

- the flexibility of topics allowed in the syllabus
- the inquiry mode of study. All four teachers indicated that they feel proficient teaching Chinese Extension using the inquiry approach
- the study of topics at greater depth
- the language being used in context.
The main concerns reported to the evaluators on the delivery of the subject centred on the ability of the teacher to:

- adequately cater for the non-background speakers in their class even though these students had done extremely well in the senior Chinese course
- adequately prepare for monitoring and verification as the timeline is so short
- find adequate time to prepare appropriate materials that meet the needs of the students
- prepare appropriate assessment tasks when the teacher’s command of English is not strong.

When making suggestions on how they could enhance the teaching of Chinese Extension in their situation, teachers suggested:

- obtaining more resources
- perusing marked student work.

5.2.3 Other views

During July 2011 interviews, all heads of department were satisfied with the way Chinese Extension was being taught in their school. One head of department extolled the effort of the non-background speaking teacher in preparing adequately for this challenging experience for her class of non-background speakers.

All four administrators interviewed indicated that they were satisfied with the way Chinese Extension was taught in their school setting. In the two schools with background speakers, the administrators acknowledged the good outcomes achieved by their students and highlighted the importance of having Chinese Extension in their school curriculum as it met the needs of the international students. Another administrator stated that the teacher was putting in an enormous amount of preparation time to assist the non-background speaking students in the class and the school would continue offering the subject as the teacher was well respected. The Administrator of the Chinese immersion program stated that even though Chinese Extension is an appropriate end point for their program, non-background speaking students would continue to struggle with the listening and speaking components of the syllabus.

The Principal of one school stated his concerns regarding small group calculations for Chinese Extension and the impact this may have on his students’ Overall Position. The evaluators raised this issue with QSA officers and the evaluators have been assured that this perception is not correct.

Commenting on the difficulties experienced in implementing Chinese Extension in their school, two administrators highlighted the failure of “Box.net”\(^1\) to provide adequate support to their staff. Another administrator stated even though the technology associated with the school online course sometimes failed, the subject could only be offered online if numbers remain small.

The Language Consultant stated that she supported the inquiry approach adopted in the syllabus as it would facilitate a deeper engagement by students with the Chinese language. She went on to say that the inquiry approach would create a sense of using the language not just passively learning it.

When commenting on the ability of beginning teachers to handle this subject, the Language Consultant believed it was more about the beginning teachers’ creativity, knowledge of the subject and teaching skills rather than experience in teaching Chinese.

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\(^1\) Box.net is an online file sharing and cloud content management service, which was being used in 2011, but has been discontinued due to problems implementing the technology.
5.3 OUTCOMES OF THE CHINESE EXTENSION PROGRAM

5.3.1 Opinions of heads of department

Even though all heads of department were satisfied with the standard of work being achieved by their students, there was a concern following monitoring about the high expectations of students’ work, especially for the non-background speakers.

5.3.2 Other opinions

In her report, Julia Han (Language Consultant), said:

Students who have been using the Extension syllabus have demonstrated sound abilities in using complex and sophisticated Chinese to convey meanings and complex tasks. They used a wide range of vocabulary and idioms in their writings. The structure, grammar and words seem appropriate. Students showed a good understanding of the historical events and cultural information covered by their teaching material.

The consultant also stated:

Some students had obtained such a high proficiency level that they would be able to enroll in advanced tertiary learning in Chinese.

However, she went on to state:

Background speakers showed a better control of the language than non-background speakers especially regarding pronunciation and spontaneity.
6. **OPINIONS ON CHINESE EXTENSION ASSESSMENT**

6.1 **STUDENTS**

During group interviews in July, the students gave a favorable report on assessment. All groups stated that they liked the variety of assessment tasks; they believed the amount of assessment was fair and most of the groups stated that the degree of difficulty of assessment tasks was good and similar in difficulty to other subjects. Non-background speakers in two groups stated that Chinese Extension was more difficult than senior Chinese.

Three groups of students were satisfied they had understood the criteria for their assessment tasks and were satisfied with the feedback they had received on their assessment task. The other group stated that they did not understand fully the expectations of the criteria and would like to see work from an “A” student for Chinese Extension.

6.2 **TEACHERS**

The evaluators received a mixed response from teachers when referring to the success of their assessment tasks during July interviews.

In the two schools with all background speakers, the teachers indicated that they were very pleased with the guidance provided in the syllabus on assessment techniques and the tasks they had developed. One teacher noted that the students had risen to the challenge.

In the other two schools with predominately non-background speaking students, the teachers expressed concerns about their assessment tasks especially following monitoring feedback. One teacher indicated that monitoring had raised concerns about the language complexity used by the students while another teacher reported that her reading tasks were regarded as being too easy. Both these teachers said they would like to see samples of marked student work highlighting the expectations of the various assessment techniques described in the syllabus.

There was general satisfaction among the four teachers with interpreting the syllabus criteria and writing criteria for assessment tasks. One teacher stated that it was a challenging and time-consuming task and would like to see exemplars and to participate in a workshop that further unpacked the standards matrix.

6.3 **HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

All four heads of department were satisfied with the standard of work being produced by the students doing Chinese Extension. One head of department stated that the school was satisfied with the standard of work produced by their non-background speakers, and although monitoring feedback had frustrated the teacher, students had remained positive.

Heads of department in the two schools with the non-background speakers expressed concern about the syllabus assessment expectations of their students.

6.4 **STATE REVIEW PANEL CHAIR**

When responding to a question on the appropriateness of assessment tasks viewed during monitoring, the State Review Panel Chair reported that although some schools had quite
good assessment tasks, there were some concerns about the type of questions asked in listening/reading assessment tasks.

The State Review Panel Chair reported that Chinese Extension teachers were trying to use the criteria but their effectiveness was inconsistent. She stated that there was still a need to have a shared understanding of the assessment criteria.

The State Review Panel Chair expressed concern that there may have been misunderstanding/misinterpretation of the Chinese Extension criteria during the monitoring process. She stated that the state panelists involved in monitoring had not received the in-service provided to the teachers on the trial Chinese Extension syllabus. This concern was endorsed by one teacher, who stated that feedback from monitoring indicated the reviewer’s comments related to the criteria for senior Chinese.

6.5 OTHER COMMENTS

When commenting on the assessment tasks stated in the trial syllabus, the Language Consultant said the assessment tasks had taken all aspects into consideration and were appropriate for testing the communicative skills of students.

The Language Consultant indicated she believed it may be challenging for teachers to develop appropriate tasks and criteria sheets. She highlighted:

• the different interpretation teachers may have on assessment techniques owing to their own experience and training background
• the various aspects to be taken into account. For example, to develop an appropriate listening assessment task, teachers need to determine the aim and objective of the assessment and to select appropriate texts (based on complexity, authenticity, length, style, content and delivery mode) which may not be easy
• the teacher’s own proficiency level in Chinese may affect the quality and implementation of the assessment task.

According to the Language Consultant, the standards matrix in the syllabus seems easy to understand but may need some clarifications to ensure teachers do not have different interpretations of such words as “effective” and “competent”. The consultant also stated that a background speaking teacher may have a different interpretation of an “A” standard compared to a non-background speaker.

As previously mentioned, the Language Consultant was most impressed with the high level of proficiency shown by some students in the work she viewed at monitoring. The consultant stated that students had demonstrated sound abilities in using complex and sophisticated Chinese to convey meanings and complex tasks. The main concern centred on the disparities she found between background and non-background speakers regarding pronunciation and spontaneity.

When interviewed, the Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre indicated that non-background speakers should not be compared to background speakers but should be marked against the criteria.
7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

7.1 OPINIONS OF TEACHERS

During telephone interviews carried out in March 2011, all four teachers reported that they had attended the two QSA conferences which had been very helpful to them in understanding the content and the intent of the syllabus. They also stated that they had appreciated the helpful support of other Chinese Extension teachers. One teacher sought assistance from a background speaker while another appreciated advice on the interpretation of the syllabus from a Chinese state panelist.

In March, three of the four teachers indicated that receiving assistance with finding appropriate resources was a high priority. The teachers said that other areas where assistance would be highly beneficial included developing appropriate learning experiences for the classroom, developing assessment instruments, and making judgments on student work.

Teachers set a high priority on maintaining and enhancing their Chinese language proficiency. Most travelled to China regularly.

7.2 OPINIONS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND ADMINISTRATORS

All heads of department indicated their teachers had received professional development relating to the trial Chinese Extension syllabus by attending the QSA conferences.

When commenting on the support provided to Chinese Extension teachers regarding interpreting and implementing the syllabus, three administrators believed it was adequate. However, one administrator indicated that there was a lack of on-going support from QSA officers following the initial conference. He said the teacher had tried contacting QSA officers and had had no response on Box.net when asking for comments on assessment tasks.

7.3 OPINION OF EVALUATION LANGUAGE CONSULTANT

At this stage there are no appropriate courses available at Griffith University should teachers wish to update their knowledge of teaching Chinese Extension. In the near future, teachers may find courses helpful to them at the Confucius Institute at Griffith University.
8. CURRENT ACCESS TO RESOURCES FOR CHINESE EXTENSION

8.1 OPINIONS OF TEACHERS

During the interviews held in July, three teachers stated that they had adequate resources to support their program.

One non-background speaking teacher expressed concern about her ability to find appropriate resources for her non-background speaking students and the time needed to locate resources. The teacher stated the continuous study of Chinese in a P–12 school makes it difficult to find material that has not been previously used in the school program. Having a background speaking teacher in the primary school has assisted immensely.

Teachers also highlighted the difficulty in finding resources for literary criticism and speaking topics.

8.2 OPINIONS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

Two heads of department reported their school had adequate resources to implement Chinese Extension with one of them indicating that they had built resources over a couple of years.

One head of department stated that having to create all the resources had made the implementation of the Chinese Extension trial difficult while another highlighted the difficulty mentioned previously if resources are used across a P–12 school.

8.3 OTHER OPINIONS

In discussions between the evaluators and the Language Consultant, it was pointed out that appropriate resources are available online and in traditional sources such as textbooks. However the consultant expressed a concern about the demands on non-background speaking teachers in terms of the language competence and the time required to access the appropriate resources.

