

English for ESL learners Trial Syllabus

Final Evaluation Report

May 2010

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.

**EVALUATION OF THE
ENGLISH FOR ESL LEARNERS
TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS**

FINAL REPORT

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February 2010

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1. ABSTRACT – INTRODUCTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners – nature and origin of the syllabus

In November 2005 the QSA was approached by a representative of the Schools Working Party of the Queensland Education and Training Export Board, requesting the development of a syllabus in English as a Second Language for visa students wanting to meet OP requirements for tertiary entrance.

The P-12 Curriculum Committee considered this request at its meeting on 6 March 2006. As well as considering the viability of the syllabus in the suite of senior English syllabuses, the following aspects were noted and considered:

- Queensland at that point in time was the only state without an ESL syllabus;
- The syllabus would be developed for a specific group (market) of students;
- The need for the syllabus to be accepted by tertiary institutions;
- The nature of its criteria and standards; and
- A timeline for development.

The Committee agreed to recommend that an ESL syllabus for Years 11 and 12 students be developed. It was also agreed that work on the design of an ESL syllabus commence and a report on the possibilities be presented at the May 2006 P-12 Curriculum Committee.

The following points (notes of meetings) trace the development of the syllabus since that March 2006 meeting. This information was provided to the evaluator by the QSA's Manager, Syllabus Revision Unit in January 2008.

19 May 2006 The governing body asked that work on a design brief for the ESL syllabus commence for its consideration.

July 2006 A draft options paper, *Catering for English as a Second Language Students in Senior Secondary Schooling*, was developed. The following information has been taken from that draft:

Background

In 2005, 3315 students eligible for certification identified themselves as either a visa student, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or nominated that the language spoken at home was not English.

A number of teachers and academics argue that these students are disadvantaged by the nature of the senior English course. In their opinion, the underpinning assumptions that students enrolling in senior English have experience in, and a command of, the English language are a significant barrier to success for some students enrolling in senior English. They assert the disadvantage cannot be overcome by making alterations to the implementation for the senior English syllabus because the underlying assumptions are unaffected.

The intent of the English syllabus is clear:

... The subject English develops students' knowledge of how language typically works in the culture as well as of how language works in particular texts. At senior level, English involves the systematic study of language to build increased understanding of the relationships among texts, language, and literacies as social practices, with the emphasis on how these relationships help to make meaning in particular cultural contexts and social situations. Students develop their ability to use language to talk about language and about its use in texts. By studying texts, by learning and using language, students develop their capacities as literate members of Australian and global communities to participate actively in the worlds of work, study and leisure among other human pursuits (p1 English syllabus 2002)

Issues

Research suggests that students placed in traditional ESL and bilingual programs need 5-9 years of instruction before their academic scores are at the average level of native English-speaking students¹. If an authority ESL syllabus is developed, then schools can develop and implement a two year course of study that has been specifically developed to cater for the needs of ESL students.

The current senior English syllabus does acknowledge that ESL students have varied language and learning needs and require specific teaching and learning processes involved in students developing second language proficiency. The current arrangement for ESL students studying English in years 11 and 12 relies on the adaptation of an English syllabus that assumes English to be a first language or that the student has significant experience in studying the language.

ESL learners need specialist understanding and teaching². This includes attention to second language development and cultural understandings in the mainstream context, and also provision for cultural and social exclusivity in the curriculum.

A significant emphasis of the senior English syllabus is the development of understandings of how discourse, genre, register and textual features interact and are independent in texts, and how they are used in making meaning of, or producing readings from, texts. In the opinion of some teachers and academics, the barriers to achievement for students studying the senior English syllabus arise from difficulties ESL students experience in critically synthesising understandings of language features that are embedded in English culture.

20 August 2006

A paper outlining the design brief and criteria for student eligibility was presented to the P-12 Curriculum Committee and the preferred options discussed. The syllabus will have an English plus literacy focus rather than the critical emphasis in Queensland's current English syllabus. Other issues discussed/noted included:

¹ Collier, V (1995) *Promoting academic success for ESL students*, New Jersey Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages – Bilingual Education

² McKay, P (2000) *On ESL standards for school-age learners*, Language Testing, QUT, Australia

- perception of a similar rigour to Senior English is crucial to the subject's acceptance;
- standards acceptable for university entrance;
- usefulness of the course for helping learning in other subjects;
- need to be reliably comparable with other states that have ESL syllabuses;
- composite classes;
- eligibility requirements (see recommendation 2 below).

Recommendations:

1. It was agreed that the QSA develops, as an alternative to senior English, a senior English syllabus for ESL learners that focuses on English for academic study. The syllabus will include:

- a suitable scope to meet the needs of ESL students;
- a content to adequately prepare students for university;
- a focus on preparing students to meet the literacy demands of a range of subjects;
- assessment standards acceptable to universities for tertiary entrance;
- a similar rigour to the Queensland senior English syllabus.

2. It was agreed this alternative English subject be available, but not compulsory, for students who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- not more than a total of five years of full-time schooling where the medium of instruction is English;
- more than a total of five years of full-time schooling where the medium of instruction is English and whose knowledge of English is restricted (SA/NT guidelines); or
- are Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students from Indigenous communities in which Standard Australian English is not the first language of the local community (current senior English syllabus appendix).

3. It was agreed that when the current senior English syllabus is revised, the appendix undergo a major revision to provide more detailed guidance on developing courses that would meet the needs of students for whom English is not their first language.

10 November 2006 The design brief (revised) was presented. The syllabus will have a different focus from senior English. It will be a course to develop standard Australian English and be reflective of community use of language. The timeline is tight if a trial is to happen in 2007. Views expressed on the design brief included:

- Need to acknowledge the first languages of all speakers;
- Need to build understanding about language itself as a focus;
- Concern about staffing; shortage of ESL trained teachers and qualified senior English teachers;

- Confirmation that this will be an Authority subject (for the OP) and a viable alternative to senior English;
- These two subjects will be incompatible; schools may offer both, but students will choose only one to study at any one time.

It was agreed that the design brief for the development of a Senior English for ESL Learners Syllabus be recommended for approval.

15 March 2007

The syllabus was presented. The syllabus has a different focus from senior English. It will be a course to develop standard Australian English and be reflective of community use of language. The intention is to trial the syllabus with a small number of schools in 2008.

The syllabus was developed after researching national and international syllabuses. It has three categories of objectives and criteria, namely *Knowledge about language*, *Cognitive processes* and *Communication skills*. Work will be assessed using the established criteria and standards model, not holistic judgment.

A reference group of educators with expertise in English as a second language was consulted as well as the English SAC. The SAC's comments from its meeting on 12 March are:

- support for a registration form being completed by the principal so that the eligibility requirements for students undertaking the course are observed and can be monitored during the evaluation
- minor adjustment to the objectives is needed to place use of language into the *Communication skills* objective rather than in *Cognitive processes*
- use of oral language should be strengthened throughout the document including in the verification folio. ...

It was indicated that learning to suit Indigenous students should be more evident in learning experiences.

It was agreed that the above be attended to, and the Senior English for ESL Learners be recommended for approval to proceed to trial with Year 11 students in 2008.

On 23 April 2007 a QSA Memo to Schools invited schools to apply to be part of the trial of the English for ESL Learners syllabus.

A number of schools applied to join the trial and 35 were accepted. Of these four schools withdrew from the trial as from the beginning of 2008.

On 22 June 2007, the Assistant Manager, Product and Assessment Services Section of QTAC advised the QSA that ... *the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Forum has considered the recommendation of the QSA and accepted English for ESL Learners: Senior Syllabus as satisfying the English (4 SA) subject prerequisite for tertiary admission purposes at QTAC's member and participating institutions. This will come into effect with the commencement of the 2007 end of year admissions ...*

In 2009 a further two schools were approved to join the trial, with year 11 students only; however, only one, Djarragun College, commenced.

Amended syllabus (March 2009)

At the March 2009 English for ESL Learners teacher conference, teachers were presented with an amended version of the syllabus. The Manager, Senior Curriculum Development Unit, QSA outlined to the trial teachers the reasons for amending the syllabus at this time, pointing out contributing factors in the broader policy and curriculum agendas. Notes of her presentation follow:

- Implementation of QCE. This had shown that access to a variety of subjects is needed by a diverse group of students and that it was in the interests of a greater range of students that QSA have a further look at the English for ESL Learners syllabus.
- Tertiary entrance. While the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre had accepted this syllabus and will recognize it into Queensland universities, the situation may not be the same in other Universities in Australia. The Bradley review is overhauling Universities and TAFE colleges and that will have implications for how the wider nation views ESL syllabuses in Australia.
- Assessment Policy P-12. This had now been formulated and will be impacting on early, middle and senior years. While the senior years' policy is not altering things greatly, it needs to be kept under scrutiny.
- Updated senior syllabus framework. This has been updated to incorporate recent policy changes.
- Policy on Indigenous perspectives. In 2008 the QSA determined a policy on Indigenous perspectives. It is a priority of the Authority to support Indigenous education and this syllabus has been one of the main ones identified to support that initiative. Indigenous students have been identified as a key target group for this syllabus and the QSA must accommodate the diversity of students the syllabus needs to serve.
- Policy on special provisions. This policy area had been reviewed, particularly for senior assessment and Authority-registered subjects. It is available on the QSA website and was effective from January 2009. It is particularly important for this subject area.
- National curriculum. English is one of the areas identified. It is yet unknown whether there will be one syllabus to suit all students, or a variety. Debate is occurring around this. The standards that are set nationally will find their way into the senior assessment regimes and the QSA is looking to set up syllabuses that are as compatible as possible (as far as is possible) with the National Curriculum.
- Consistent terminology across suite of QSA English syllabuses. There is a drive for consistent terminology across the suite of QSA English syllabuses.
- Aspects identified for adjustment at conference 3, October 2008. The amended syllabus takes into account feedback from teachers.
- School interest. School interest has been considerable. It is important to enable schools with high Indigenous student populations to be able to access the document.

- Proposal for ESL guidelines P-10.

The Manager also outlined the implications for this trial, resulting from the syllabus amendment at this point of the trial. They were:

- Year 12 2009 students will exit on the current syllabus (October 2007) syllabus
- Year 11 2009 students commence on the amended March 2009 syllabus and exit on the amended syllabus in 2010
- Year 11 2010 students use amended March 2009 syllabus and exit on it in 2011.
- For work programs already submitted and approved, there is no requirement to change them; however schools can change their work program if they wish.
- Given that there will be more work programs coming in (new schools joining the trial), that some panellists have resigned and that some groups have been under-represented on the panel, the State Panel is being disbanded. The new panel will commence on 1 May 2009. Schools will be invited to ask teachers to apply. The Manager added that the current State Panel had done an excellent job and that the quality of advice at monitoring was excellent.
- The evaluator's second interim report (July 2009) and final report (February 2010) will help provide direction for further revision of the syllabus; and
- The revised syllabus will then be approved, likely for pilot, commencing with year 11 students in 2011 and finishing with year 12s in 2012.

1.1.2 Purpose of the evaluation and timelines

This report represents the final report of the evaluation of the English for ESL Learners Trial Senior Syllabus which has covered the period February 2008 – December 2009.

Over the period of the two-year trial, the syllabus evaluator was asked to consider the following aspects:

- the internal consistency of the components of the syllabus;
- the degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers;
- the suitability of the scope and depth of the syllabus requirements;
- the suitability of the sequencing of the subject matter required by the syllabus;
- the relevance of the subject to students;
- the appropriateness of the assessment requirements of the syllabus;
- the resources found to be useful in trial schools;
- the suitability of the criteria in the eligibility statement for determining students for whom the syllabus is intended to cater;
- the types of students undertaking the course;
- the qualifications and professional development for ESL teachers;
- the balance across a range of learning and assessment experiences (oral and written); and
- the development of appropriate standards for student achievement.

The evaluation of the Trial Senior Syllabus English for ESL Learners commenced on 1 February 2008 and has had the following reporting timeline:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| * Year 1 – July 2008 | First interim report |
| * Year 2 – July 2009 | Second interim report outlining recommendations |
| * Year 2 – November 2009 | Progress report |
| * February 2010 | Final report. |

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations arising from the evaluation of the English for ESL Learners trial, as shown below, draw on the findings outlined in both interim reports, the progress report (November 2009) and this final report.

1. Implications for English (2008) . That, given a possible movement away from this syllabus by some trial schools to the Trial English Syllabus (2008), and given the recommendation of the QSA's P-12 Curriculum Committee on 20 August 2006 (repeated below), the QSA consider ways that the Trial English Syllabus (2008) can be made appropriate to ESL Learners -

...when the current senior English syllabus is revised, the appendix undergo a major revision to provide more detailed guidance on developing courses that would meet the needs of students for whom English is not their first language.

2. The internal consistency of the components of the syllabus. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following suggestions, aimed at improving the internal consistency of the components of the syllabus, or making the consistency more evident, be considered:

- **General Objectives – Introductory section.** Include wording such as... *Elements of each of the categories of general objectives MAY appear in assessment instruments*, so that teachers realise that individual dimensions within each criterion can be assessed without the need to address all dimensions of the criterion in the one assessment instrument.
- **General objectives – introductory section.** Include the following words after the sentence *Knowledge about language, Cognitive skills and Communication skills are the three categories of assessable general objectives ...*

A student needs to obtain a standard C in two of the criteria associated with these general objectives, one of which must be in Communication skills, in order to obtain a Sound Achievement on exit - refer to Section 6.8, Determining exit levels of achievement.

- **Assessment – 6.7 Exit criteria and standards.** The final sentence in 6.7 Exit criteria and standards ... *each criterion is to make an equal contribution to the determination of exit levels of achievement ...* be changed as this is not the case.
- **General objectives – 3.1 Attitudes and values.** Add to the Attitudes and values general objectives the following objective which is also in English 2008 ... *Value the world in which they live and understand better the worlds of others.*
- **General objectives and Assessment – 6.7 Exit criteria** – Add a footnote to the stem of the Knowledge about language general objectives to indicate that the language features of this category of objectives primarily apply at the word, sentence and paragraph level; and add a footnote to the stem of the Communication skills category of objectives to indicate that these objectives relate more to language features such as audience, purpose and genre patterns ... or wording to that effect, which helps clarify the major differences between the applicability of these two categories of objectives. Similar statements should be added to Assessment, Section 6.7, Exit criteria.

- **Various sections of the syllabus – Indigenous perspectives.** If it is mandatory that schools embed Indigenous perspectives in their course of study (as opposed to these perspectives being optional), this requirement needs to be clearly stated in the syllabus, with Indigenous perspectives reflected in schools' work programs.

3. The degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following suggestions, aimed at improving the degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers, be considered:

- **Course organisation – organizing principles**

- the five organizing principles in the Course organisation section be adapted to reflect ESL teaching/learning principles and that, should an ESL language framework be developed to support this syllabus, links be made to elements within that framework;

- links be made between the five organising principles and other relevant sections of the syllabus;

- consideration be given to the appropriateness of adding 'and balance' to the organising principle, Range.

- **Course organisation – definition of subject matter**

- the definition of subject matter for the English for ESL Learners syllabus be included in the Course Organisation section of the syllabus; and

- if the term 'subject matter' is going to be used in any other context in this syllabus, then a second definition be provided that covers the context of that use, or an alternative term be used.

- **Course organisation – Language features**

- a Language features table be retained in the syllabus and that a framework be used for the table that reflects the hierarchical, constituted structure of language viz word (comprised of morphemes) → phrase → clause (finite and non-finite) → sentence → paragraph → whole text. (Consideration could be given to using the structure adopted in the QSA's Draft Scope and Sequence – Grammar – Years 1-9 document);

- the need to explicitly embed the teaching of language features, including grammar, throughout the two year course of study be emphasised strongly in the Course organisation section of the syllabus;

- schools be required to demonstrate in work programs how the language features are embedded throughout their two year course of study; and

- the sample work program on the QSA's website be enhanced to show the embedding of language features throughout the two year course of study.

- **Course organisation – Areas of study**

- include more specific advice in the syllabus about the required balance across the three areas of study;

- provide greater clarity/specificity about the range and balance of texts that must be incorporated into the two year course of study;

- include advice as to whether or not students are required to study any **complete** texts;

- given that research skills are one of three elements of language and texts that schools must give students opportunities to learn about within Language for academic learning, consideration be given to explicitly including research skills in the assessment criteria and standards; and

- include in the Course organisation section, a sub-section, Planning Steps, as in English (2008), but with the addition of the following step:

- * identify and incorporate relevant language features for each unit as a focus for teaching and learning.*

4. The relevance of the subject to students.

- That, in order to enhance the relevance of the subject to students, the Queensland Studies Authority continue to liaise with the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) in relation to acceptance of the subject, English for ESL Learners, for tertiary entrance purposes by all Australian Universities and that the QSA continue to advise schools of the progress in this regard.
- That consideration to be given to changing the name of the subject. Perhaps the name indicated by the National Curriculum Council in its preliminary work could be considered ... English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). (This is also the name used by the Curriculum Council of WA for its 2008 English for ESL syllabus.)

5. The appropriateness of the assessment requirements of the syllabus. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009):

- the verification requirements be no greater (in terms of required number of instruments) than those required for English (2008); and

- clarity be provided around how teachers should be assessing oral communications (refer to p29, 5.4).

6. Resources found to be useful in trial schools. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009):

- the resources list be broken into 'categories' of resources, to enhance readability; and
- a scan be undertaken of resources recommended in similar syllabuses in other States and Territories, with any appropriate resources included in the Resources list at the back of the syllabus and that the resources listed by the evaluator in her various reports throughout the trial also be considered for inclusion.

- resources identified as useful by trial teachers (and listed in the various evaluators' reports) be included in the Resources section.

7. The suitability of the criteria in the eligibility statement for determining students for whom the syllabus is intended to cater. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following changes be made to the eligibility statement:

- dispense with the term 'senior schooling', instead referring to 'year 11' in this particular circumstance; and
- either reword the statement or add some accompanying guidelines to it which:
 - help clarify what is meant by 'restricted' knowledge of English;
 - provide further advice about the eligibility of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students and/or include examples of the language backgrounds of some of the Indigenous students who are currently enrolled in the subject;
 - suggest that students who do not have a particular level of English proficiency on commencement (eg bandscale 5) **may not be suited to this subject due to the academic rigour of the subject.**

8. The qualifications and professional development for ESL teachers. That consideration be given to developing an ESL Language Framework, specifically designed to support teachers of English for ESL Learners, and that trial teachers with expertise in ESL teaching/learning principles be invited to assist with this task.

9. The development of appropriate standards for student achievement. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the standards associated with exit criteria be rewritten and that:

- verbal language features become a dimension in their own right within the Knowledge about language criterion;
- *research skills* constitute an explicit dimension in the assessment criteria; and
- terminology and other issues, as identified by trial teachers and outlined in the second interim report, progress report (November 2009) and this final report all be addressed.

2. TRIAL SCHOOLS

2.1 TRIAL SCHOOLS AND STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The trial schools and the number of students (including the number of visa students) who were enrolled in English for ESL Learners as at June 2009 are shown in Table 1. It should be noted that enrolment data for those schools highlighted (Cleveland District SHS and yr 12 data for Kelvin Grove State College) was not available through the QSA as at June 2009.

Table 1: Enrolment data - schools offering Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners, June 2009

Schools	Students enrolled in English for ESL Learners						
	Year 11			Year 12			Total
	F	M	TOTAL / NO. VISA STUDENTS	F	M	TOTAL / NO. VISA STUDENTS	TOTAL / NO. VISA STUDENTS
All Saints Anglican Sch	18	13	31 / 29	12	14	26 / 26	57 / 55
Centenary Heights SHS	-	-	-	8	6	14 / 14	24 / 14
Christian Outreach College, Bris.	7	15	22 / 13	7	8	15 / 10	37 / 23
Clayfield College	18	-	18 / 13	18	-	18 / 17	36 / 30
Cleveland District SHS							
Coorparoo Secondary Coll	6	1	7 / 2	3	5	8 / 0	15 / 2
Corpus Christi College	15	-	15 / 11	9	-	9 / 5	24 / 16
Djarragun College	10	2	12 / 0	-	-	-	12 / 0
Forest Lake College	12	15	27 / 26	14	19	33 / 31	60 / 57
Forest Lake SHS	5	7	12 / 0	7	9	16 / 1	28 / 1
Gordonvale SHS	4	3	7 / 0	4	3	7 / 0	14 / 0
Hills International Coll	9	33	42 / 42	8	14	22 / 21	64 / 63
Indooroopilly SHS	11	20	31 / 24	12	25	37 / 27	68 / 51
Kelvin Grove State Coll	10	10	20				
Merrimac SHS	11	3	14 / 8	14	11	25 / 20	39 / 28
Mitchelton SHS	4	9	13 / 11	5	15	20 / 16	33 / 27
Mount Gravatt SHS	17	16	33 / 29	6	12	18 / 16	51 / 45
Mueller College	4	4	8 / 8	5	4	9 / 9	17 / 17
St James College	14	41	55 / 47	16	23	39 / 33	94 / 80
St Joseph's Nudgee Coll	-	30	30 / 28	-	25	25 / 21	55 / 49
St Margaret's Anglican Girls Sch	-	-	-	14	-	14 / 12	14 / 12
St Paul's School	18	28	46 / 45	13	6	19 / 15	65 / 60
St Stephen's College	7	9	16 / 14	-	-	-	16 / 14
St Ursula's College T'wmba	2	-	2 / 2	7	-	7 / 6	9 / 8
Tagai State Coll (Thursday Is)	10	1	11 / 0	7	9	16 / 0	27 / 0
The Cathedral School	5	8	13 / 10	5	9	14 / 12	27 / 22
The Glennie School	5	-	5 / 1	5	-	5 / 4	10 / 5
The Scots PGC College	-	-	-	-	4 / 2	-	4 / 2
The Southport School	-	10	10 / 8	-	13	13 / 11	23 / 19
West Moreton Anglican Coll	6	5	11 / 11	10	5	15 / 14	26 / 25
Whites Hill State Coll	9	8	17 / 11	6	2	8 / 1	25 / 12
Woodridge SHS	8	10	18 / 0	9	10	19 / 0	37 / 0
Yeronga SHS	25	14	39 / 8	12	12	24 / 3	63 / 11
TOTALS	270	315	585/401	240	263	495/345	1074/748

From table 1, it can be seen that, as at June, second year of trial:

- There were about 90 more students enrolled in year 11 than in year 12;
- Approximately 70% of the students enrolled in the subject were visa students;
- Enrolments from the three schools with mainly Indigenous students undertaking the subject (Djarragun College, Gordonvale SHS and Tagai College), accounted for about 5% of the total enrolment;
- Approximately 47.5% of the students enrolled in the subject were female;
- Numbers of students enrolled at the trial schools ranged from four to 94 students at the school with the highest enrolments;
- There were 14 government schools in the trial and 18 non-government schools, including the school that joined the trial for the first time in 2009;
- Within the non-government schools there was a mix of Catholic and Independent schools - some were all girls' schools, some all boys' schools, with the remainder being co-educational schools.
- There was a mix of metropolitan and regional schools in the trial.

Djarragun College joined the trial in 2009 with year 11 students only.

There were three schools that joined the trial in 2008 that were not offering the subject to year 11 students in 2009 viz Centenary Heights SHS, St Margaret's Anglican Girls School and The Scots PGC College.