The Queensland LOTE Centre Manager pointed out to the evaluators that at the outset of the development of the trial syllabus there was a lack of resources available. The Manager commented that having appropriate resources was an essential part of implementing the trial syllabus in schools. Resources for Chinese Extension would be developed later in 2011 to be ready for use in 2012.
9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 STUDENTS

Of the 27 students studying the trial Chinese Extension course, 19 were background speakers of Modern Standard Chinese (Mandarin). Two of the four cohorts were international fee-paying students.

Even though students had enjoyed studying the interesting and relevant topics and had been most successful with their studies in the senior Chinese course, a significant number of non-background speakers struggled with the expected listening and written complexities. The Language Consultant reported that there were disparities between the background and non-background speakers in terms of their pronunciation and spontaneity. The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre stated that the syllabus should cater for local non-background students.

Recommendation 1
It is recommended that the syllabus demands for increasing language complexity be reviewed to cater for the needs of local non-background speakers.

9.2 TEACHERS

There were two background speaking and two non-background speaking teachers of Chinese Extension. Both the administrator and the head of department at one school indicated that being a non-background speaking teacher adds pressure in planning time and finding resources.

All the teachers had studied Chinese in their pre-service training.

9.3 CHINESE EXTENSION SENIOR SYLLABUS

Our Language Consultant believes that the strengths of the syllabus lie in its rationale which reflects the widely accepted theories on second/foreign language teaching and learning and provides students with opportunities to achieve high levels of proficiency in Chinese.

When commenting on the syllabus, heads of department stated that they liked the flexibility and relevance of the topics. They also commended the opportunities provided to students to further develop their skills and interests. This statement was particularly important in the two schools catering for international students.

Throughout the trial, the Chinese Extension teachers stated that the syllabus was well written and supported incorporating the objectives under three dimensions. The teachers also liked the flexibility regarding the topics to be studied and they enjoyed the variety of assessment tasks outlined. Concern was expressed in the two schools with non-background speakers about the lack of direction in the syllabus regarding the degree of language complexity expected.

The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre indicated that it was exciting that there was now a syllabus which allowed students to continue their studies in Chinese to a higher level but emphasised that the syllabus should cater for the local students.
Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the syllabus clarify to teachers of non-background speaking students the degree of language complexity expected in the syllabus.

9.4 WORK PROGRAMS

Heads of department and teachers were generally satisfied with the way the syllabus had assisted them with the writing of their work program.

Three of the four teachers interviewed in March 2011 indicated that their work programs written on the trial Chinese Extension syllabus would meet the needs of their students. One teacher pointed out that the biggest selling point of the subject for his students was the gaining of Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) points while another highlighted the importance of small group work to individual development.

The State Review Panel Chair reported that school work programs were easy to approve provided they followed the guidelines of the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA). She indicated that schools were still requesting workshops on designing assessment instruments that meet the criteria laid down in the syllabus.

During July 2011 interviews, only one teacher reported that the school work program had been approved. One teacher expressed frustration with the slow process but the State Review Panel Chair had stated that delays had been caused because work programs had not been submitted on time.

In September 2011 the evaluators established that all work programs had been accredited. One teacher whose work program had only been accredited on 24 August stated it would have been helpful for the development of assessment tasks if the process had been completed before monitoring.

9.5 QUALITY OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS

9.5.1 Students’ opinions

There was a mixed response from students regarding what they had enjoyed about their Chinese Extension program. Two groups of students highlighted the topics being studied while the other groups focused on the skills they are developing with the inquiry approach.

Whereas the background speaking students stated writing in English and Chinese as the most challenging aspects of the course, non-background speakers identified listening and speaking. One group of students of mainly non-background speakers in a Chinese immersion program expressed their disappointment in their performances in Chinese Extension mainly because they could not fully comprehend the language being used in resources such as Chinese films. These students had done extremely well in the senior Chinese course but now found difficulties in meeting their own high expectations.
9.5.2 Views of teachers and other stakeholders

In July 2011 all teachers stated that their program was progressing satisfactorily. All heads of department and administrators indicated they were satisfied with the way the subject was being taught.

Three teachers stated they had enjoyed teaching the trial syllabus, with the fourth reporting that it was sometimes enjoyable. One teacher went on to say their 2012 program would improve following the experiences they had during the trial.

Most of the teachers indicated that they had used the inquiry approach effectively. One school with all background speakers adopted an online method for the delivery of most of the school program. A teacher in another school stated that non-background speakers need more support and structure.

The principal of one school expressed a concern regarding small group calculations for Chinese Extension during Overall Position procedures and the negative impact this could have on student numbers in future years. The evaluators raised this concern at the Languages Learning Area Reference Committee meeting and were assured by a QSA officer that the school misunderstood the procedures and their concern was unfounded.

Recommendation 3
It is recommended that the Queensland Studies Authority inform all participating schools of the method used in small group calculations for Chinese Extension.

9.6 Opinions on Chinese Extension Assessment

9.6.1 Students

Students are mostly satisfied with the variety, amount and timing of assessment. When commenting on the difficulty of assessment, one group of background speakers stated that their assessment was as difficult as other subjects while a group of non-background speakers who were doing the senior Chinese and Chinese Extension courses concurrently stated that assessment was challenging but enjoyable. Another group that included background and non-background speakers concluded that assessment tasks were more difficult for the non-background speakers.

9.6.2 Teachers

Following monitoring, there were mixed reports from teachers on assessment. The teachers in schools with only background speakers were satisfied with their assessment tasks and the students’ response to the challenges posed in them. However, the two schools with non-background speakers reported that their assessment tasks and the students’ responses were generally not seen by the review panel as meeting the criteria in the syllabus.

At the March 2011 teachers’ conference, several teachers questioned whether non-background students could achieve the standards stated in the syllabus even though the syllabus states it is for both background and non-background speakers. One teacher asked if the “A” standard was achievable by non-background speakers.

During July interviews the two teachers in schools with non-background speakers once again expressed concerns about the standards. One teacher suggested an immediate workshop to discuss and clarify the standards and to review assessment tasks set for Semester 2.
9.6.3 Heads of department opinions

Heads of departments expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by the students in Chinese Extension.

Following monitoring feedback, heads of department in the two schools with non-background speakers raised concerns about the expected standards for Chinese Extension.

9.6.4 State Review Panel Chair and Language Consultant

Following monitoring, the State Review Panel Chair reported that even though some assessment tasks were quite good and appropriate others were of concern especially in the area of listening/reading.

The State Review Panel Chair stated that teachers were generally trying to use the criteria in the standards but were inconsistent on how these were applied. The Language Consultant was impressed with some of the work presented by students. She stated that some of the students had obtained a high level of proficiency and would be able to complete advanced tertiary studies in Chinese. She noted disparities between the students especially regarding pronunciation and spontaneity.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that the standards matrix be reviewed to ensure that the criteria are appropriate for both background and non-background speakers.

Note:

It should be noted that the evaluators completed this report before verification. As a result, the difficulties mentioned in this section may have been accommodated or may still need to be resolved in the future. Other assessment issues may be identified during verification.

9.7 Professional development

Teachers reported that they had received most of their professional development on Chinese Extension at the QSA conferences. Even though teachers expressed satisfaction with the material discussed and presented at the conferences, there were still two teachers who requested assistance with assessment related issues.

Teachers set a high priority on maintaining and enhancing their Chinese language proficiency. Most travelled to China regularly.

There was general endorsement of the conferences by administrators. One administrator expressed a concern on the lack of support from QSA officers since the March conference.

9.8 Resources

Having adequate and appropriate resources for Chinese Extension was a concern for a couple of teachers. Concerns centred on speaking topics and literary criticism resources being at an appropriate level of English for background speakers. One school struggled to find appropriate resources for non-background speakers that had not been previously used in their P–12 Chinese school program.
In response to a question on resources for Chinese Extension, the Language Consultant indicated that there were adequate online resources available but expressed a concern about the time required to access them and the language competence required of the teacher for the selection of appropriate materials.

The Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre acknowledged the importance of having appropriate resources for the delivery of Chinese Extension and reported that QSA would develop a resources package in the latter part of 2011 ready for 2012.

**Recommendation 5**
It is recommended that appropriate resources be developed/identified to assist the delivery of the syllabus and to meet the specific needs of both non-background and background speaking students.

**9.9 CONCLUSION AND FINAL RECOMMENDATION**

Teachers were generally satisfied with the program they had developed based on the trial syllabus. They endorsed the syllabus’ inquiry mode of delivery and the flexibility of topics to be studied. The interesting topics incorporated into their programs engaged and challenged their students. However, student outcomes were mixed. Background speakers were generally producing a high level of proficiency while high achieving non-background speakers found it difficult to reach the expectations of the “A” level set down in the standards matrix.

Teachers generally made good progress with applying the new assessment categories. Provision of sample annotated students’ scripts will help teachers develop their knowledge and skills in this area.

**Recommendation 6**
It is recommended that the Chinese Extension Senior Syllabus proceed to general implementation provided the needs of non-background speakers are addressed.
APPENDIX 1: PROGRESS REPORTS
EVALUATION OF THE
TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN
CHINESE EXTENSION

PROGRESS REPORT 1

Administration Survey 1  February 2011
Teachers Conference     March 2011
Student Questionnaire 1 March 2011
Teacher Interview 1     May 2011

Prepared for the
Languages Learning Area Reference Committee
Queensland Studies Authority, Queensland.

Ian Crabb, Ruth Peckman
Estelle Crabb

Evaluators for Trial Senior Syllabus in Chinese Extension

June 2011
In February of this year, a short survey was forwarded to schools offering the Trial Senior Syllabus in Chinese Extension in 2011. The survey requested the number of Year 12 students taking Chinese Extension and the number of classes.

Four schools were offering Year 12 Chinese Extension in 2011.

A summary of the information provided by the schools is included in the table below. A complete list of information is provided in Table 2.

### TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation in Chinese Extension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Year 12 students</td>
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### TABLE 2

**Year 12 enrolments in Chinese Extension**  
February 2011

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Number of classes</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kawana Waters State College</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Pauls Anglican College</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Varsity College</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>27</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TEACHERS CONFERENCE — MARCH 2011

The following notes were recorded from a general discussion between the evaluators, teachers from three of the four trial schools, a panel member and two QSA personnel.

Question 1
As a Chinese Extension teacher, what has impressed you in the trial Chinese Extension syllabus document?