2.2 NUMBER OF CLASSES AT EACH TRIAL SCHOOL, 2009

Table 2 shows the number of classes at each trial school in year 11 and 12, 2009. It can be seen from this table that:

- one school (the school with 55 enrolments in year 11 in 2009) had three classes of year 11 students and 2 classes of year 12 students;
- seven schools had two classes of year 11 students; and
- six schools had two classes of year 12 students.

One school with ten enrolments over years 11 and 12 had a composite year 11-12 class.

Table 2: Number of classes at each trial school in year 11 and 12 - 2009

School	Yr 11	Yr 12
All Saints Anglican School	2	2
Centenary Heights SHS	-	1
Christian Outreach College, Bris.	1	1
Clayfield College	1	1
Cleveland District SHS	1	1
Coorparoo Secondary College	1	1
Corpus Christi College	1	1
Djarragun College	1	-
Forest Lake College	1	2
Forest Lake SHS	1	1
Gordonvale SHS	1	1
Hills International College	2	1
Indooroopilly SHS	2	2
Kelvin Grove State College	1	1
Merrimac SHS	1	1
Mitchelton SHS	1	1
Mount Gravatt SHS	2	1
Mueller College	1	1
St James College	3	2
St Joseph's Nudgee College	2	2
St Margaret's Anglican Girls Sch	-	1
St Paul's School	2	2
St Stephen's College	1	-
St Ursula's College Toowoomba	1	1
Tagai State College (Thursday Is)	1	1
The Cathedral School	1	1
The Glennie School	1**	1**
The Scots PGC College	-	1*
The Southport School	1	1
West Moreton Anglican College	1	1
Whites Hill State College	1	1
Woodridge SHS	1	1
Yeronga SHS	2	1

* Combined English for ESL Learners and English Communication class

** Composite year 11 - 12 class.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 CONCEPTUAL MODEL/Framework – AN OVERVIEW

The Contingency-Congruency Model of curriculum evaluation, developed by Stake³, formed the conceptual framework/model for this evaluation. The three basic types of information gathered in the Contingency-Congruency Model, with examples adapted to suit this particular evaluation, are described below:

- antecedents – information regarding factors in the educational environment that exist prior to the program and which may affect outcomes such as student and teacher characteristics, resources and the broader environment;
- transactions – information relevant to the process of implementation, including the work program, the program in schools, school/environment characteristics, availability of resources, etc;
- outcomes – information regarding both short and long-term ‘products’ or outcomes, including outcomes of all aspects to be considered over the two year evaluation, as indicated in section 1.2 of this report.

Stake’s model examines what was *intended* and what was *actually observed*. One of the main strengths of this model is that it deliberately seeks judgements regarding the value or worth of various aspects of the phases from a wide range of stakeholders. The approach adopted, and its application to this evaluation, is summarised in Table 3. The first column indicates the type of information gathered, as per the Contingency-Congruency Model; the centre column describes those aspects/issues addressed throughout the evaluation of the trial; and the right-hand column indicates the sections of each of the evaluation reports in which some/all aspects identified in the middle column were addressed.

This first interim report focused primarily on the ‘antecedents’ component of the Contingency-Congruency model but also touched on those aspects of ‘transactions’ that were applicable to the first semester of implementation of the trial syllabus. The second interim report focused primarily on the ‘transactions’ and ‘outcomes’ phases and the final report has an outcomes focus.

Table 3: The overarching evaluation framework – an adaptation of the Contingency-Congruency Model

Information to be gathered	Aspects/issues addressed	Section in 1 st interim report	Section in 2 nd interim report	Section in final report
Antecedents	* The Senior Trial Syllabus in English for ESL Learners			
	- History and nature of the Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners	1.1.1	1.1.1	1.1.1
	- Trial schools, student numbers and number of classes	2	2	2
	* Teachers’ entering characteristics and views	4.1		

³ Heron, L – ‘Integrating Technology into Canadian Adult Literacy Programs: Curriculum Evaluation Considerations’, 2000

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Teaching experience and subjects currently teaching - Completed tertiary qualifications - Teachers' views about level of clarity of syllabus in conveying its intentions - Types of assistance teachers indicated needed by them to implement syllabus effectively - Views as to why students have chosen English for ESL Learners - Eligibility statement <p>* Students' entering characteristics and views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - OP-eligibility - First language - Student type - Other subjects being studied - Reasons for taking English for ESL Learners, including most important reason - Views about English for ESL Learners, core areas of study and teaching/learning resources - Plans after year 12 <p>* Views of school administrators about English for ESL Learners</p> <p>* The broader environment – issues of relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revision of current senior English syllabus and comparison of requirements for verification folios – QSA - ESL syllabuses in other States/Territories - Employability skills framework - Report commissioned by the QSA – <i>Development of a set of principles to guide a P-12 syllabus framework</i>, January 2008 - Issues identified by the Manager, Senior Curriculum Unit, QSA – March 2009 - English for ESL Learners and tertiary entrance - National Curriculum 	<p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.2.1</p> <p>4.2.2</p> <p>4.2.3</p>		<p>4.2.1</p> <p>4.2.2</p>
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Transactions	<p>* The syllabus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The internal consistency of the components of the syllabus; 5.2 5.2 - The degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers; 5.3 5.3 - The suitability of the scope and depth of the syllabus requirements; 5.4 5.4 - The suitability of the sequencing of the subject matter required by the syllabus; 5.5 5.5 - The relevance of the subject to students; 5.6 5.6 5.1 - The appropriateness of the assessment requirements of the syllabus; 5.7 5.7 5.2 - The resources found to be useful in trial schools; 5.8 5.8 5.3 - The suitability of the criteria in the eligibility statement for determining students for whom the syllabus is intended to cater; 5.9 5.9 - The types of students undertaking the course; 5.10 5.10 - The qualifications and professional development for ESL teachers; 5.11 5.11 - The balance across a range of learning and assessment experiences (oral and written); and 5.12 5.12 - The development of appropriate standards for student achievement. 5.13 5.13 5.4 			
Outcomes	* Review and synthesis of all data and determination of aspects that require review –interim recommendations	5 and 1.2	5 and 1.2	6 and 1.2

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGIES

The specific strategies used in this evaluation are outlined below. Through the range of strategies adopted, triangulation⁴ of results has been achieved.

a. **Evaluation Committee meetings.** The evaluator convened the first meeting of the English for ESL Learners Evaluation Committee on 13 February 2008. The minutes of this meeting were appended to the first interim report as Appendix A. The evaluator convened a second meeting of the Evaluation Committee on 11 February 2009. The minutes of this meeting were appended to the second interim report – Appendix A.

b. **Observation at teacher conferences.** The evaluator attended four teacher conferences – February 2008, October 2008, March 2009 and October 2009. The focus of the February 2008 conference was primarily on work program development; however there

⁴ Triangulation – a measurement term that is key to program evaluations and needs assessments. It represents the idea that three different models or methods of assessment should be utilized in order to have a valid product.

were also sessions on assessment (principles of assessment, criteria sheets, devising instruments and sharing assessment instruments), sharing units of work and a guest speaker presentation on 'A paradigm for teaching English for ESL Learners'. The focus of the October 2008 teacher conference was on feedback on work programs and preparation for monitoring. The focus of the March 2009 teacher conference was on feedback from monitoring and preparation for October verification. There was also a guest speaker presentation at this conference on Indigenous perspectives. The focus of the October 2009 was on verification. **Appendix B** to this report represents notes of teachers' comments from a workshop run by the evaluator at this conference. **Appendix D** is a copy of the task asked of teachers in this workshop session.

c. **Surveying trial teachers.** The evaluator administered four teacher surveys, one at each of the teacher conferences. A summary of responses to the first teacher survey was included as Appendix B in the first interim report. Summaries of the responses to the teacher surveys administered at the October 2008 and March 2009 teacher conferences were included in the second interim report – Appendices B, C and J and the responses to the teacher survey administered in October 2009 are included in this report – **Appendix A**.

d. **School visits.** Ten trial schools had been visited prior to the end of June 2008. Notes from these visits were included in the first interim report - Appendix C. A further 22 visits to schools were undertaken by the evaluator over the period July 2008 – end June 2009, including a visit to a school new to the trial in 2009. Notes of visits to these 22 schools were included in the second interim report, Appendix C. Visits to the remaining two trial schools were conducted in term 4, 2009. Refer to **Appendix C** of this report.

e. **Surveying students.** Summaries of year 11 students' responses to a survey administered in May 2008 were included in the first interim report – Appendix D. Responses were received from students at 30 of the 31 trial schools. A survey was administered to this same cohort of students in May 2009. The evaluator received responses from students at 22 of the 31 trial schools. Appendix G, second interim report, contained a summary of the students' responses⁵.

f. **Obtaining additional feedback from teachers other than those in schools visited in semester 1 2008.** The evaluator contacted all trial schools in June 2008 asking them if they had any issues with the syllabus. In response, four teachers provided feedback. Copies of this feedback were included in the first interim report at Appendix E. In addition, feedback was received from the ESL Project Officer, Indigenous Schooling Support Unit (ISSU), Education Queensland, Cairns. The feedback from this Project Officer, who supported the teachers at Gordonvale SHS and Tagai State College with implementation of the syllabus throughout the trial, was shown in the first interim report in Appendix F. The evaluator also had an opportunity to speak with this person, who is now an ESL Project Officer with DET (but still supporting the North Queensland schools) in May 2009.

g. Comment by the QSA's Senior Education Officer, Quality Assurance, June 2008. In response to some queries raised by the evaluator, the SEO provided advice/feedback. This was included in the first interim report in Appendix G.

h. Other strategies have included:

- presentation of the first interim report to the QSA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committee, October 2008;
- researching relevant aspects in the broader environment; and
- examining work programs of trial schools during school visits.

⁵ Students' spelling and grammar has been unaltered in these summaries.

4. THE 'SETTING' OF ENGLISH FOR ESL LEARNERS – THE 'ANTECEDENTS' PHASE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

'Antecedents' refers to information regarding factors in the educational environment that exist **prior to the program** which may affect outcomes, such as student and teacher characteristics, resources and the broader environment.

Section 4 of the first and second interim reports provided an overview of relevant aspects of the broader educational environment as at the particular time each report was developed.

Section 4.2 below provides a brief overview of two issues in the broader environment that are of particular relevance as at the end of the trial.

4.2 THE BROADER ENVIRONMENT – ISSUES OF RELEVANCE

4.2.1 English for ESL Learners and tertiary entrance

As indicated in both the first and second interim reports, on 22 June 2007, the Assistant Manager, Product and Assessment Services Section of QTAC advised the QSA that:

... the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Forum has considered the recommendation of the QSA and accepted English for ESL Learners: Senior Syllabus as satisfying the English (4 SA) subject prerequisite for tertiary admission purposes at QTAC's member and participating institutions. This will come into effect with the commencement of the 2007 end of year admissions ...

During the course of the trial, however, it became evident that not all Universities Australia-wide will automatically accept English for ESL Learners for tertiary entrance purposes.

At the October 2009 teacher conference the issue was again raised when a teacher advised that James Cook University had indicated to a trial student that it would not recognize the subject.

The following represents a summary (notes) of the advice that was subsequently provided to teachers on day 2 of the 2009 October conference by the Manager, Syllabus Revision Unit, following further discussion between QSA officials and QTAC on the matter:

** For all domestic admissions through QTAC including those through James Cook University it was understood by QTAC that English for ESL Learners would be considered as an English subject. QTAC has programmed for this to automatically occur.*

** QTAC is currently clarifying with James Cook University and interstate Universities further about this including in relation to admissions to specific courses eg pharmacy, dentistry, VET Science and Medicine offered through James Cook University.*

** In terms of interstate Universities, decisions will be made once the OP and other results are known.*

** The Certification Unit will be looking after student results and in the next two weeks there will be an email sent to all trial schools outlining the process to be followed by English for ESL Learners year 12 students from now on. The advice will include the contact name and details for the person/organisation the student or school can approach once results come out officially, through to when Universities commence in 2010.*

** The QSA will honour its commitment to those students who have undertaken the course and will do everything possible to ensure a smooth transition from school to University for those students following this particular pathway.*

4.2.2 National Curriculum

As shown in the second interim report, ACARA's *English Curriculum Design* paper advised that:

A second course will be developed for students from diverse backgrounds with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) including Indigenous students. This course will provide a variety of language, literature and literacy experiences as well as some pathway options to accommodate the range of student ability. Student eligibility requirements may need to be taken into consideration for certification purposes.

At the October 2009 teacher conference, the Assistant Director, Senior Curriculum Resources Branch, QSA, provided an update on the national curriculum and its impact on the Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners syllabus.

A summary of the advice given to teachers is outlined below:

- English as an Additional Language or Dialect is being developed nationally and will replace the QSA's Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners syllabus.
- At this stage timelines are not known; however the QSA has been told that implementation in States/Territories will commence from 2011-2013. The QSA is therefore looking at 2012.
- To reduce the impact on schools, the QSA will extend the trial of English for ESL Learners beyond 2010. There will be no pilot phase; however the recommendations from the evaluator's report will still inform refinements that need to be made to the syllabus which will take schools to the end of 2011.
- The Assistant Director indicated that using the Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners syllabus will prepare teachers well for implementing the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) syllabus.
- States/Territories will continue to implement their own assessment systems and Queensland will continue with school-based assessment – ACARA will provide the content and standards.
- ACARA appears to be ambivalent about whether or not English as an Additional Language or Dialect will satisfy tertiary entrance purposes and the QSA's advice to ACARA has been that this needs to be clarified.

5. IMPLEMENTATION IN SCHOOLS

This section of the report focuses on issues associated with implementation in schools that arose during the **final period** of the trial viz July 2009 – December 2009. The information in this section needs to be read in conjunction with that outlined in section 5 of the second interim report as the issues identified in that report remain relevant.

5.1 THE RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT TO STUDENTS

5.1.1 Students' views - implementation in schools

Comments from students at the trial schools visited in the last semester of the trial basically reiterated and confirmed that, overall, students have been very positive about the way they have been supported in class in this subject. Comments from some of the year 11 students at the trial schools visited in term 4 are outlined in Appendix C to this report and include the following:

- helps us more (than normal English)
- supports us more than normal English which has a fast pace
- the teachers consider your ability and you get lots of help
- it is every easy and there is less pressure
- we work through assignments step-by-step in class.

Year 11 students at one of these schools said, however, that they disliked doing grammar and the war poetry they had covered, that they found the in-class essays very hard and that the writing expectations of the subject were very high. They felt that two drafts should be allowed in year 12, rather than the one that has been recommended in the syllabus. Year 12 students at the same school, however, felt that there should be more 'grammar teaching'. They felt there should be a greater focus on teaching vocabulary and on writing skills, that they like the topics to be relevant and to focus on what they are going to be doing at University eg report writing. They felt that some of the topics were a bit 'vague'.

5.1.2 English for ESL Learners and tertiary entrance

Some of the students were concerned that the subject would not automatically be accepted for tertiary entrance purposes at all Universities around Australia.

The Deputy Principal at one of the schools visited indicated that this was a real issue for his school, where five of the 18 international students who exited the school last year at the end of year 12 went to Universities in Victoria.

Some of the teachers at the October 2009 teacher conference indicated in their responses to the evaluator's questionnaire that they were unsure whether the subject would continue at their school in 2010 because of this issue. Comments included:

- No clear path for visa students guaranteed entry into tertiary positions. We would like to continue if course gains credence eg through ACARA future.
- Concerned about recognition by tertiary institutions.
- Depends on outcomes of current year 12 cohort – university entrance requirements, acceptance of English for ESL learners.

One trial school, that has not offered English for ESL Learners to year 11 students in 2009, has enrolled its 2009 year 11 international students instead in the Trial Senior

Syllabus in English (2008). The school has dedicated classes of international students undertaking Senior English. This switch has been a direct result of the tertiary entrance issue. Some teachers from other schools have indicated, during the evaluator's school visits and at the October 2009 teacher conference, that their school might also consider this option.

The evaluator feels it important, therefore, to recommend that, in the revision of the Trial Senior Syllabus in English (2008), cognisance be taken of the fact that an increasing number of ESL students are likely to be taking the subject.

When revisiting the background to the development of the Trial Senior Syllabus for English for ESL Learners, it can be seen that this was in fact the intention of the QSA's P-12 Curriculum Committee who, on 20 August 2006, recommended:

...when the current senior English syllabus is revised, the appendix undergo a major revision to provide more detailed guidance on developing courses that would meet the needs of students for whom English is not their first language.

5.1.3 The name of the subject

Students with whom the evaluator spoke during term 4, 2009 school visits agreed that the name of the subject should be changed. They preferred the name recommended by the evaluator in the second interim report, English as an Additional Language or Dialect, as it would dispense with the ESL tag.

Students at one school said that 'mainstream think we are dumb' even though the subject is the same level as Authority English. Students at the other school said that at their school 'people here think ESL is easier or dumber'.

5.1.4 Exit levels of achievement

The following table, table 4, shows overall levels of achievement for year 12 students who exited English for ESL Learners at the end of 2009.

Table 4: Levels of achievement – English for ESL Learners - 2009

	VHA		HA		SA		LA		VL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Males	4	0.78	69	13.48	146	28.52	44	8.59	2	0.39
Females	18	3.52	100	19.53	105	20.51	22	4.30	2	0.39
Persons	22	4.3	169	33.01	251	49.02	66	12.89	4	0.78

The results show that more females achieved at VHA and HA levels than males (23.05% vis a viz 14.26%). More males, however, achieved an SA level of achievement than females (28.52% vis a viz 20.51%). More males also achieved a LA level of achievement than females (8.59% vis a viz 4.30%).

Table 5 shows the levels of achievement for year 12 students who exited English (2002) at the end of 2009.

Table 5: Exit levels of achievement – English (2002) – 2009

	VHA		HA		SA		LA		VL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Males	1116	3.36	4602	13.87	6472	19.51	1963	5.92	234	0.71
Females	2335	7.04	7507	22.63	7187	21.67	1606	4.84	149	0.45
Persons	34561	10.40	12109	36.5	13659	41.18	3569	10.76	383	1.15

The gender breakdown of levels of achievement for English (2002) represents a relatively similar picture to that for English for ESL Learners with exit levels of achievement for females for English (2002) higher in the VHA, HA and SA levels, and lower than males in the LA and VL levels.

When one looks across both subjects, the following observations can be made:

- A greater % of students who exited English (2002) achieved a VHA or HA level than did students of English for ESL Learners;
- A greater % of students who exited English for ESL Learners achieved a SA level than did students of English (2002); and
- A greater % of students of English for ESL Learners achieved a LA level of achievement than did students of English (2002).

5.2 THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS OF THE SYLLABUS

This issue was further explored by the evaluator with trial school teachers at the October 2009 teacher conference through the survey administered to teachers by the evaluator, which sought feedback on:

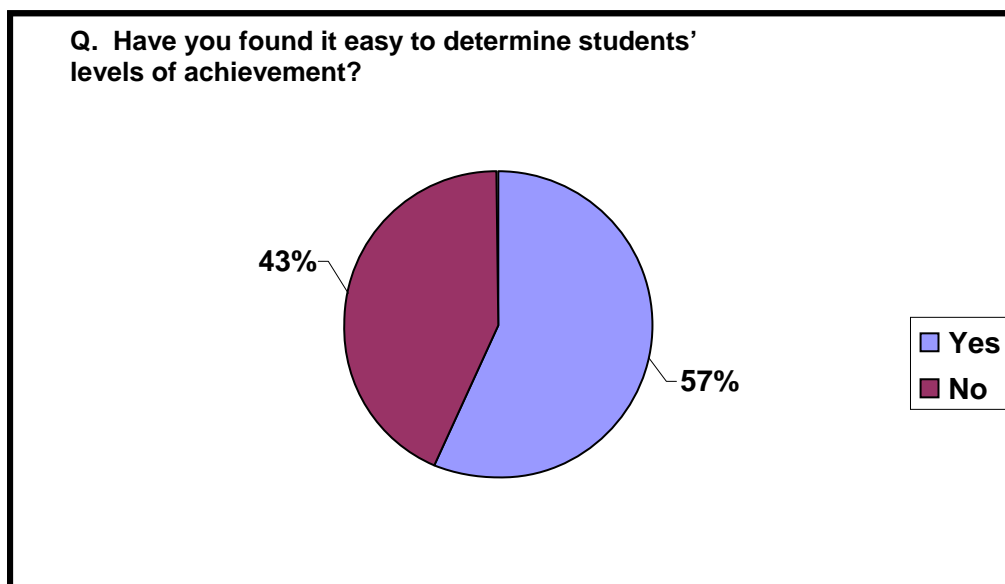
- Verification
- Suggested drafting strategy
- Suggested instrument lengths
- Written requirements for verification folio
- Spoken/signed requirements for verification folio
- Awarding exit levels of achievement

Teachers' feedback is summarised below.

5.2.1 Verification

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with feedback/comments from verification, 38.5% of the teachers who responded to this survey question said that they agreed with some comments/feedback **but not all**.

The following graph shows teachers' responses to the survey question .. *Have you found it easy to determine students' levels of achievements?* It shows that 43% of teachers did not find it easy to determine students' levels of achievements.



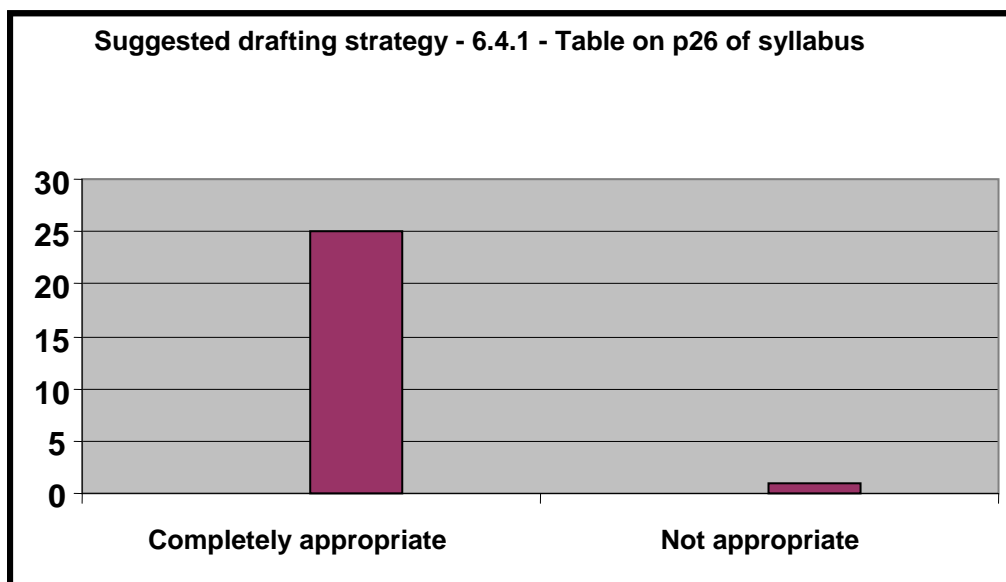
Comments made by the State Panel Chair at the October 2009 teacher conference in relation to verification are summarised below:

- The actual verification process went well and the majority of submissions were of an excellent quality.
- The majority of students have actually passed this subject – those students who were in LA or lower either do not have the level of language skills to cope with the subject or they don't draft.
- There was good quality in terms of the range of assessment tasks; however a couple lacked clarity of assessment design and there were a few discrepancies with criteria sheets. A couple of spoken tasks did not include the non-verbal conventions dimension. The Panel Chair advised teachers to be clear about what mark they give for each criterion, reminding them that this is not holistic marking. She suggested teachers include comments as to why they gave the student the grade they have.
- Surprisingly and interestingly, the Panel Chair said, criterion 2 has worked well and the panel were more concerned with criteria 1 and 3. There was more evidence to suggest a lower placement in these two than in criterion 2.
- The Panel Chair said there needed to be some improvement in the use of grammar, expression, range of vocabulary and the general application of conventions of Standard Australian English. She said that when there was an issue the panel looked to the profile for some further clarification but that in some cases the profile had not been included.
- The Panel Chair said there also needed to be improvement in the labelling of recorded evidence, which needed to be labelled with the standard awarded.