- Range of assessment tasks e.g. research. The senior Chinese Syllabus tasks are all under supervised conditions.
- Allows students to show what they are capable of.
- The intellectual approach: higher order thinking, analysis. Like incorporating inquiry.
- The flexibility: choice of topics, depth and areas of study.
- The higher number of contact hours with students makes a big difference to students’ language ability.

Question 2
What concerns do you have at this stage with the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

- Finding resources at the right level. A teacher who is a non-background speaker reported the time demands evaluating resources.
- Using resources; being aware of copyright for movies.
- Need to promote the course to non-background speakers. The course is written for them. Are the standards achievable by non-background speakers?
- Creating meaning — is “A” standard appropriate for non-background speakers?
- The challenge of the standards interacting with the modes and dimensions.

Question 3
What concerns do you have at this stage with implementing the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

- Non-background students feel disadvantaged.
- Not to be swayed by the achievement of background speakers.
- Time for preparation.
- Developing learning experiences with more individual learning and only Chinese spoken.
- Choice of text can make a big difference to students’ outcomes, e.g. *Newsweek* article compared to Shakespeare in Chinese.
- Some topics can be more suited to some students than others, e.g. film is easier than economics.
- Demonstrating increasing complexity. Showing advanced proficiency in tasks, learning experiences, assessment tasks. Need to consider choice of words and the use of authentic texts.
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE 1 — MARCH 2011

Dear Student,

It is important that the Queensland Studies Authority finds out information about Year 12 students taking Chinese Extension in 2011. This questionnaire asks a few questions about you. Please answer them as best you can. If you have any difficulties about the items in the questionnaire, please ask your teacher. Ignore the small numbers throughout the questionnaire as they are used in the analysis of your responses.

Thank you for your assistance.

Ian Crabb
Evaluator for Chinese Extension

Please tick the appropriate box or insert the information as requested.

1. NAME OF SCHOOL:

2. GENDER: Male 15 Female 12

3. SUBJECTS STUDIED IN YEAR 11 IN 2010

Please tick the box if you studied the subject in Year 11 and tick the rating you obtained for the subject at the end of 2010. (Some students did not provide ratings for subjects they studied and as a result totals do not always correlate)

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<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film and Television</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology, Systems</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36
4. REASONS FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

Please tick the box if this was a reason why you chose to take Chinese Extension at the beginning of Year 12. You may tick more than one box.

REASONS FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

1. 20 You did well in Year 11 Chinese.
2. 18 You expect to do well in Chinese Extension.
3. 10 You wanted to improve your ability to write in Chinese.
4. 21 You believed it would help you to get a high OP score.
5. 4 You wanted to be with your friends.
6. 12 You liked the teacher taking Chinese Extension.
7. 2 Your parents wanted you to take Chinese Extension.
8. 10 It was the best subject available on the subject choice line.
9. 8 You thought it would be an easy subject.
10. 7 You thought it would improve your chances of getting a job.
11. 11 You thought it would be useful or needed in a future job.
12. 7 You thought it may help you do a related course at tertiary level.
13. 2 Any other reason? Please specify:
   1 Improve conversational Chinese.
   1 The other two Chinese students wanted to do it and I did not want to be outdone.

5. MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

Which of the reasons in Question 4 was the MOST important reason why you chose to do Chinese Extension?

1. 2 You did well in Year 11 Chinese.
2. 2 You expect to do well in Chinese Extension.
3. 2 You wanted to improve your ability to write in Chinese.
4. 15 You believed it would help you to get a high OP score.
5. 0 You wanted to be with your friends.
6. 2 You liked the teacher taking Chinese Extension.
7. 0 Your parents wanted you to take Chinese Extension.
8. 0 It was the best subject available on the subject choice line.
9. 1 You thought it would be an easy subject.
10. 0 You thought it would improve your chances of getting a job.
11. 2 You thought it would be useful or needed in a future job.
12. 1 You thought it may help you do a related course at tertiary level.
13. 1 Any other reason? Please specify:
    The other two Chinese students wanted to do it and I did not want to be outdone.

6. Do you hope to use what you are learning and the skills you are developing in Chinese Extension in a future career?

12 Yes What career do you hope to enter?
   Engineering (In China) Lawyer/Diplomat
   Psychologist Medicine/Pharmacy
   Accountant (2) Chinese teacher
   Education Defence services

1 No
11 Not sure
We would like to know why other students in your Year 11 Chinese class in 2010 did not wish to study Chinese Extension in 2011. Select from the reasons below. You may tick more than one box.

a. 16 Not interested in doing an additional language subject.
b. 2 Did not like the description of the course which was provided.
c. 1 Were advised against taking Chinese Extension.
d. 3 Did not like the Chinese Extension teacher.
e. 15 Needed to do other subjects to get a high OP score.
f. 5 Needed to do other subjects to gain entrance to some tertiary courses.
g. 10 Did not have the ability for this subject.
h. 4 Friends not doing it.
i. 7 Timetable clash with another subject.
j. 9 Needed to do other subjects for job reasons.
k. 1 Any other reason? Please specify
   Five years of Chinese immersion was enough for them.

8. A background speaker is defined in Chinese Extension as follows:

   A background speaker is a person who has been born, raised and lived in an environment where the language is a major language of communication. They have had sustained formal education in that language and speak and write that language at home and/or outside the classroom in a sustained manner with other background speakers for purpose of communication.

Are you a background speaker of Chinese?

20 YES 7 NO 0 NOT SURE
## TEACHER INTERVIEW 1 — MAY 2011

Interviews were conducted with four teachers of the trial syllabus in Chinese Extension at the four participating schools in early May 2011. Information was sought about their background and qualifications, their views about assistance required to implement the syllabus, work program development and the success of implementation to date.

1. NAME OF SCHOOL

### TEACHER BACKGROUND

2. GENDER:  
   - Female: 3  
   - Male: 1

3. How many years have you been teaching? (Include 2011 as one year)  
   - 1 year: 0  
   - 2 years: 0  
   - 3–5 years: 1  
   - 6–9 years: 0  
   - 10 or more years: 3

4. How many years have you taught Chinese? (Include 2011 as one year)  
   - 1 year: 0  
   - 2 years: 0  
   - 3 years: 0  
   - 4 years or more: 4 (4, 10, 14, 18)

5. Did you cover Chinese in your pre-service education?  
   - Yes: 4  
   - No: 0

6. Are you a “background speaker” of Chinese? (Use definition of a background speaker from the syllabus)  
   - YES: 2  
   - NO: 2

7. In what other subject areas are you currently teaching?  
   - ESL  
   - Senior English, SOSE  
   - Middle school Chinese Foundation course  
   - Senior Chinese  
   - Religious Studies, Business Studies

8. What tertiary courses have you completed?  
   - BA, Dip Ed, 1 semester at a Beijing university plus shorter courses  
   - BA, Grad Dip Ed, MBA, Dip International Education, 1 year postgrad scholarship to China  
   - Bachelor of Arts (Language and Linguistics) (2)  
   - Postgraduate in Education, Postgraduate in Science Education

9. Are you currently enrolled in a tertiary course?  
   - YES: 0  
   - NO: 4
ASSISTANCE

10. The following list has been identified as possible sources of assistance in teaching Chinese Extension. Tick each source of assistance you have used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Little help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Queensland Studies Authority/Senior Education Officer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. State Panel Chair</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Teachers at other schools teaching Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Another teacher who is a background speaker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Another Chinese teacher on State Panel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Please indicate whether you need assistance in the following areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>High priority</th>
<th>Low priority</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Understanding the Dimensions outlined in the syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Designing appropriate units of work in the Areas of Study outlined in the syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Finding resources</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Developing course overview</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Developing appropriate learning experiences for the classroom</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Developing an appropriate inquiry-based style of teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Developing assessment instruments</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Demonstrating increasing complexity in Year 12 assessment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Making judgments about student assessment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Writing task-specific criteria sheets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WORK PROGRAM

12. At what stage is your work program?

0  Accredited  4  Submitted but no feedback yet  0  Not yet submitted.

13. Did you encounter any difficulties writing your work program?

NO  2
• But preferred the former style of work program where all units were planned. Find the skeletal format less useful.
• State Panel experience has helped.

YES  2
• Finding appropriate resources; uncertainty of meeting Panel expectations.
• Designing appropriate learning experiences for the classroom.
• What assessment opportunities to give the students.

14. Did you have any assistance outside of your school in writing your Chinese Extension work program?

NO  0

YES  4
• Conversations at teacher conferences and with Panel members. (3)
• Conversations with other State Panelists not involved in trial.

THE CHINESE EXTENSION PROGRAM

15. From your perspective, how well is your Chinese Extension program going?

Very Well  0  Well  4  Satisfactory  0  Unsatisfactory  0

• Students say they are happy. Lively discussion. Program will improve more next year.
• Students’ language ability is definitely improving which is noticeable in the regular Chinese class. The course challenges students.
• Students are engaged and enjoying the challenge. One student is finding the assessment difficult.

16. What do you consider is going well or is enjoyable?

• Flexibility of the course. Good discussion. Students are engaged. Online delivery is great — students can have access at any time.
• Students enjoy less structure in this course and the more in-depth study using language in contexts.
• Implementation of the program. Students are interested in the units.
• Flexibility of course. Student centred. Students are engaged and are enjoying their studies. More interesting than Senior Chinese. Small group allows for more interaction. Not as much assessment as senior Chinese.
17. Do you feel proficient teaching Chinese Extension with a student inquiry approach?

YES  4
• Would be happy to do more professional development in this area.

NO   0

18. What problems have you encountered in teaching the trial syllabus in Chinese Extension? Consider teaching strategies, student inquiry approach, composite classes, teachers’ expertise or confidence, student motivation and resources.

• Native speakers can outperform the teacher who needs to set clear parameters to keep within.
• Timetabled during sport on a Friday afternoon. Students and teacher are tired. Sometimes lose the sessions for other activities like QCS practice. The teacher takes a long time to evaluate resources because of her language ability.
• Creating a balance in learning experiences for the native speaking students and the non-native speaking students. Time to develop appropriate assessment tasks and resources.

19. Do you anticipate any other problems developing in implementing your course?

NO   3
• Just time to do it well. A little concerned whether students now in Year 11 will choose Extension. Depends on the comments of this cohort of Year 12 students.
• Very interested to get feedback at monitoring. Have posted assessment tasks on Box.net but little response.

YES  1
• Not sure that assessment is appropriate. Uncertain about Term 3/4 assessment. Finding adequate and appropriate resources is an ongoing concern.

STUDENTS

20. What has been the general reaction of the students to the subject so far?

• Biggest selling point is gaining QCE points. Find the subject is good fun. As native speakers, the pressure is off for them as the source materials are in Chinese though instructions are given in English.
• The course is a challenge but their language improvement pleases them. The small group enjoys being together.
• Most students are engaged and challenged.
• Most students are enjoying the topics and class discussions. Looking at issues from different cultural backgrounds.
21. At this time, do you feel confident that a program based on the Trial Senior Syllabus for Chinese Extension will meet the needs of your students?

YES 3

- It employs inquiry learning and develops higher-order thinking. Supports the outcomes of Senior English for native speakers. English language improves too.
- Language proficiency improves and the course is based around students’ interests.
- Travelling well at this point in time.

NO 0

UNSURE 1

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

- Chinese Extension is a very exciting subject. Love its flexibility.
- The course is currently progressing quite well but the teacher has a concern if class numbers increase. Currently have a concern regarding the depth of coverage in units as a considerable amount of time is lost with school interruptions.
- Native speakers are able to develop their inquiry better than non-native speakers.
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

PROGRESS REPORT 2

Head of Department Interview  July 2011
Teacher Interview 2  July 2011
Group Interview with Students  July 2011
Administration Interview  July 2011
State Review Panel Chair Feedback  July 2011
Consultant’s Feedback on Syllabus  July 2011
Consultant’s Feedback on monitoring  June 2011

Prepared for the
Languages Learning Area Reference Committee
Queensland Studies Authority, Queensland.

Ian Crabb, Estelle Crabb
Ruth Peckman

2 August 2011
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT INTERVIEW — JULY 2011

In July 2011, face-to-face interviews with the Heads of Department were conducted in the four trial schools. The Head of Department at one school had been on long service leave for all of Semester 1 and was not able to comment in-depth.

1. What have you observed about the quality of the Chinese Extension program operating at your school?
   - A comprehensive program.
   - It is fine.
   - Good quality but difficult to resource. A lot of work for the teacher.
   - Teacher is working very well to deliver a quality program.

2. What have been the positive and negative reactions to this Chinese Extension program?

   **Students: Positive**
   - One international student who was not achieving well in other subjects is loving the success in Extension Chinese.
   - No feedback.
   - Great opportunity to continue their skills.
   - Students are enjoying the program and improving their skills.

   **Students: Negative**
   - Nil (2)
   - Non-background speakers have found the subject very difficult.
   - Have to work extremely hard to achieve a good result (all non-background students).

   **Teacher: Positive**
   - Nil (2)
   - Complements Year 12 English.
   - Great enjoyment from teaching it.

   **Teacher: Negative**
   - Issue with being timetabled after school.
   - Guidance Officer questioned its value. Is it a disservice to off-shore students to spend more time in a class on their own?
   - Difficult to resource, a lot of work and organisation.
   - Planning time for non-background speaking teacher is enormous. Lack of support from QSA. Frustrated with the feedback from monitoring.

   **Administration: Positive**
   - Supportive to offer a number of languages.
   - Like our experiment with online learning.
   - Nil.
   - Has supported the teacher. Currently considering supplying a background speaking teacher aide.
Administration: Negative
- Late to decide to offer Extension but only if timetabled after school.
- Support its inclusion but only if not in regular timetable and offered online.
- Concern around what data (QCS) will be used to scale the results — other extension language data indicates a student achieving a VH10 would not get the value he expected.
- Nil.

Parents: Positive
- Nil. (3)
- Enhanced parent satisfaction because it meets student’s needs.

Parents: Negative
- Nil. (3)
- Parents have expressed concern about the level of complexity for non-background speakers.

Community: Positive
- Nil. (4)

Community: Negative
- Nil. (4)

3. Have any of the following made the implementation of this subject difficult in your school?

Staffing: Yes
- Having no really experienced Chinese teacher has put a lot of pressure and responsibility on the teacher.
- Being a non-background speaking teacher adds pressure.

Staffing: No
- Have one Chinese teacher at the school but can access a couple of others in an emergency.
- Teacher is generous with time. Subject not offered to non-background speakers so makes it easier to deliver.

Resources: Yes (2)
- The teacher has had to create all resources.
- Not enough resources available that have not been previously used in the P–12 Chinese program. Teacher has had to work hard in finding material.

Resources: No (2)
- Good resources. Been building Chinese resources for a couple of years.

Students: Yes
- Students exited the senior Chinese class to take Extension. Resulted in a composite Year 11 and Year 12 Chinese class.

Students: No (3)

Other
- Nil. (2)
- Time tabled outside school hours. Teacher and students have regular contact in Senior Chinese and one other contact class for Extension. The rest of Extension is provided online.
- Students are programmed to do Chinese Extension during sport and after school.
4. Are you satisfied with the standards achieved by the students in this new program?

YES  4  NO  0  NOT SURE  0

Comment:
- There is a typical profile.
- Even though we are satisfied with the work of our non-background speaking students, feedback from monitoring has frustrated the teacher. Students still appear positive.

5. Are you satisfied with the way the subject has been taught?

Very Satisfied  1  Satisfied  3  Not Satisfied  0

Comment:
- The non-background speaking teacher has put in an extraordinary effort in delivering this program.

6. What professional development has been offered to the teacher in your school to equip them for the teaching of the trial Chinese Extension program?

- QSA teacher conferences. (4)
- The teacher receives additional planning time each week.
- Teacher disappointed that she did not receive any support through Box.net.

WORK PROGRAMS

7. Is your work program approved?

Approved  1  Not approved  3  Do not know  0

8. What feedback have you received from State Panel?

- None yet. (2)
- Did not receive any feedback for approved program.

9. Comment on the process of approval.

- No comment. (3)
- Have yet to receive any feedback on work program. Taken too long. Need to know if we are on the right track.
SYLLABUS

10. What do you like about the trial syllabus?
   
   • The opportunity for students to further expand their skills. (2)
   • Meets the needs of background speakers — pursues their interests; the higher level of difficulty. Workload is manageable for background speakers. Most international students arrive mid Year 11. The one year of Extension Chinese in Year 12 is excellent.
   • Flexibility, relevance, caters to students’ interests.

11. Did the syllabus assist sufficiently with writing your work program?

   Yes 4   No 0

12. What difficulties have you found with the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

   • Difficult for Cantonese speakers to do well in writing tasks using the simplified script.
   • Nil.
   • HOD has found it difficult to support the teacher as the HOD does not speak the Chinese language and the teacher is struggling with her English.
   • Knowing the full meaning of the criteria stated in the Standard Matrix. Need more workshops and exemplars.

13. From your experiences so far, what changes should be made to the syllabus?

   • No suggestions. (3)
   • Exemplars need to be added to syllabus to highlight the expectations.

OTHER ISSUES

14. Are there any unresolved issues in implementing Senior Chinese Extension at your school?

   • Timetabling. (3)
   • Our concern centres on the impact of QCS data (State) uncertainty on scaling our student results.

15. Do you foresee any changes to the way Senior Chinese Extension is offered, promoted and taught in your school?

   • The number of international students has declined. May have impact in the future.
   • Could share the course online with Centenary Heights SHS who receive students from the same off-shore school. A selling point with Year 11 students is that Extension will give them two more QCE points.
   • Depends on how our students are treated this year.
   • Have the subject offered on a line and not in out-of-school hours.
16. What lessons have been learnt at your school that could be useful to schools new to the syllabus when it is implemented statewide?

• Even if class size may be small it meets background speakers’ needs. The *Chinese Senior Syllabus 2008* is tailored to second language learners.
• Delivering online has been difficult. Learning Place does not cope with large files. It is an easy course to run with only background speakers in the class.
• Nil.
• Need to establish a network. Must have access to resources before you commit.

17. Any other comments?

• It is good to be part of the trial. Extension is a great syllabus for this school. It meets the needs of different learning pathways for the diverse students enrolled at the school. Late entry background speakers do the external Senior Chinese course which has very difficult assessment.
• The class has 11 background speaking students who all do Year 12 Chinese as well. Variable progression rate (VPR) for the Year 11 background speakers — they only do the assessment. There is one Year 11 non-background student who is doing external Senior Chinese.
• Major concern centres on the difficulty of this subject for non-background speaking students. In New South Wales and Victoria they have separate syllabi for background and non-background speakers. Should we have the same?
TEACHER INTERVIEW 2 — JULY 2011

In July 2011, face-to-face interviews with the Chinese Extension teachers were conducted in the four trial schools.

STUDENTS

1. What has been the general reaction of the students to the subject so far?

   Positive
   • Students find it challenging and enjoyable.
   • The class of 11 background speakers seems to enjoy working in Chinese and apply themselves.
   • Enjoy the variety of learning and the in-depth topics.
   • Enjoyed strengthening their skills in the subject.

   Negative
   • Challenge for non-background speakers. (2)
   • No negative comments or behaviours.
   • A lot of work. Subject is done during sport and after school as it could not be fitted into the current curriculum lines.

2. What problems have the students faced during the course?

   • Nil.
   • Working online. Some students needed reminders to stay on task.
   • Understanding the criteria requirement in assessment tasks. Students need more practice. Background speaking teacher will explain it better when teaching the course a second time.
   • Speaking and writing tasks expectations difficult for students. Term 1 was difficult due to the big difference in expectations from Semester 2 Year 11 Chinese to Term 1 Year 12 Chinese Extension.

3. From your perspective, how well is your Chinese Extension program going with Year 12 students?

   Very good 0 Good 1 Satisfactory 3 Less than satisfactory 0

   • Have ideas to implement next year. It will improve.

ASSESSMENT

1. How successful have assessment tasks been?

   • Tasks have been successful. Good feedback at monitoring.
   • Tasks have been good. Students have engaged well. Responses show they have risen to the challenge.
   • Concern about listening skills. Need examples of language complexity.
   • Concern about interpretation of syllabus between teacher and State Panelist at monitoring. Feedback from monitoring indicated that her three reading tasks were too easy. Teacher indicated that everybody should be on same playing field.
2(a) In the syllabus, how clear is the guidance provided on assessment techniques?

- Quite clear.
- Absolutely but also like the flexibility. Great to be able to assess writing and reading in one task — with two sets of criteria.
- Need examples of language complexity.
- Open to interpretation. Need clarification.

2(b) Do you have any suggestions that could improve the guidance provided on assessment techniques?