It should be noted that this year's year 12 students are exiting on the Trial Senior Syllabus in English for ESL Learners, 2007 and not the March 2009 amended version.

5.2.2 Suggested drafting strategy

The majority of teachers surveyed at the October 2009 teacher conference feel that the suggested drafting strategy is completely appropriate, as demonstrated in the graph below.



Despite the majority of teachers feeling that the guidelines are completely appropriate, however, a number of comments were made by teachers about this, including those below:

- From looking at samples of students' work from some schools, it seems that there is a range of approaches here with some students given excessive (in my opinion) response to drafts, even drafts for tests (unseen).
- Guideline is useless if not consistently applied by all schools.
- I am glad it is suggested and not mandated.
- Draft work should be included in submissions to panels to allow for transparency in process.

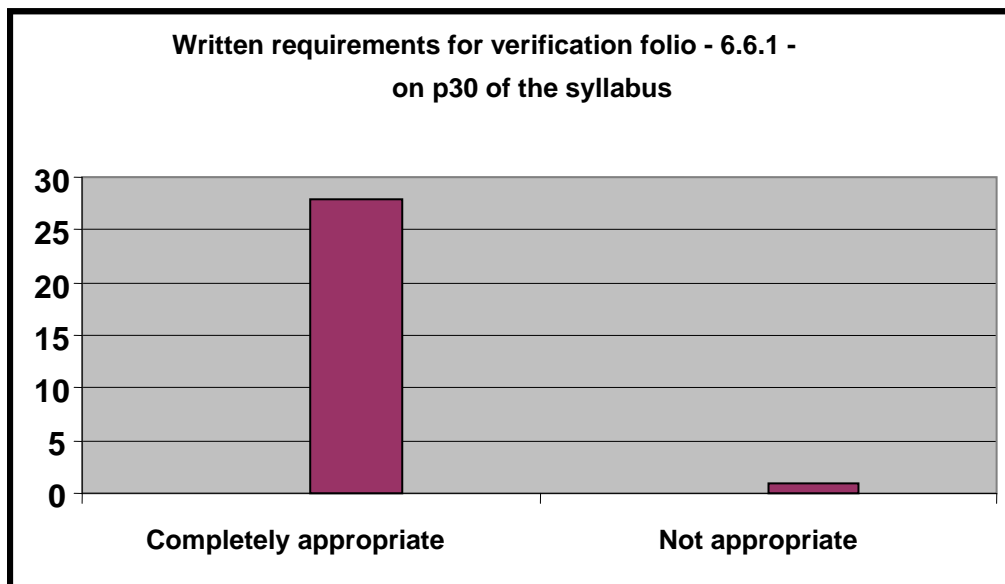
5.2.3 Suggested instrument lengths

There was unanimous support for the suggested instrument lengths as outlined in the syllabus; however some respondents qualified their response with suggestions, including:

- With the exception of pair or group spoken/signed which I believe is too short.
- Somewhat appropriate ... however, I believe all students should have a reflective text not persuasive ..
- Must be as for Board English to maintain standards and credibility.

5.2.4 Written requirements for verification folio

There was also almost unanimous support for the written requirements for verification folio, as shown in the following graph.



Once again, however, some teachers' responses were qualified eg -

- The 6.6.1 information provides a detailed description of what is needed for verification; however the word 'must' should be followed by either 3 or 4 written instruments.
- Written requirements should include mandatory imaginative and reflective tasks that assess all three criteria. More emphasis on 'response to literature' tasks and conditions for exam to show authentic student work (handwritten).
- ... it is difficult to find a task that does not require cognitive processes. If this is the case, I believe all 3 criteria should be assessed in each instrument so the line 'at least 2 instruments assessing all 3 criteria' would be irrelevant – this would also be true for spoken/signed tasks.

5.2.5 Spoken/signed requirements for verification folio

Of the teachers who responded to this survey item, approximately 10% felt the requirements were not appropriate. Comments made by trial teachers included:

- C2 – necessity for one piece to be analytical – response to literature. Is this too prescriptive?? I don't think subject English is as prescriptive in this respect.
- I am not sure why a spoken task must be presented in term 4.
- Perhaps 'a minimum of two spoken instruments' rather than ambiguous 'three or four'.
- Should the instruction be more specific ie two spoken instruments.
- Should be three compulsory spoken tasks to allow students the opportunities to demonstrate all three criteria. This will allow students to achieve a 'SA' achievement overall, similar to Senior English (2008) trial syllabus.
- Not appropriate. One should be persuasive.

5.2.6 Awarding exit levels of achievement

The majority of teachers are satisfied with the minimum combination of standards across the criteria for each exit level. One teacher queried, however, why for a VLA the requirement is for an E in the three criteria. She wondered if it should say standard E in two criteria.

5.3 RESOURCES FOUND TO BE USEFUL IN TRIAL SCHOOLS

Comments made by students at the trial schools visited in semester 2, 2009 confirm that they are satisfied with the range of resources used in this subject. Students at the last school visited by the evaluator felt that they would have benefited by having a textbook for the subject.

Appendix A – Teacher survey responses, October 2009 teacher conference and Appendix C – Evaluator’s notes from visits to trial schools, semester 2, 2009 include reference to some resources that trial teachers have found useful. These resources should be added to the Resources List in the Syllabus.

5.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE STANDARDS FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Fourteen per cent of the respondents to the evaluator’s October 2009 teacher survey felt that the standards associated with exit criteria for this subject are not appropriate. Some of the comments from teachers included:

- Points raised at yesterday’s session need to be considered eg Criterion 1 – ‘range of spelling’; separating verbal and non-verbal descriptors.
- Still lack of descriptors for spoken/signed tasks.
- Many inconsistencies and lack of differentiation between grades. Needs to be re-worked.
- Criterion 3 – needs more unpacking in ‘LA’ and ‘VLA’ standard descriptors (flesh out). The standards for spoken tasks requires the addition of non-verbals (pause, pitch, pace, eye contact, gestures, etc). Criterion two – cognitive processes are NOT just in response to other texts but should be evident in the construction of their own texts.

At the 2009 teacher conference the evaluator provided teachers with a list of comments made by trial teachers to the evaluator over the course of the trial in relation to the standards associated with exit criteria (these comments were included in the second interim report). Teachers were asked to identify those issues with which they agreed and to add other issues, if appropriate. While the teachers did not complete the task fully in the time allocated, some useful feedback was obtained. Appendix B provides a summary of the comments made by the teachers. It is recommended that these comments, as well as those included in the second interim report, be taken into account in the revision of this section of the syllabus.

A query was raised at the October 2009 teacher conference about how teachers should be assessing oral presentations. The teacher said that the criteria made it difficult to assess the students’ performance only (as opposed to performance and content of presentation). The Panel Chair advised that when assessing spoken text, the teacher should be assessing what the student is actually saying (content) as well as how they are saying it. It was agreed that the syllabus needs to provide clarity around this and that the criteria and standards need to facilitate whatever approach is required.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations arising from the evaluation of the English for ESL Learners trial, as shown below, draw on the findings outlined in both interim reports, the progress report (November 2009) and this final report.

1. Implications for English (2008) . That, given a possible movement away from this syllabus by some trial schools to the Trial English Syllabus (2008), and given the recommendation of the QSA's P-12 Curriculum Committee on 20 August 2006 (repeated below), the QSA consider ways that the Trial English Syllabus (2008) can be made appropriate to ESL Learners -

...when the current senior English syllabus is revised, the appendix undergo a major revision to provide more detailed guidance on developing courses that would meet the needs of students for whom English is not their first language.

2. The internal consistency of the components of the syllabus. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following suggestions, aimed at improving the internal consistency of the components of the syllabus, or making the consistency more evident, be considered:

- **General Objectives – introductory section.** Include wording such as... *Elements of each of the categories of general objectives MAY appear in assessment instruments, so that teachers realise that individual dimensions within each criterion can be assessed without the need to address all dimensions of the criterion in the one assessment instrument.*
- **General objectives – introductory section.** Include the following words after the sentence *Knowledge about language, Cognitive skills and Communication skills are the three categories of assessable general objectives ...*

A student needs to obtain a standard C in two of the criteria associated with these general objectives, one of which must be in Communication skills, in order to obtain a Sound Achievement on exit - refer to Section 6.8, Determining exit levels of achievement.

- **Assessment – 6.7 Exit criteria and standards.** The final sentence in 6.7 Exit criteria and standards ... *each criterion is to make an equal contribution to the determination of exit levels of achievement ...* be changed as this is not the case.
- **General objectives – 3.1 Attitudes and values.** Add to the Attitudes and values general objectives the following objective which is also in English 2008 ... *Value the world in which they live and understand better the worlds of others.*
- **General objectives and Assessment – 6.7 Exit criteria** – Add a footnote to the stem of the Knowledge about language general objectives to indicate that the language features of this category of objectives primarily apply at the word, sentence and paragraph level; and add a footnote to the stem of the Communication skills category of objectives to indicate that these objectives relate more to language features such as audience, purpose and genre patterns ... or wording to that effect, which helps clarify the major differences

- **Various sections of the syllabus – Indigenous perspectives.** If it is mandatory that schools embed Indigenous perspectives in their course of study (as opposed to these perspectives being optional), this requirement needs to be clearly stated in the syllabus, with Indigenous perspectives reflected in schools' work programs.

3. The degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following suggestions, aimed at improving the degree to which the syllabus communicates its intentions to teachers, be considered:

- **Course organisation – organizing principles**
 - the five organizing principles in the Course organisation section be adapted to reflect ESL teaching/learning principles and that, should an ESL language framework be developed to support this syllabus, links be made to elements within that framework;
 - links be made between the five organising principles and other relevant sections of the syllabus;
 - consideration be given to the appropriateness of adding 'and balance' to the organising principle, Range.
- **Course organisation – definition of subject matter**
 - the definition of subject matter for the English for ESL Learners syllabus be included in the Course Organisation section of the syllabus; and
 - if the term 'subject matter' is going to be used in any other context in this syllabus, then a second definition be provided that covers the context of that use, or an alternative term be used.
- **Course organisation – Language features**
 - a Language features table be retained in the syllabus and that a framework be used for the table that reflects the hierarchical, constituted structure of language viz word (comprised of morphemes) → phrase → clause (finite and non-finite) → sentence → paragraph → whole text. (Consideration could be given to using the structure adopted in the QSA's Draft Scope and Sequence – Grammar – Years 1-9 document);
 - the need to explicitly embed the teaching of language features, including grammar, throughout the two year course of study be emphasised strongly in the Course organisation section of the syllabus;
 - schools be required to demonstrate in work programs how the language features are embedded throughout their two year course of study; and
 - the sample work program on the QSA's website be enhanced to show the embedding of language features throughout the two year course of study.