- No. (2)
- Examples of language expectation. Be able to use Box.net at school.
- Need assessment exemplars. More consultation between teachers, State Panelists and QSA. State Panelists need training if they are to do monitoring and verification effectively.

3. Are you satisfied now with interpreting the criteria for assessment tasks?

- Yes. (2)
- Fine but need more practice.
- No. Need more clarification.

4. How confident are you in writing task specific criteria for assessment tasks?

- Confident. The standards are clear and easy to use. (2)
- Alright. Monitoring feedback indicated that the writing standards were a bit easy.

5. Are you confident in applying the criteria to student work?

- Yes. (2)
- Monitoring feedback indicated that students’ work was not up to standard. (2)

6. Do you have any suggestions that would improve the clarity of the “standards matrix”?

- No. (2)
- An exemplar in the future showing use of the standards would ensure greater comparability.
- Workshop criteria. Provide exemplars of student work that exhibit standards. Need to improve the use of Box.net.

7. From monitoring, your school received feedback from State Panel on ways of improving your assessment. In what ways did these comments assist you?

- Affirmed the tasks and standards. (2)
- Comments were not clear on how I could make changes and improve.
- Not the most constructive comments. Panelist graded on senior Chinese criteria and not those to be used in Chinese Extension and suggested downgrading the students. Have now discussed concerns with State Panel Chair.
8. Are there any other difficulties or comments associated with assessment?
   - No. (2)
   - Yes. Training session needed on marking assessment.
   - Yes. Is everybody on the same page with regard to assessment?

9. Do you anticipate problems in determining the relative achievement of the Year 12 students at the end of the year?
   **YES** 1
   - Have asked for a meeting of all teachers and State Panelists as soon as possible.
   **NO** 3
   - The need to demonstrate higher-order thinking causes a spread of achievement.

**PROGRAM**

1. How have you enjoyed teaching the Trial Syllabus in Senior Chinese Extension?
   Very enjoyable 1 Enjoyable 2 Sometimes enjoyable 1 Not enjoyable 0
   - Students are great to work with. The teacher finds it helps develop her capacity in Chinese.
   - Planning is very hard work.

2. What has gone well in the teaching of Chinese Extension at your school?
   - Good response from the students. The academic challenge is appropriate. The inquiry approach improves thinking skills.
   - Students locate their own resources well. Assessment has been good. Students like that they can gain two more QCE points.
   - Students and teacher very positive about the subject. Good support from Administration.
   - Level of student improvement and confidence is fantastic.

3. What has not gone well?
   - At first uncertainty about inquiry. Should it be similar to English Extension? Feel more confident now.
   - Failure of Learning Place website. Did not cope with large files.
   - In class groups — background and non-background students do not mix readily.
   - Assessment.
   - Monitoring. Resourcing — promised help but have not received any. Non-collaboration on Box.net.
4. Are there any unresolved difficulties in the teaching of Senior Chinese Extension?
   • No feedback on work program yet. (2)
   • No
   • Work needed for monitoring before twenty week unit was completed.

5. How effectively have you used the inquiry process in the delivery of Chinese Extension?
   Very effectively  2  Effectively  1  Hardly effectively  1  Not at all  0

   Any comments?
   • Students ask a lot of questions and readily discuss material.
   • Non-background students need more structure.

6. What suggestions can you make that would enhance the teaching of Chinese Extension in your situation?
   • Need more resources. (2)
   • Maintain the view that the course is developing. Next year it will be even better.
   • Hope to encourage students to blog so they interact with English speaking students and discover a range of points of view.
   • Exemplars of marked student work.

7. Do you have any concerns about your background or proficiency in teaching Chinese Extension?
   No  2  Yes  2
   • Teacher is concerned that her standard of English make work program and assessment preparation difficult.
   • Time spent in preparation of assessment and class work “nearly killed” the non-background speaking teacher.

SYLLABUS
1. What do you like about the trial syllabus?
   • Students can pursue their interests in the inquiries. Valuable inter-cultural understandings are achieved — not just linguistic and cultural but historic. The syllabus promotes bilingualism. The standards are at the right level.
   • Flexibility for teacher and students to explore areas of interest. The emphasis is on developing higher-order thinking skills which then enhances all learning.
   • The wide range of opportunities for student learning. Different scenarios. Less assessment than parent subject [senior Chinese] has.
   • Initial reaction was great but has found that parts need further unpacking.

2. Did the syllabus assist you sufficiently with writing your work program?
   Yes  3  No  0  Not Sure  1
   • Do not know as the submitted work program has yet to be returned.
3. What difficulties have you found with the trial syllabus?
   • Nil. (2)
   • Language complexity requirements. No details, no samples.
   • Understanding what is required in criteria.

4. Are you satisfied with the way the objectives of the syllabus are grouped under 3 Dimensions?
   Yes 4 No 0
   Comments?
   • The objectives guide assessment very well.
   • They are the same as in Senior English.
   • Dimension 1 and Dimension 2 could be incorporated into one dimension.

5. Are the language requirements of the trial syllabus appropriate for Year 12 Chinese Extension students?
   YES 2 No 1 Do not know 1
   • Unable to find the complexities of language required.
   • Interested to know how well non-background speakers would fare.
   • Too difficult for non-background speaking students. Equivalent to studying 3rd Year Chinese at university. Term 1 Chinese Extension was too big a step from Year 11 Chinese for non-background speaking students.

6. From your experiences so far, what changes should be made to the syllabus?
   • No suggestions. (2)
   • Samples of language complexity.
   • Criteria need review. Need separate syllabi for background and non-background speaking students.

WORK PROGRAM
1. Is your work program approved?
   Approved 1 Not approved 3

2. What feedback have you received from State Panel?
   • Nothing yet. (2)
   • My program contained two units. Only one is required. Needed to remove one unit.
   • No feedback with approved work program.
3. What comments do you have on the process of approval?

- No comment. (2)
- Not on the process so much but making time to write the program was difficult.
- Too slow. Where is it?

RESOURCES

1. Do you currently have enough resources to support your program?

- Yes. Most are teacher created. (2)
- Yes. Students hunt them out and find relevant materials. Most are electronic.
- Not enough.

2. Have there been particular aspects of the course for which it has been difficult to find or develop resources?

- Hard to find literary criticism resources at appropriate level of English language to help teach the terminology.
- No.
- Speaking topics. Sentence structures.
- Yes. Finding resources that have not been previously used in P–12 Chinese studies.

3a. What are the most useful commercial resources you have used?

- Settlement guide — produced by ANZ Bank.
- Nil.
- Chinese Made Easy — textbook.

3b. What community/other resources did you find helpful in delivering your program?

- Nil. (2)
- Will invite Bond University lecturer after verification.
- Having a background speaking teacher in the school.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

- The Extension class consists of background and heritage speakers. They are not part of the Senior Chinese class so they do not disadvantage the students in the senior Chinese program. They are permitted to do Year 11 Senior Chinese.
- School is looking at employing a background speaking teacher aide.
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

GROUP INTERVIEW WITH YEAR 12 STUDENTS — JULY 2011

In July 2011, face-to-face interviews were conducted with groups of Year 12 Chinese Extension students in the four schools implementing the trial Chinese Extension syllabus.

1. What aspects of this subject have you enjoyed?
   - Improves our Chinese, especially the written component, while living away from China.
   - Helpful to develop skills in writing reports, improving thinking and analysing. Enjoy the inter-cultural aspects.
   - Focus on literature and media.
   - Deeper understanding of the language. Topics interesting. Cultural learning as well as language. Good support from teacher.

2. What aspects have disappointed you?
   - After school hours classes are inconvenient. One student from Hong Kong finds using the simplified script difficult to use in written tasks.
   - It is not an easy subject. We use more English than expected. The Learning Place website sometimes fails to work.
   - Watching Chinese language film. Had to use English sub-text to understand (all non-background speakers). Even two Cantonese students had difficulty with the fast flow of Mandarin.
   - Struggling to meet expectations in listening and speaking. (4 out of 5) Believe expectations cater for background speakers. Gradings dropped following monitoring. Lack of conversational language used in the classroom.

3. What are the benefits of doing this subject?
   - It is a subject we can do well in. It should help to get a better OP.
   - Improves our English. Help with OP.
   - Career pathways.
   - Cultural understanding for workplace. Most of the time we speak Chinese in classroom.

4. During your Chinese Extension studies, how much time was spent working by yourself or with other students on a task?
   - Most of the time  1  
   - Some of the time  2  
   - Not often  1  
   - Never  0
5. What is your opinion of the assessment in this subject?

a. Variety of tasks
   • Good. (4)

b. Amount of assessment
   • Good. (3)
   • Fair. Similar to other subjects.

c. Timing of assessment
   • Good. (3)
   • Given late notice and not a clear deadline.

d. Degree of difficulty of assessment
   • Good.
   • Same as other subjects.
   • More difficult for non-background speakers.
   • Challenging but still enjoyable. A lot more difficult than senior Chinese. (Non-background speakers)

6a. Do you understand the criteria for each assessment task?

   Yes 3  No 1

   • Do not understand the expectations of criteria. Open to teacher interpretation. Need examples of what is expected.

6b. Do you receive sufficient feedback about your performance in class as well as on assessment tasks?

   • Yes. (2)
     • Good feedback from the teacher.
     • Need to ask to see marks. Would like to see what an ‘A’ standard is.

7. What have you found most challenging about the Chinese Extension course?

   • Writing — especially with time pressure in exams. Have been in Australia for two years during which time there has been little practice in Chinese writing.
   • Writing in English.
   • Lack of conversational Chinese in class for non-background speakers. As a result, listening and speaking tasks are difficult.

8. Any other comments?

   • We would encourage Year 11 students to choose to take Chinese Extension.
   • All five students in group who were VHA in senior Chinese believed that their Chinese Extension would not be used in their OP calculations.
   • Would recommend the subject to Year 11 students.
ADMINISTRATION INTERVIEW — JULY 2011

In July 2011, face-to-face interviews were conducted with Administrators in the four trial schools.

1. What have been the positive and negative reactions to Chinese Extension by:

Students
   Positive
   • No comment. (4)
   Negative
   • No comment. (3)
   • Non-background students concerned with their listening and speaking skills.