- **Course organisation – Areas of study**

- include more specific advice in the syllabus about the required balance across the three areas of study;

- provide greater clarity/specificity about the range and balance of texts that must be incorporated into the two year course of study;

- include advice as to whether or not students are required to study any **complete** texts;

- given that research skills are one of three elements of language and texts that schools must give students opportunities to learn about within Language for academic learning, consideration be given to explicitly including research skills in the assessment criteria and standards; and

- include in the Course organisation section, a sub-section, Planning Steps, as in English (2008), but with the addition of the following step:

- * identify and incorporate relevant language features for each unit as a focus for teaching and learning.*

4. The relevance of the subject to students.

- That, in order to enhance the relevance of the subject to students, the Queensland Studies Authority continue to liaise with the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) in relation to acceptance of the subject, English for ESL Learners, for tertiary entrance purposes by all Australian Universities and that the QSA continue to advise schools of the progress in this regard.
- That consideration to be given to changing the name of the subject. Perhaps the name indicated by the National Curriculum Council in its preliminary work could be considered ... English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). (This is also the name used by the Curriculum Council of WA for its 2008 English for ESL syllabus.)

5. The appropriateness of the assessment requirements of the syllabus. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009):

- the verification requirements be no greater (in terms of required number of instruments) than those required for English (2008); and

- clarity be provided around how teachers should be assessing oral communications (refer to p29, 5.4).

6. Resources found to be useful in trial schools. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009):

- the resources list be broken into 'categories' of resources, to enhance readability; and
- a scan be undertaken of resources recommended in similar syllabuses in other States and Territories, with any appropriate resources included in the Resources list at the back of the syllabus and that the resources listed by the evaluator in her various reports throughout the trial also be considered for inclusion.

- resources identified as useful by trial teachers (and listed in the various evaluators' reports) be included in the Resources section.

7. The suitability of the criteria in the eligibility statement for determining students for whom the syllabus is intended to cater. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the following changes be made to the eligibility statement:

- dispense with the term 'senior schooling', instead referring to 'year 11' in this particular circumstance; and
- either reword the statement or add some accompanying guidelines to it which:
 - help clarify what is meant by 'restricted' knowledge of English;
 - provide further advice about the eligibility of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students and/or include examples of the language backgrounds of some of the Indigenous students who are currently enrolled in the subject;
 - suggest that students who do not have a particular level of English proficiency on commencement (eg bandscale 5) **may not be suited to this subject due to the academic rigour of the subject.**

8. The qualifications and professional development for ESL teachers. That consideration be given to developing an ESL Language Framework, specifically designed to support teachers of English for ESL Learners, and that trial teachers with expertise in ESL teaching/learning principles be invited to assist with this task.

9. The development of appropriate standards for student achievement. That, in the revision of the English for ESL Learners Trial Syllabus (March 2009), the standards associated with exit criteria be rewritten and that:

- verbal language features become a dimension in their own right within the Knowledge about language criterion;
- *research skills* constitute an explicit dimension in the assessment criteria; and
- terminology and other issues, as identified by trial teachers and outlined in the second interim report, progress report (November 2009) and this final report all be addressed.

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APPENDIX A: TEACHER SURVEY RESPONSES – OCTOBER 2009 TEACHER CONFERENCE

TRIAL SENIOR SYLLABUS – ENGLISH FOR ESL LEARNERS

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE 4 – OCTOBER 2009 TEACHER CONFERENCE

1. NAME OF TEACHER*:

SCHOOL:

2. VERIFICATION/LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT (2007 SYLLABUS) – 30 responses

Has your school received feedback from verification? *(Please circle your response)*

28 x Yes 1 x No 1 x Not applicable (eg year 11 only in 2009)

If 'yes', please indicate your level of agreement with feedback/comments from verification, by circling **one** of the responses below:

16 x Agree with all comments/feedback

10 x Agree with some comments/feedback but not all

0 x Do not agree with any of the comments/feedback

Do you have any comments arising from verification? **6 x Yes / 22 x No**

If 'yes', please provide your comments in the space below:

- *It would have been nice to have a comment of some sort.*
- *It was a relief as I haven't been a part of the process before. I have cross marked with the HOD of English and this has been very helpful when arriving at standards.*
- *A productive and constructive process to show evidence of syllabus standards for exit level. Feedback from panel matches folios and criterion descriptors. Consistent concerns with C1, C3. (panellist)*
- *Disappointed, but after discussion there was a slight movement upward with which we were satisfied. This had to do with Student A and B only.*
- *Some comments made not justified eg sample A had comments about students' poor expression, inconsistent application of grammatical conventions and general C1 criterion not being met at A Standard. However, these comments were not justified. Negotiations*

- *The comments on the R6 were non-specific and unhelpful but after consultation with the SRPC the comments were expanded and become more specific and helpful.*
- *Overall yes – borderline kids are difficult.*
- *As I have been a Senior English Teacher for many years this process is well known to me.*
- *In the session yesterday, when looking at other submissions:*
 - *still thought A standard was different among submissions;*
 - *some submissions had no feedback from verification.*

Have you found it easy to determine students' levels of achievement?

17 x Yes / 13 x No

If 'no', please explain why you have not found it easy to determine students' levels of achievement

- *Bearing in mind that this course supposedly has 'parity' with Senior English, it is difficult to see how this can ever be the case. The level of drafting (x2) support is also so much higher for this subject that at times it's hard to see what is left of the students' original work. Every teacher has a strong opinion/perception of the course which makes cross marking time consuming.*
- *I wouldn't say it's easy or difficult. I think it's a learning process to feel confident about identifying evidence which supports your judgement.*
- *Upper level VHA/HA decision making has been the hardest especially deciding if low VHA, high VHA ..otherwise relatively easy. The new criteria is, however, much easier to work with.*
- *First time to do this. Need to be comfortable with the process.*
- *In cases where students were 'borderline' (VHA1 – HA10 or HA1 – SA10) it was hard to decide placement – otherwise okay.*
- *I am a first time teacher in this subject teaching year 11s – working with others in the moderating process will help me to determine future students' levels ie what an A, B, C looks like for next year.*
- *It has been OK but in the back of my mind I was always wondering 'what is an A in criterion 1?' etc. It will be good to have some examples of a typical, B, C etc.*
- *I came in semester 2 and previous teacher's work was different to my own.*
- *Have become more confident in my appraisal of student work with cross marking.*
- *Unsure at times – the verification process confirmed teacher/school judgments of LOAs and standards. Agreed with panel recommendations and comments on R6 form. Great help!!*
- *No – detailed, exhaustive consideration and double-check up required for students on threshold level, especially those situated around LA10/SA1.*
- *Students tend to be erratic in their assessment at times – dependent on what time they have to personally dedicate to the drafting and redrafting process. Students often don't present as 'typical' level students as in English Authority.*
- *Difficult at times, as unsure what a standard VHA, HA, SA etc are in comparison to my cohort. This conference has aided in this process.*
- *Yes and no. Fine for top students – it seems that criterion 1 and 3 need to be analysed more closely in order to reach a fair result (I was not giving SA and LA level students enough credit).*

3. THE ENGLISH FOR ESL LEARNERS SYLLABUS (AMENDED MARCH 2009) – SECTION 6, ASSESSMENT

Please comment on the following aspects of **Section 6, Assessment**, of the English for ESL Learners Amended Syllabus (March 2009) ...

3.1 Suggested drafting strategy – 6.4.1 - Table 1 on page 26 of the syllabus

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

25 x Completely appropriate **1** x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- *From looking at samples of students' work from some schools, it seems that there is a range of approaches here with some students given excessive (in my opinion) response to drafts, even drafts for tests (unseen).*
- *Guideline is useless if not consistently applied by all schools.*
- *I think this section is very explicit about expectations. Very helpful.*
- *Agree with principle of increasing independence; however to suggest one draft in year 12 semester 3 especially when international students have returned after 6 weeks in their home country is not constructive.*
- *Have not looked at new syllabus indepth as not using it (no year 11 cohort).*
- *Links directly to Principle 4: Increasing Independence*
- *Highly appropriate for Principle 4.*
- *I am glad that it is suggested and not mandated.*
- *I am not sure about this. I make judgements on the individual students. Obviously some students improve to a level of independence where the drafting guidelines are appropriate. For students at a lower level, I offer added consultation.*
- *I think this is a fair guide for both students and teachers.*
- *More evidence of increased independence and less teacher input. Verbal feedback, only in later part of year 12. Less task scaffolding and structuring. Multiple drafts not suitable and cloze style activities. Teachers should not be rewriting paragraphs and sentences. Too much evidence of heavy teacher input and corrections.*
- *Draft work should be included in submissions to panels to allow for transparency in process.*
- *Not appropriate – need to indicate how many drafts for a task for both year levels.*
- *Completely appropriate – I believe 2 drafts in 11 and one in 12 does provide for the principle of increasing independence. We are, after all, preparing students (often) for the rigours of Uni or work. Giving any more than this does not allow for students own development and Krashen's (I + 1) theory fits here. We have to constantly challenge all to go one step further to achieve.*

3.2 Suggested instrument lengths for year 11 and 12 – 6.5.2 - Table 3 p29 of the syllabus

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

29 x Completely appropriate **0** x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- **Very clear. It is helpful to have a variety of options for the length of time of an oral task. You can design tasks which suit the cohort more effectively.**
- **Increase or decrease in length helped students as they became more confident in their abilities but also to be concise when required.**
- **Lengths suggested are appropriate for each year level.**
- **Keep the same – very appropriate – length is fine for the levels 11 and 12.**
- **No problems with this.**
- **With the exception of pair or group spoken/signed which I believe is too short.**
- **Yes, a good guide I think.**
- **Lengths are suitable but could also be aligned with Senior English (2008) syllabus.**
- **Do not make shorter if we want to be considered comparable and having academic rigour.**
- **Somewhat appropriate – This works; however I believe all students should have a reflective text not persuasive ie persuasive should be optional and reflective mandatory. Students can cover the persuasive text in the spoken instrument. Lengths are fine and along with increased complexity – increased length is appropriate. Suggestions of when to use long or short and spoken could be included.**
- **Must be as for Board English to maintain standards and credibility.**

3.3 Written requirements for verification follo – 6.6.1 on page 29 of the syllabus

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

28 x Completely appropriate **1** x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- **This section is fine but the issue of ‘authorship’ is difficult to monitor. Most students produce their own work as can be seen by the drafting process. However, there are cases where it is clear students have not completed the tasks themselves (independently) and even after exhausting all avenues, it is difficult to ‘prove’. This is also difficult to monitor in other subjects where native speakers have tutors.**
- **It is quite prescribed but I really think that to maintain consistency and parity across all schools it needs to be; very clear; perhaps ‘a minimum of three written instruments’ rather than the ambiguous ‘three or four’.**
- **The 6.6.1 information provides a detailed description of what is needed for verification; however the word ‘must’ should be followed by either 3 OR 4 written instruments.**
- **Written requirements should include mandatory imaginative and reflective tasks that assess all three criteria. More emphasis on ‘response to literature’ tasks and conditions for exam to show authentic student work (handwritten).**
- **I’m not sure why these particular genre types are mandated but I think they are fine.**
- **As discussed on day 1, it is difficult to find a task that does not require cognitive processes. If this is the case, I believe all 3 criteria should be assessed in each instrument so the line ‘at least 2 instruments assessing all 3 criteria’ would be irrelevant – this would also be true for spoken/signed tasks.**
- **If these pieces are spread over a period of time they reflect language development and conceptual/cognitive understanding/maturity in the individual student – or the opposite perhaps – a lack of focus/declining application! – a fair system. What about being specific about the number of pieces?**

3.4 Spoken/signed requirements for verification folio – 6.6.2 p30 of the syllabus

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

26 x Completely appropriate 3 x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- **C2 – necessity for one piece to be analytical – response to literature. Is this too prescriptive?? I don't think subject English is as prescriptive in this respect.**
- **I am not sure why a spoken task must be presented in term 4.**
- **Perhaps 'a minimum of two spoken instruments' rather than ambiguous 'three or four'.**
- **Clear conditions.**
- **The same for this section – keep it clear about what is actually required for verification.**
- **I'm not sure why these particular genre types are mandated but I think they are fine.**
- **I like the fact that the student submitted as an A standard does not have to be from a submitted folio or whose overall achievement is not VHA.**
- **Should the instruction be more specific ie two spoken instruments.**
- **Should be three compulsory spoken tasks to allow students the opportunities to demonstrate all three criteria. This will allow students to achieve a 'SA' achievement overall, similar to Senior English (2008) trial syllabus.**
- **Not appropriate. One should be persuasive.**