Teachers
   Positive
   • No comment. (2)
   • Enjoying Extension Chinese.
   • Appreciated the support of HOD and school (given time-off to prepare).
   Negative
   • No comment. (2)
   • Lack of resources and the QSA timeline for monitoring and verification.
   • Frustrated with the lack of QSA support. No word on work program even though it was submitted at beginning of Term 2. Feedback from monitoring was not well received as it related to senior Chinese criteria and not Chinese Extension criteria.

Parents
   Positive
   • No comment. (3)
   • Appreciate the progression of an immersion subject.
   Negative
   • No comment. (3)
   • Lack of resources. Students find listening component hard.

General community
   Positive
   • No comment. (4)
   Negative
   • No comment. (4)

2. Are you satisfied with the way the subject is being taught?
   Yes 4
   • Students are getting good results. Very happy with the teacher
   • Very satisfied. It has gone well.
   • Teacher is putting in a large amount of work to assist the students.
3. What were the difficulties of implementing Chinese Extension at your school?

- Promoting a new subject. Students were apprehensive about what was involved.
- Technology failed sometimes using online delivery. Will continue to be offered online unless numbers grow.
- Resourcing subject. Not able to access Box.net at school.
- Able to put material on Box.net but no feedback at all.

4. What, if any, are the unresolved issues with regard to offering Chinese Extension?

- Difficulty timetabling Extension when students drop one of their Year 11 subjects. It is offered after school as there is no common time.
- Nil.
- Ability of non-background students to handle the course even though the students have had 1800 hours of Chinese immersion studies from Year 6 to Year 10 and had been very successful in completing the senior Chinese course in Year 11.
- Unable to tell as work program has not been returned.

5. Do you believe that the Chinese Extension teacher received enough support in interpreting and implementing the syllabus?

- Has attended all QSA conferences. Learning manager (HOD) gave excellent support.
- Yes — able to attend all QSA conferences. Teacher is highly motivated to keep developing.
- School provided teacher extra time to find resources and to prepare assessment tasks.
- No. There has been a lack of support from QSA.

6. What lessons have you learnt at your school that could be useful to schools new to the syllabus when it is implemented statewide?

- Believe the subject will work well in any school with international students. Important for them to continue to develop their mother tongue. Numbers will grow in time as it has in Music Extension.
- It is important to clearly communicate the benefits of selecting Chinese Extension for Year 12 to Year 11 students who are background speakers.
- Non-background students will struggle with listening and speaking components of the course. Might damage their OP score.
- Nothing at this stage.

7. How important is Chinese Extension in your school curriculum?

- Very important to accommodate the needs of international students. Chinese is the strongest language offered in the school. German and Indonesian have been discontinued.
- It is critical. We are committed to meeting the needs of international students.
- Vital as Chinese Extension is an appropriate end point for the immersion program.
- Will be offering it again next year. Teacher is well respected by students doing Chinese.
8. Any other comments?

- Our goal is to be a Language School of Excellence.
- The principal of the school involved in the Chinese immersion program expressed a concern about the “small group” calculations for OP. He believed that even though his students have worked extremely hard to come to grips with this subject especially in the listening and speaking aspects of the course, it is highly unlikely that Chinese Extension will make a significant contribution to any OP score of any student in the group, even if they score a VHA for the subject. He believes that the Z score for Chinese Extension is likely to be significantly lower than that of other extension subjects as it contains a large number of ESL students who do not do well on QCS. His concern is that students in his school who have completed the senior Chinese in Year 11 are likely to pick up another subject in Year 12 that would be much easier and more likely to make a contribution to their OP. He suggested that for Chinese Extension you could have a “background speaking” small group and a “non-background speaking” small group for OP calculations. Otherwise the subject will have difficulty in surviving for non-background speaking students in his school.
STATE REVIEW PANEL CHAIR QUESTIONNAIRE — JULY 2011

1. What have you observed about the approved work programs?

The work programs that I have seen to date (two so far) have been fairly easy to approve provided the school followed the guidelines given by QSA.

2. What are the common difficulties in the work programs that are yet to be approved?

There are two schools yet to have work programs approved. I know that one school’s WP is with the State Panelists being reviewed. I think it is just getting the WP submitted in time that is causing a delay in the system.

3. What have been the main needs/requests for which schools are still seeking help?

More support in the form of workshops. As schools are designing assessments for the first time, it would have been good to have a sharing session to ensure the assessments meet the criteria.

4. What issues still need to be addressed to assist trial schools and teachers?

Shared expectations/understanding of the assessment criteria.

5. At monitoring, how appropriate were the assessment tasks used by schools?

Some schools were quite good and appropriate. However, there were others about which we were a little concerned — mainly on the type of questions asked in listening/reading assessments.

6. At monitoring, how effectively did teachers use the criteria stated in the syllabus on student work?

This is where I think there may have been misunderstanding/misinterpretations of criteria. Many of the State Panelists except for Cronos Chen do not teach the syllabus so how we interpret the criteria may be slightly different from the teachers. Overall, it was evident that the teachers were trying to use the criteria, hit and miss at times on the effectiveness.
7. Are there any assessment issues that need addressing?

One school has raised the question of having a meeting/workshop so that assessments prior to verification can be discussed to ensure that the listening/reading questions are appropriate.

8. What changes, if any, need to be made to the syllabus before it proceeds to general implementation?

None

9. Do you see Chinese Extension becoming more popular with other schools when it goes to general implementation?

Whether the Chinese Extension syllabus is taken up by a school depends on the background of the students and the background of the teacher. It is a more challenging syllabus.

10. Any other comments? Nil
FEEDBACK ABOUT THE SYLLABUS

1. What do you consider are the strengths of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

   The strengths of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus lie in:
   a) its underpinning rationale, which reflects the widely accepted theories on second/foreign
      language teaching and learning
   b) the opportunities that it provides for students to achieve an advanced level of proficiency in
      Chinese.

2. What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

   I cannot perceive any weakness from reading the trial Chinese Extension syllabus. However, it
   is my impression that this syllabus may be very challenging for teachers and students whose
   native and heritage language is not Chinese.

3. The syllabus states on page 3:

   By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to communicate in Chinese at an advanced level of proficiency, in accordance with the exit standards. This will be evident through the depth and breadth of language use —
   the range of language and expressions used and the versatility, adaptability and
   spontaneity of language use.

   (i) From your experience, do you believe that this goal is achievable?

       Yes, I do believe this goal is achievable. From the students’ work presented for the
       monitoring, I do think it is possible for students to communicate in Chinese at an advanced
       level of proficiency.

   (ii) What needs to be done at the school level to ensure that this goal is reached?

       To ensure this goal is reached, schools probably need to have competent teachers who are
       confident of handling authentic Chinese texts of various styles, contents and modes. They also
       need to provide adequate resources, e.g. making Chinese books and movies available to
       students and offering students access to online Chinese resources. They can also help their
       students to achieve this goal by creating more opportunities for students to interact with
       Chinese native speakers, for example, inviting native Chinese speakers to class physically or
       via the internet, and organising study tours in China or places where Chinese is spoken.
4. How well do you believe a first/second year teacher would handle this trial syllabus? Please comment on possible strengths and weaknesses of these teachers.

I think experience is not very relevant to the competence of handling this trial syllabus. It seems to me that teachers’ creativity, knowledge of the subject and teaching skills are more important.

5. The current Chinese Extension teacher may need to be replaced during the year. How well do you believe the replacement teacher would handle teaching from this trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

It would be challenging for the replacement teacher to keep the teaching consistent. How well they could handle the teaching will greatly depend on their understanding of the syllabus, their dedication to the work and their knowledge of the subject.

6. The objectives of the syllabus are grouped under DIMENSIONS. Is this an appropriate way of stating the objectives of a language syllabus?

It seems appropriate to me to state the objectiveness of this syllabus under dimensions. It provides clear indication of the knowledge and abilities that this syllabus expects the students to achieve.

7. Are the four organising principles stated in the syllabus, namely, “linguistic development, socio-cultural context, intercultural understanding and language in use — literary and non-literary text types” appropriate for a Chinese Extension course of study?

Definitely. The four principles reflect recent common understandings in the field of foreign/second language teaching and learning. It is appropriate and essential to adopt these four principals in Chinese Extension courses, as I believe they are able to provide necessary guidance for Chinese language teachers to develop their students’ communicative competence in Chinese. Without these principles, we will run the risks of unbalanced development of students’ Chinese language communicative capacities, caused by inadequate training and personal preferences that teachers may have.

8. The syllabus states that the inquiry approach should underpin the teaching and learning of the subject. Would you comment on using this approach with Chinese Extension students.

I do agree that the inquiry approach should be adopted for the teaching and learning of Chinese Extension, as I believe this approach will facilitate a deeper engagement by students with Chinese. The inquiry approach will make Chinese learning meaningful and relevant to students. It creates a sense of “utilising” the language, not only passively “learning” it. Students are more likely to be motivated to learn.

9. Are there adequate resources available to assist with the delivery of this syllabus?

Yes, there are adequate resources available online to assist with the delivery of this syllabus, in addition to materials in traditional forms. I would expect that the problem would not be the lack of resources but the demand on teachers in terms of the time and language competence required for the selection of appropriate materials.
10. Are the assessment techniques suggested in this syllabus appropriate?

Yes, I think the assessment techniques are appropriate for testing students’ communicative competence in Chinese. I appreciate that the trial syllabus has taken all possible aspects into consideration to ensure that the assessments are focused, balanced and fair.

11. Are the number of tasks required for monitoring and verification appropriate?

One response in each mode for monitoring and two responses in each mode for verification seem appropriate and practical to me.

12. Could you please comment on the complexities for teachers in developing assessment tasks and criteria sheets that meet the needs of the syllabus.

It is my impression that it may be challenging for teachers to develop appropriate assessment tasks and criteria sheets. First of all, teachers may have different interpretations of the assessment principles and techniques, due to their own experience and training backgrounds. Secondly, there are various aspects to be taken into account. For example, to develop an appropriate listening assessment task, teachers need to determine the aims and objectives of the assessment and to select appropriate texts (considering their complexity, authenticity, length, style, content and delivery mode), which may not be as easy as it seems to be. Thirdly, teachers’ own proficiency levels in Chinese may also affect the quality and implementation of the assessment tasks.

13. How easy will it be for Chinese Extension teachers to understand and use the standards matrix on student work?

The standards matrix seems easy to understand. But the problem may lie in the possibly different interpretations of terms such as “effective”, “skillful” and “competent”. Teachers may have different standards for what could be rated as “effective” or “competent”. An “A” marked by a teacher who is a native or native-like speaker of Chinese may not be the same as the “A” given by a teacher who is not a competent Chinese speaker.

14. How well does Chinese Extension prepare students for any language course/s at your institution? Could you identify some of these courses?

Students who successfully complete Chinese Extension will be able to take up courses open to Chinese native speakers at Griffith University, such as Business Chinese and Chinese-English Written Communication, which will prepare them to work and communicate competently in Chinese in the workplace. Students who successfully complete Chinese Extension will also be more likely to do well in the HSK tests and have the opportunity to conduct their tertiary education in Chinese in China or other areas where Chinese is spoken.
15. If continuing teachers wanted to update their knowledge of teaching Chinese Extension, what course(s) at your institution would you recommend to them?

At this stage, there are no appropriate courses available for these teachers at Griffith University. In the near future, continuing teachers may find courses helpful to them at the Confucius Institute at Griffith University.

16. Any other comments on this trial syllabus and its implementation?

This trial syllabus is well devised and offers clear guidance on the teaching and learning of advanced Chinese language courses. The success of its implementation requires highly qualified teachers and devoted students. Care needs to be taken when monitoring the quality of teaching across schools.
These are Julia Han’s comments after attending the monitoring meeting.

1) First of all, I would say that the students who have been using the Extension (the trial syllabus) have demonstrated sound abilities in using complex and sophisticated Chinese to convey meanings and complex tasks. They used a wide range of vocabulary and idioms in their writing. And the structures, grammar and words seemed to be appropriate. They also have shown a good understanding of the historical events and cultural information covered by their teaching materials. I was impressed by some of the work presented by the students. I think some of the students have obtained such a high proficiency level that they will be able to conduct tertiary learning in Chinese. It is my impression that if they want to continue their Chinese study at university level, they will be able to do courses designed for Chinese background speakers. But as I did not see the texts used for the listening and reading tasks, I find it difficult to make comments on students’ listening and reading skills.

2) Disparities have been found between students. Students whose heritage language is Chinese showed a better control of the language than those who do not have Chinese as their heritage language, especially regarding pronunciation and spontaneity.
EVALUATION OF THE
TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN
CHINESE EXTENSION

PROGRESS REPORT 3

Telephone Interview with Manager of the Queensland LOTE Centre
August 2011

Prepared for the
Languages Learning Area Reference Committee
Queensland Studies Authority, Queensland.

Ian Crabb, Ruth Peckman
Estelle Crabb

Evaluators for Trial Senior Syllabus in Chinese Extension

September 2011
TELEPHONE INTERVIEW WITH TAMARA ROMANS — AUGUST 2011

1. Why has the development of a Chinese Extension Senior Syllabus been important?

- Commonwealth Government in 2007 made a commitment to the study of four Asian languages which were Japanese, Korean, Indonesian and Chinese.
- States and Territories were given money and some set targets which included the number of students exiting Year 12 with one of those languages.
- Plan had to be approved by Canberra. Queensland did a needs analysis and those results showed that Japanese should maintain status quo. There was a real need to grow Mandarin Chinese.
- One method of getting the level of proficiency needed was to develop accelerated or immersion programs. An immersion program in Chinese was developed at Varsity College.
- Historically, where we had an immersion program there was an extension program to complete their studies. This practice was to acknowledge the level they had achieved.

2. What involvement have you had in the development of this trial syllabus?

- Put forward the idea. Needed approval of QSA. It was DEET funding.
- Memorandum of understanding developed with QSA.
- Ensured that QSA understood the challenges associated with the development of this syllabus as this extension syllabus was different to other extension programs. In Chinese Extension, they were dealing with a native speaker component outside of the immersion students. There was not a background speaker syllabus such as New South Wales and Victoria have. Structure and design of syllabus had to be different from other extension syllabi.

3. What are the strengths of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

- Existence. Gives students the opportunity to display their skills.
- Students should be given the opportunity to reach a level above senior Chinese.

4. What concerns do you have about the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

- Concern with implementation. Timeline is a concern.
- Resources. QSA contract was to develop syllabus and resources. Resources are to be developed by October/November this year.
- Teachers need to understand the meaning of the syllabus.
- Need to be aware that it is a trial syllabus and will develop.
- Should cater for background and non-background students.
- This syllabus requires students to make meaning of the language.
- Teachers need special professional development. Chinese Extension is different from other languages.
- Non-background speaking students should not be compared with background speakers in class. They should be marked against the stated criteria.
5. What feedback have you received from the trial schools about the syllabus and its implementation?
   • Concern about small group calculations.

6. Can you suggest any changes to the trial syllabus?
   • Nil

7. Lack of adequate resources has been a concern for some trial schools. How do you believe that this concern can be handled better if this syllabus was to proceed to general implementation?
   • QSA is to develop a set of resources for this subject.

8. Any other comments?
   • QSA has assured me that small group calculations will be OK.
   • This subject should cater for our local students doing the subject not just for fee-paying students.
   • Extension Chinese aligned to senior Chinese. Students should be marked against criteria. Local students should be given every opportunity.
APPENDIX 2: INSTRUMENTS
# EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

## ADMINISTRATIVE SURVEY 1 — FEBRUARY 2011

Name of School:

Principal’s Name:

School Phone Number  Fax Number:

Name of Head of Language Department:______________________________

Email of HOD ________________________________

Phone number of HOD staffroom ________________________________

Name of Year 12 Chinese Extension Teacher(s) ______________________

Email of Chinese Extension teacher ________________________________

Phone number of Chinese Extension teacher’s staffroom ______________

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PLEASE FAX RETURN BY WEDNESDAY 9th MARCH 2011

FAX: 02 6676 0070
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

TEACHERS CONFERENCE — MARCH 2011

Could you please assist us by answering the following questions.

Question 1
Could you provide us the following details on the students in your Chinese Extension class.
* Number of students in your class
* Number of students who have completed a Chinese immersion in Years 8 to 10
* Number of students in your class who would be classed as a “background speaker”
* Number of students in your class who would be classed as a “heritage speaker”

Question 2
As a Chinese Extension teacher, what has impressed you in the trial Chinese Extension syllabus document? (Please be concise)

Question 3
What concerns do you have at this stage with the trial Chinese Extension syllabus? (Please be concise)

Question 4
What concerns do you have at this stage with implementing the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Dear Student,

It is important that the Queensland Studies Authority finds out information about Year 12 students taking Chinese Extension in 2011. This questionnaire asks a few questions about you. Please answer them as best you can. If you have any difficulties about the items in the questionnaire, please ask your teacher. Ignore the small numbers throughout the questionnaire as they are used in the analysis of your responses.

Thank you for your assistance.

Ian Crabb
Evaluator for Chinese Extension

Please tick the appropriate box or insert the information as requested.

1. NAME OF SCHOOL:

2. GENDER: Male ☐ Female ☐

3. SUBJECTS STUDIED IN YEAR 11 IN 2010

Please tick the box if you studied the subject in Year 11 and tick the rating you obtained for the subject at the end of 2010.

☐ English ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ English Communication ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ Other English subject
   Please specify: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ Mathematics A ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ Mathematics B ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ Mathematics C ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ Other mathematics subject
   Please specify: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

☐ I did not study mathematics in 2010. (Please turn the page)
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study of Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Earth Science</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any other subjects?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please specify:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. REASONS FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

Please tick the box if this was a reason why you chose to take Chinese Extension at the beginning of Year 12. You may tick more than one box.

REASONS FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

1. [ ] You did well in Year 11 Chinese.
2. [ ] You expect to do well in Chinese Extension
3. [ ] You wanted to improve your ability to write in Chinese.
4. [ ] You believed it would help you to get a high OP score.
5. [ ] You wanted to be with your friends.
6. [ ] You liked the teacher taking Chinese Extension.
7. [ ] Your parents wanted you to take Chinese Extension.
8. [ ] It was the best subject available on the subject choice line.
9. [ ] You thought it would be an easy subject.
10. [ ] You thought it would improve your chances of getting a job.
11. [ ] You thought it would be useful or needed in a future job.
12. [ ] You thought it may help you do a related course at tertiary level.
13. [ ] Any other reason? Please specify:

............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................

5. MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR TAKING CHINESE EXTENSION

Which of the reasons in Question 4 was the MOST important reason why you chose to do Chinese Extension?

Place the number in the box. [ ]

6. Do you hope to use what you are learning and the skills you are developing in Chinese Extension in a future career?

[ ] Yes      What career do you hope to enter? _______________________

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure
7. We would like to know why other students in your Year 11 Chinese class in 2010 did not wish to study Chinese Extension in 2011.

Select from the reasons below. You may tick more than one box.

a. ☐ Not interested in doing an additional language subject.
b. ☐ Did not like the description of the course which was provided.
c. ☐ Were advised against taking Chinese Extension.
d. ☐ Did not like the Chinese Extension teacher.
e. ☐ Needed to do other subjects to get a high OP score.
f. ☐ Needed to do other subjects to gain entrance to some Tertiary courses.
g. ☐ Did not have the ability for this subject.
h. ☐ Friends not doing it.
i. ☐ Timetable clash with another subject.
j. ☐ Needed to do other subjects for job reasons.
k. ☐ Any other reason? Please specify.

8. A background speaker is defined in Chinese Extension as follows:

A background speaker is a person who has been born, raised and lived in an environment where the language is a major language of communication. They have had sustained formal education in that language and speak and write that language at home and/or outside the classroom in a sustained manner with other background speakers for purpose of communication.