3.5 Awarding exit levels of achievement – 6.8 - table on p32 of the syllabus

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

28 x Completely appropriate 1 x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- **Yes, I believe that a sound achievement in Communication Skills, Criterion 3, is necessary. A student may not be able to write accurately but they can still communicate their intention in the genre required.**
- **As English is a second language 'Communication Skills' should deserve to be seen as the most important and therefore essential for a passing grade.**
- **C = any two criteria and no less than a D in the remaining criterion; All criteria should be equally weighted; Don't agree with students need to pass Cr3 to pass.**
- **Clear for assessment/awarding exit levels of achievement. The criterion needs to be clear as to which one is more heavily weighted ie C3.**
- **I would reword the LA standard to include more detail.**
- **I think it is fair – but at this conference, we collectively raised the question of the extra emphasis on Communication Skills – this is mainly to do with register, tenor etc – so I think the requirement is relevant.**
- **Awarding exit levels should be weighted upon all three criteria and an on-balance judgement of written and spoken responses.**
- **VLA – must be E in three – should say 2 criteria?**

3.6 Standards associated with exit criteria – 6.8.1 – p33

Please circle the response that most closely resembles your views about the appropriateness of this section of the syllabus

24 x Completely appropriate 4 x Not Appropriate

Comments:

- **Points raised at yesterday's session need to be considered eg Crit 1 – 'range of spelling'; grammar – especially D and E; separating verbal and non-verbal descriptors.**
- **Not appropriate – Point 1, as discussed in Thursday discussion too broad – needs specific written and spoken dot points.**
- **Still lack of descriptors for spoken/signed tasks – will this be amended?**
- **Partly – be more specific with spoken components to be assessed (ie gestures, pace, volume, expression, pronunciation, fluency, clarity).**
- **Appropriate but only once the necessary changes, according to teachers' feedback have been made. These standards are better to work with than those of previous syllabus.**
- **As discussed on Day 1 – many inconsistencies and lack of differentiation between grades. Needs to be re-worked.**
- **Could make it even a little more prescribed for further clarity – C1, C2, C3.**
- **Perhaps clarity is needed of each criterion and the descriptors – to avoid confusion – should be equally weighted.**
- **But there are some issues with wording.**
- **Completely appropriate – matches with the objectives of the syllabus.**
- **Completely appropriate – BUT spoken and non-verbal features etc could be included as separate points under the appropriate criteria (although we could do this ourselves for each specific task).**
- **Verbal features need to be explicit on exit criteria and have stems for – spoken, non-verbal, visual/auditory; fix E2 to 'basic sentence structures with limited grammatical accuracy'; Standard 5 needs to be divided into paragraphing and punctuation/spelling.**
- **Criterion three – needs more unpacking in 'LA' and 'VLA' standard descriptors (flesh out). The standards for spoken tasks requires the addition of non-verbals (pause, pitch, pace, eye contact, gestures, etc). Criteria two – cognitive processes are NOT just in response to other texts but should be evident in the construction of their own texts.**
- **Spoken/non-verbal/visual/auditory features – incorporated into the criteria – specific for students**
- **Knowledge about language. Apart from the grammatical and/or spelling oversights discussed at conference, I believe this criterion to be mostly appropriate. I think the first dot point could be split so as not to assess so many aspects within one descriptor.**
- **Cognitive processes – Mostly appropriate. Some tasks do not allow for analysis or synthesis from a wide variety of texts.**
- **Communication skills – Mostly appropriate. If communication skills carries a different weight to the other criteria, it should possibly have more detail.**
- **I believe a model and or definition of examples indicating 'discerning' or 'sustained', for example, be given. Many teacher see this vocab as hard to distinguish between. This is true across all 3 criteria when differentiating between A and B descriptors.**

4. PLANS FOR 2010

My school will be offering English for ESL Learners again in 2010. Please circle your response.

22 x Yes

0 x No

8 x Unsure

If 'no' or 'unsure', please provide comment:

- **Concerned about**
 - **recognition by tertiary institutions**
 - **impact on students OP given the fact that this cohort won't perform as well as 'mainstream' cohort in core skills**
 - **mightn't have the numbers.**
- **No clear path for visa students guaranteed entry into tertiary positions. We would like to continue if course gains credence eg through ACARA future.**
- **Discussing this at the moment – may finish current year 11 students in year 12, 2010 and then only offer Senior English.**
- **Unsure - Based on ongoing issues with students being able to enter universities. The school will have to be informed and make a decision based on this knowledge.**
- **Depends on outcomes of current year 12 cohort – university entrance requirements, acceptance of English for ESL Learners.**
- **Unsure – If the English for ESL syllabus will cease to exist when the National Curriculum begins, then it has a pre-determined shelf-life. It is not clear whether the 'EAL or D' syllabus will have the same focus or be an Authority subject. If this is the case why should we not just 'cut our losses' so to speak?**
- **Unsure – May consider working with another new trial school (Robina SHS) to offer VISA students access to the course and help boost our numbers.**
- **No – The school wishes to cap numbers so enrolments should remain steady (2 x yr 11 and 2 x yr 12).**
- **Unsure – Unless the issue of parity with English and that at least all Queensland universities will recognise this as the same as Authority English. We will need to discuss this with our admin.**

If 'yes', do you expect that enrolments will increase in 2010?

16 x Yes / 13 x No

Please comment:

- **The international cohort is increasing every year. So long as the students can gain tertiary entrance through the course, they will enrol in greater numbers.**
- **Yes, will have 2 classes in both year 11 and 12.**
- **It has been promoted as an equivalent to Board English not for students failing in English.**
- **Identifying more ESL learners within the school. Teacher recommendations have been extremely helpful to promote course.**
- **As we are fed by the international school on campus, I expect a few more students to join the class as they graduate from the International College later in the year.**
- **No – We have a number of current year 11 students opting for Foundation courses. Probably about similar numbers to 2009.**
- **Yes – There are currently 7 grade 12 and 2 grade 11 in 2011 – we will have 12-13 Grade 11's.**
- **Yes – we are anticipating 2 classes in yr11 and 1 class in yr12**
- **Unsure – depending on the lines that the subject is run**
- **Yes – 2 classes of year 11s; 1 class for year 12.**
- **Same as current cohort.**
- **34 students have already indicated EESL as a choice on subject selection forms.**
- **3 classes in yr 11 and 3 classes in yr 12**
- **Larger numbers, I think, from yr 10 to 11.**
- **Will not increase – we accept only a certain % of students within ESL in each year level.**
- **Probably not – apparently it's harder to 'recruit' students from China, there is a lot more competition. Also many of our year 11 students leave at the end of the year to go to University Foundation Courses.**
- **Yes – hopefully depends on number of Indigenous ESL students in year 10.**

If 'yes' what changes, if any, do you propose to make in 2010 to the way you have offered English for ESL Learners during the trial period?

- *I will change the order of units studied (already amended in my work program) to meet verification deadlines.*
- *There will be no major changes, but minor tweaking will occur as some areas for improvement have been identified throughout the trial period.*
- *Change the order of units; more differentiation in content between 11 and 12; Amend work program, if necessary, to accommodate changes above.*
- *Will be taught by another teacher.*
- *We will be submitting an amendment to our work program.*
- *I have removed one of the assessments from Grade 11 so the total number is 5. No other changes planned.*
- *With my new understanding I would like to include most of our Indigenous students in the subject.*
- *An extra class; change to yr 11 term 1 task.*
- *None really – except that we may consider how we divide the classes.*
- *Increased numbers of migrant and indigenous ESL Learners in the course. Some concerns with the trial syllabus not going to pilot.*
- *Will have a department evaluation and make changes, eg changing some assessment based on what worked well/didn't; perhaps change topics around.*
- *Only in terms of staffing and internal organization.*
- *I may have more Indigenous students coming in – may include more Indigenous perspectives.*
- *More classes would be put on if English for ESL Learners increased. We are refining our teaching of this subject.*
- *Revise and resubmit work program to modify assessment tasks and assessment plan, due to using it until 2012.*
- *Current program has worked quite well although 'assessment driven'. I will consider dropping an assessment item from year 11 as I currently have 6. This will allow more time for language teaching.*

5. RESOURCES

Please list below any resources you have found useful (texts, videos, other). Please include author/publisher, if known.

- *'Airdancer of Glass' – Australian novel; futuristic – dystopian society – Author: Catherine Bateson*
- *Animal Farm; BBC interactive grammar w/s; An Inconvenient Truth; The Great Global Warming Swindle.*
- *Although it's a primary text, Beverly Deriawanka's text on grammar published through PETA has a great breakdown of language.*
- *R Murphy – English Grammar in Use; The Spare Room, Kathryn Lomer*
- *'Stolen' – Jane Harrison – a good play for students to engage with Indigenous themes.*
- *'Does my head look big in this?' Fattah?; 'Taming of the Shrew', Shakespeare; '10 Things I hate About you' Junger.*
- *I have created a google group for all teachers of Eng for ESL Learners to access and share resources, ideas etc 'English for ESL Learners Teachers' Forum' – email lthor81@eq.edu.au to join the group.*
- *www.myread.org; databases eg Eric, Education AT; Senior English Text – Miller? & Cowill?); 'Does my head look big in this?' – novel.*
- *'An Inconvenient Truth' – Al Gore – DVD and the 2 books that go with it.*
- *Chinese Cinderella (novel), Adeline Yen Mah*
- *The Spare Room (novel)*
- *Othello (drama), Shakespeare*
- *Rabbit Proof Fence (film)*

- **Footy Legends (film)**
- **ESL Essentials, Nina Carter – a valuable resource for Indigenous learners and ESL bank scale.**
- **Movies: Schindlers List; Looking for Allibrande; Strictly Ballroom; Man From Snowy River; Hotel Rwanda.**
- **Text – Half of the Yellow Sun (Adiche); Night (Elie Wiesel); My Place (Sally Morgan); various biographies**
- **Poetry – S Heaney; Henry Lawson; A B Patterson**
- **Genre and Grammar – anything from Farr Books – find on www.farrbooks.com.au – the writers of these texts are also ESL teachers.**
- **We would find it useful to have a reference handbook with samples of tasks, students' work at different levels of achievement (exemplars) and handbook with grammar references and assorted language features and student activities. At present, I tend to take bits and pieces from everywhere – would be good to have it in one place.**
- **IELTS Grammar workbook – Cambridge University Press.**
- **Nothing new, but still receive resources from I.S.S.U.**

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Do you have any suggestions as to how the English for ESL Learners Syllabus (March, 2009) could be improved (ie in addition to any you might have already mentioned in this questionnaire)? Please outline your suggestions below.