Are you a background speaker of Chinese?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

TEACHER TELEPHONE INTERVIEW 1 — MAY 2011

1. NAME OF SCHOOL: ____________________________________________

TEACHER BACKGROUND

2. GENDER: Female □ Male □

3. How many years have you been teaching? (Include 2011 as one year)
   1 year □ 2 years □ 3–5 years □ 6–9 years □ 10 or more years □

4. How many years have you taught Chinese? (Include 2011 as one year)
   1 year □ 2 years □ 3 years □ 4 years or more □

5. Did you cover Chinese in your pre-service education? YES NO

6. Are you a “background speaker” of Chinese? YES NO
   (Use definition of a background speaker from the syllabus)

7. In what other subject areas are you currently teaching?

8. What tertiary courses have you completed?

9. Are you currently enrolled in a tertiary course? YES NO
   If yes, what course?
ASSISTANCE

10. The following list has been identified as possible sources of assistance in teaching Chinese Extension. Tick each source of assistance you have used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Queensland Studies Authority/Senior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. State Panel Chair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Teachers at other schools teaching Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Another teacher who is a background speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Another Chinese teacher on State Panel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Please indicate whether you need assistance in the following areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>High priority</th>
<th>Low priority</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Understanding the Dimensions outlined in the syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Designing appropriate units of work in the Areas of Study outlined in the syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Finding resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Developing course overview</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Developing appropriate learning experiences for the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Developing an appropriate inquiry-based style of teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Developing assessment instruments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Demonstrating increasing complexity in Year 12 assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Making judgments about student assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Writing task-specific criteria sheets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WORK PROGRAM

12. At what stage is your work program? (Tick one box only)

☐ Accredited ☐ Submitted but no feedback yet ☐ Not yet submitted
☐ Being revised
What revision was required?____________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

13. Did you encounter any difficulties writing your work program? YES NO
If yes, what difficulties
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

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14. Did you have any assistance outside of your school in writing your Chinese Extension work program?  
YES    NO    If yes, who assisted you?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**THE CHINESE EXTENSION PROGRAM**

15. From your perspective, how well is your Chinese Extension program going?  

Very Well    Well    Satisfactory    Unsatisfactory

Any comments:__________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

16. What do you consider is going well or is enjoyable? ________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17. Do you feel proficient teaching Chinese Extension with a student inquiry approach?  

YES    NO

Comments:____________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18. What problems have you encountered in teaching the trial syllabus in Chinese Extension?  
Consider teaching strategies, student inquiry approach, composite classes, teachers’ expertise or confidence, student motivation and resources.

19. Do you anticipate any other problems developing in implementing your course?  

YES    NO

If so, what are your concerns?
________________________________________________________________________
STUDENTS

20. What has been the general reaction of the students to the subject so far?

21. At this time, do you feel confident that a program based on the Trial Senior Syllabus for Chinese Extension will meet the needs of your students?

   YES   NO   UNSURE

Any comments?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT INTERVIEW 1 — JULY 2011

1. What have you observed about the quality of the Chinese Extension program operating at your school?

2. What have been the positive and negative reactions to this Chinese Extension program?
   Positive
   Negative
   Students
   Teacher
   Administration
   Parents
   Community

3. Have any of the following made the implementation of this subject difficult in your school?
   Staffing:
   Resources:
   Students:
   Other:

4. Are you satisfied with the standards achieved by the students in this new program?
   YES    NO    NOT SURE
   Comment:

5. Are you satisfied with the way the subject has been taught?
   Very Satisfied    Satisfied    Not Satisfied
   Comment:
6. What professional development has been offered to the teacher in your school to equip them for the teaching of the trial Chinese Extension program?

**WORK PROGRAMS**

7. Is your work program approved? Approved Not approved

8. What feedback have you received from State Panel?

9. Comment on the process of approval.

**SYLLABUS**

10. What do you like about the trial syllabus?

11. Did the syllabus assist sufficiently with writing your work program?
   
   Yes No
   Comment:

12. What difficulties have you found with the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

13. From your experiences so far, what changes should be made to the syllabus?

**OTHER ISSUES**

14. Are there any unresolved issues in implementing Senior Chinese Extension at your school?

15. Do you foresee any changes to the way Senior Chinese Extension is offered, promoted and taught in your school?

16. What lessons have been learnt at your school that could be useful to schools new to the syllabus when it is implemented statewide?

17. Any other comments?
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

TEACHER INTERVIEW 2 — JULY 2011

In July 2011, face-to-face interviews with the Chinese Extension teachers were conducted in the four trial schools.

STUDENTS

1. What has been the general reaction of the students to the subject so far?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. What problems have the students faced during the course?

3. From your perspective, how well is your Chinese Extension program going with Year 12 students?

| Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Less than satisfactory |

ASSESSMENT

1. How successful have assessment tasks been?

2(a) In the syllabus, how clear is the guidance provided on assessment techniques?

2(b) Do you have any suggestions that could improve the guidance provided on assessment techniques?

3. Are you satisfied now with interpreting the criteria for assessment tasks?

4. How confident are you in writing task specific criteria for assessment tasks?

5. Are you confident in applying the criteria to student work?

6. Do you have any suggestions that would improve the clarity of the “standards matrix”?

7. From monitoring, your school received feedback from State Panel on ways of improving your assessment. In what ways did these comments assist you?

8. Are there any other difficulties or comments associated with assessment?

9. Do you anticipate problems in determining the relative achievement of the Year 12 students at the end of the year?

YES  NO
PROGRAM

1. How have you enjoyed teaching the Trial Syllabus in Senior Chinese Extension?
   Very enjoyable   Enjoyable   Sometimes enjoyable   Not enjoyable

2. What has gone well in the teaching of Chinese Extension at your school?

3. What has not gone well?

4. Are there any unresolved difficulties in the teaching of Senior Chinese Extension?

5. How effectively have you used the inquiry process in the delivery of Chinese Extension?
   Very effectively   Effectively   Hardly effectively   Not at all
   Any comments?

6. What suggestions can you make that would enhance the teaching of Chinese Extension in your situation?

7. Do you have any concerns about your background or proficiency in teaching Chinese Extension?
   No   Yes

SYLLABUS

1. What do you like about the trial syllabus?

2. Did the syllabus assist you sufficiently with writing your work program?
   Yes   No   Not Sure

3. What difficulties have you found with the trial syllabus?

4. Are you satisfied with the way the objectives of the syllabus are grouped under 3 Dimensions?
   Yes   No
   Comments?

5. Are the language requirements of the trial syllabus appropriate for Year 12 Chinese Extension students?
   YES   No   Do not know

6. From your experiences so far, what changes should be made to the syllabus?
WORK PROGRAM

1. Is your work program approved?

2. What feedback have you received from State Panel?

3. What comments do you have on the process of approval?

RESOURCES

1. Do you currently have enough resources to support your program?

2. Have there been particular aspects of the course for which it has been difficult to find or develop resources?

3a. What are the most useful commercial resources you have used?

3b. What community/other resources did you find helpful in delivering your program?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS
Evaluation of the Trial Senior Syllabus in Chinese Extension

Group Interview with Year 12 Students — July 2011

Q 1 What aspects of this subject have you enjoyed?

Q 2 What aspects have disappointed you?

Q 3 What are the benefits of doing this subject?

Q 4 During your Chinese Extension studies, how much time was spent working by yourself or with other students on a task?
   Most of the time    Some of the time    Not often    Never

Q 5 What is your opinion of the assessment in this subject?
   a. Variety of tasks
   b. Amount of assessment
   c. Timing of assessment
   d. Degree of difficulty of assessment

Q 6a Do you understand the criteria for each assessment task?

Q 6b Do you receive sufficient feedback about your performance in class as well as on assessment tasks?

Q 7 What have you found most challenging about the Chinese Extension course?

Q 8 Any other comments?
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

ADMINISTRATION INTERVIEW — JULY 2011

1. What have been the positive and negative reactions to Chinese Extension by:

   Positive                                  Negative

   Students

   Teachers

   Administration

   Parents

   General community

2. Are you satisfied with the way the subject is being taught?

3. What were the difficulties of implementing Chinese Extension at your school?

4. What, if any, are the unresolved issues with regard to offering Chinese Extension?

5. Do you believe that the Chinese Extension teacher received enough support in interpreting and implementing the syllabus?

6. What lessons have you learnt at your school that could be useful to schools new to the syllabus when it is implemented statewide?

7. How important is Chinese Extension in your school curriculum?

8. Any other comments?
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

STATE REVIEW PANEL CHAIR QUESTIONNAIRE — JULY 2011

1. What have you observed about the approved work programs?

2. What are the common difficulties in the work programs that are yet to be approved?

3. What have been the main needs/requests for which schools are still seeking help?

4. What issues still need to be addressed to assist trial schools and teachers?

5. At monitoring, how appropriate were the assessment tasks used by schools?

6. At monitoring, how effectively did teachers use the criteria stated in the syllabus on student work?

7. Are there any assessment issues that need addressing?

8. What changes, if any, need to be made to the syllabus before it proceeds to general implementation?

9. Do you see Chinese Extension becoming more popular with other schools when it goes to general implementation.

10. Any other comments?
EVALUATION OF THE TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS IN CHINESE EXTENSION

CONSULTANT QUESTIONNAIRE — JULY 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Name:

2. Organisation:

3. Position within the organisation:

FEEDBACK ABOUT THE SYLLABUS

1. What do you consider are the strengths of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

2. What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

3. The syllabus states on page 3:
   By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to communicate in Chinese at an advanced level of proficiency, in accordance with the exit standards. This will be evident through the depth and breadth of language use — the range of language and expressions used and the versatility, adaptability and spontaneity of language use.
   (i) From your experience, do you believe that this goal is achievable?
   (ii) What needs to be done at the school level to ensure that this goal is reached?

4. How well do you believe a first/second year teacher would handle this trial syllabus? Please comment on possible strengths and weaknesses of these teachers.

5. The current Chinese Extension teacher may need to be replaced during the year. How well do you believe the replacement teacher would handle teaching from this trial Chinese Extension syllabus?

6. The objectives of the syllabus are grouped under DIMENSIONS. Is this an appropriate way of stating the objectives of a language syllabus?
7. Are the four organising principles stated in the syllabus, namely, “linguistic development, sociocultural context, intercultural understanding and language in use — literary and non-literary text types” appropriate for a Chinese Extension course of study?

8. The syllabus states that the inquiry approach should underpin the teaching and learning of the subject. Would you comment on using this approach with Chinese Extension students?

9. Are there adequate resources available to assist with the delivery of this syllabus?

10. Are the assessment techniques suggested in this syllabus appropriate?

11. Are the number of tasks required for monitoring and verification appropriate?

12. Could you please comment on the complexities for teachers in developing assessment tasks and criteria sheets that meet the needs of the syllabus.

13. How easy will it be for Chinese Extension teachers to understand and use the standards matrix on student work?

14. How well does Chinese Extension prepare students for any language course/s at your institution? Could you identify some of these courses?

15. If continuing teachers wanted to update their knowledge of teaching Chinese Extension, what course(s) at your institution would you recommend to them?

16. Any other comments on this trial syllabus and its implementation?