- **More prescriptive re exam conditions (notes/no notes; dictionary), drafting conditions**
- **Perhaps – increase focus and amount of time on English for academic writing. The content teaching required for Language of Media and Literature does not permit enough time to teach language features/grammar.**
- **Policy on plagiarism detailed.**
- **A guide or framework for the assessment criteria – some exemplars**
- **Samples – for all standards, with evidence highlighted.**
- **Tidy up the standards/the wording of them in line with the feedback given by teachers during the evaluator's session yesterday.**
- **I agree with making language features explicit in a work program. I believe that clarification regarding tertiary entrance should be within the syllabus – students need to know up front. I believe extra clarification of terms used in exit criteria will be of assistance to teachers and also help students target their weak areas.**
- **Confirmation about QTAC admissions and University pathways**
- **More parity with English (2008) syllabus for rigour and consistency**
- **Name change for course – EAL.**
- **Definitely the language feature table on pp9-10 – more examples in that section. Suggestions for grammar texts for word, sentence and genre.**

APPENDIX B: NOTES FROM EVALUATOR'S SESSION OCTOBER 2009 TEACHER CONFERENCE (TEACHER WORKSHOP)

Comments from teachers on standards associated with exit criteria (Amended syllabus, March 2009)

CRITERION 1

- Verbal features should be a separate dimension to give it more weight
- Agree ... Standard B5 reads .. *Sustained use of appropriate paragraphing, a range of punctuation and spelling*. To judge punctuation and spelling it may read *sustained use of ... a range of punctuation and spelling*. Whilst the word range has been useful in documents in the past to describe vocabulary, it seems to have little merit when trying to assess spelling and punctuation. How would teachers make a judgment?
- Standard E.2. The following syntax seems awkward: *basic sentence structures grammatically accurate*.
- E2 change to *basic sentence structure with limited grammatical accuracy*.
- C1 final dimension – break into two dimensions – paragraphing and the 2nd, spelling and punctuation.
- C.1 E level/standard needs to include some mention of paragraphing eg limited/uneven use of paragraphing
- Agree – criterion 1 is ambiguous, particularly in relation to grammar, which is trickier to pinpoint.
- In the footnote to the Knowledge about language criterion, in relation to non-verbal, there is no reference to pause, pace, pitch, etc.
- Agree – Standard C.1 – question use of word *suitable* Why not *appropriate*?
- C.5 What is *appropriate punctuation and spelling*?
- For spoken tasks, the very general wide range of verbal conventions could be made more specific (maybe dot points eg audibility/clarity/intonation, etc)
- Hard to distinguish between A & B descriptors (eg precise, efficient)
- Not sure what the difference is between *efficient control* (B standard) and *precise and sustained control* (A standard)
- E.2 How can you fail (E) and be grammatically accurate?
- B.5 What is a *range of spelling*?

CRITERION 2

- Separation of *positions* and *conclusions* and *justifications* (descriptor 3)
- What's the difference between *discriminating* (descriptor 1) and *highly appropriate* – why not use *highly appropriate* instead?
- The other definition of 'subject matter' as 'content' is needed.
- Agree – criterion 2 is very confusing ... there needs to be greater clarity between the standards as it is difficult to differentiate between them as they are now.
- The glossary definition of *subject matter* is not relevant to English.
- Totally agree that still a bit 'fuzzy' – cognitive processes are not JUST in relation to other texts but should be evident in own texts. Another dimension should be added relating to the construction of the students' own texts.
- Definition of subject matter in glossary is too broad.
- Agree – wide variety of texts needs clarifying.
- Agree – problem with vocabulary overlap (and resulting confusion) when you consider the word *analysis* and the glossary definition of subject matter. Also, this (Halliday?) way of defining subject matter may be extremely problematic for teachers given that subject matter usually means content.

- Agree – problems with subject matter – also the difference between *wide variety* and *variety*.

CRITERION 3

- Agree – a bit ambiguous eg ...*integration of language features ... strengthening meaning* – this is a hard thing to judge. Similarly with the dimension *Logical selection* ... it is difficult to differentiate between the standards for both of these dimensions (2nd and 3rd within the criterion);
- Agree – There is a big jump between a D and an E standard in criterion 3 and it is not clear what is meant by some of the dimensions in these such as ... statements of simple ideas and language features that respond to the particular audience, purpose or context.
- Between D and E standards, the statements need more development. Agree standard of speaking task needs addition of words and terms to differentiate task.
- Criterion 3 is important – students can be able to communicate in spite of poor grammar and language skills.
- E.2 language features – need to quantify this? Possibly use *restricted*.
- A3 – comma needed before *enhancing*.
- The standard for speaking tasks requires the addition of words/terms to more accurately differentiate student work.
- Agree – not a fine distinction between B and C standards-genre. B control of patterns and conventions – C control of patterns. Don't the conventions establish the patterns? Last dot point in B standards incomplete.
- Agree – In the Communication skills criterion what exactly is meant by *insightful* and *perceptive*? The terms are too vague. The wording of the standards overall needs considerable work to enable teachers to more readily differentiate student work. Another example of this is in the Cognitive process criterion where the gradation in one dimension from standard A – B was from *insightful* to *realistic* – these are two different things. Similarly the same thing occurs in the 2nd dimension within cognitive processes, with the terms *thorough* and *effective* which are also two different concepts rather than two levels within the one concept.
- A.3 comma needed before *enhancing*.
- E.2 *language features* – need to quantify this – suggestion *restricted/limited use*?
- Some points tend to overlap with criterion 1.
- E – clarity is lacking – needs to be written in a similar format to the other levels.

APPENDIX C: EVALUATORS' NOTES FROM VISITS TO TRIAL SCHOOLS, SEMESTER 2, 2009

SCHOOL NO 2 - SMALL METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL WITH ONLY 50 STUDENTS APPROX. IN YR 12

DATE OF VISIT: 13 OCTOBER 2009

Principal:

- Have mixed feelings about the future of the subject at this school. The original concept was good; however, not sure how well it has progressed.
- Working with the panel has been an issue for us, with differences in expectations. There needs to be more direction from syllabus/panel about the number of assessment items required, content in relation to critical literacy and some statement about its purpose in terms of functional literacy outcomes.
- It should have the same rigour as English but when you look at the students you need to ask whose needs it is meeting? We feel it is pitched at too high a level. We thought it would have a focus on functional language, but it has too much focus on literature.
- The fact that Victorian universities will not automatically accept the subject for tertiary entrance purposes, is a possible issue for our students who may consider doing a straight IELTS course.

HOD English (not teaching the subject):

- It is hard to maintain parity/level with Authority English, given:
 - the level the students come in at is not the same
 - students can't cope with critical literacy.The yr 12s are doing OK but the international visa students in yr 11 are struggling.
- Students study a Shakespearean text and are required to undertake research; however there is a lot of plagiarism.
- Year 12 students (currently 6 – a number have left or dropped out, with the class starting with 12 or 13) include refugees, migrants and a couple of international students; year 11 students are all international visa students (15).
- We have an issue with the fact that the subject is not automatically recognized for tertiary entrance purposes in Victoria.
- Pleased that at least a standard C in the communication criterion is required for an overall SA.
- We will continue with the subject next year; however there are concerns about whether we can continue to run it in future if numbers are small.
- Griffith University will take some of the students at the end of yr 11 and offer a bridging program.
- Unfortunately we are getting 3rd and 4th wrung international students and only one is passing in year 11. (The Coordinator of the International School advised the evaluator that only 11% of the English for ESL Learners students were passing the subject.)

Teacher:

- One teacher taking yr 12 (not present on day of evaluator's visit) and another taking yr 11. This teacher has been teaching English for ESL students for 10 years. Trained as an English teacher.
- Two of the students in year 12 have been in Australia since 1986.
- School insisted on 6 assessment items – teacher would prefer the minimum of 5.
- Issues with grammar are addressed as they arise. With the need to incorporate 6 assessment items, there has been no time to explicitly incorporate grammar teaching, although the teacher indicated she will change this next year. The teacher likes the course but would like to cut back on assessment in 2010.
- There is a real problem with plagiarism with the students.
- The teacher feels the Victorian University situation is not a real issue as most of the students will go to Griffith University. She feels the name of the subject is appropriate.
- A good resource is ... *First Steps in Academic Writing* (Charles Sturt University) – has some good things on avoiding plagiarism.
- Students read *The Don* in year 11 and *Lord of the Flies* in year 12.
- The teacher feels the subject has comparability with Authority English – it is as rigorous. Allowing only 2 drafts in yr 11 and 1 in yr 12, however, will be a problem for the students. The teacher said she won't rewrite drafts for them.
- The teacher feels the revised eligibility statement is still very broad. She feels they may not have been applying the eligibility criteria as rigorously as they should have been and will need to look at that in 2010.

Yr 11 students:

- Backgrounds: Australia x 1; China x 4; Japan x 2; Sri Lanka x 3; Lebanon x 1; Philippines x 1; Vietnam x 1. All students commenced the subject in term 1, with the exception of one student who commenced term 2.
- When asked why they took this subject rather than Authority English the students indicated that this subject 'helps us more', 'supports us more than normal English which has a fast pace' and because it is also an OP subject.
- All students indicated they intended to go to University at end yr 12.
- Two of the students said this subject was easier than all of their other subjects; 2 said it was harder, with the remaining students indicating it was about the same level of difficulty as their other subjects.
- All students said they were happy with the subject, although a few said they thought it would be simpler than it is. They agreed that others not taking the subject think it is easy.
- Two students had a preference for the Language of the Media Area of Study, two for Literature, with the remainder preferring Language for Academic Studies.
- While students said they disliked doing grammar, they felt they should do more around sentence structure, etc. They said they disliked the war poetry they had done, that in-class essays are very hard and that the writing expectations are very high. They said two drafts should be allowed in yr 12.
- Students enjoyed reading 'The Don', although it involved them in a 'lot of writing'. They said they find orals easier than written tasks. Their main resources in the subject are handouts, the internet, and videos. They like the subject as it is but feel it would be good to have some choice around topics.
- Students felt that the fact that the Victorian Universities would not automatically accept the subject for tertiary entrance purposes was 'not fair'.

Yr 12 students:

- 6 students – one each from Syria, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Korea, Hong Kong and Japan. The student from Lebanon has been in Australia for 16 years, the student from Afghanistan for 8 years and the others from between 1-3 years.
- The students said they took the subject because it was an OP subject. They said the subject is the same level as Authority English but that they get more attention and one-on-one help in this subject. They said there is ‘more explanation’ and that the ‘normal English class expects more’. They said there was less literature in this subject than in normal English.
- Four of the students said the subject was about the same level of difficulty as their other subjects; two felt it was harder, especially ‘when we do Shakespeare’.
- Two students indicated they enjoyed studying Romeo and Juliet the most.
- The students felt that there needed to be more grammar teaching. They felt there should be more focus on teaching vocabulary and on writing skills and that they like the topics to be relevant and to focus on what they are going to be doing at University eg report writing. They said some of the topics are a bit vague.
- Resources used include a textbook for grammar, printouts, the internet, library, videos.
- Two students said they did not like doing oral presentations, but all agreed there was good variation in what they had to do.
- While it was not the favourite subject of any of the students, they said they like coming to class as the teacher treats them as adults and ‘gives us space to do it on our own’.
- The students said that the cross-marking the teacher has to do with the English HOD is disappointing. They said the HOD ‘doesn’t experience us and know what we’re doing’, that the teacher is experienced and knows what she is doing.
- The students felt that what they had learned in Language for Academic Learning would help them the most, three said that Language in the Media would help them the least and three said Language of Literature would help them the least.
- They felt that the subject name should be changed. They said that ‘mainstream think we are dumb’. They said that the subject was the same level as Authority English.
- Two of the students said there is a lot more work in this subject than they thought there would be and five said they thought it would be easier than it is.
- They felt the subject should continue, however, especially with the growth in immigration. They said in the normal English class, they would be lost.

SCHOOL NO 24 - METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL WITH A TOTAL OF 900 STUDENTS

DATE OF VISIT: 27 OCTOBER 2009

Deputy Principal:

- 1 class of English for ESL Learners in year 12 (14 students) – mainly international students; 2 classes of yr 11 students (33 in total). Two teachers, both of whom have ESL teaching backgrounds.
- Some international students are doing Authority English.
- This school has been involved in international programs since 1990, being one of the first schools to do so.
- Most of the international students come from Nantong in China where they are put through a year 10 English exam. Numbers from Nantong, however, are diminishing of 15 in 2010 with 20 in 2009, resulting in only one year 11 class for 2010.
- For students to go into Authority English they must have a yr 10 English pass. The Deputy indicated he had the following issues with the subject and that, while it has been good to have the option of this subject for this group of students, the school may consider going to the Trial English Syllabus (2008) in 2011:
 - Being a small subject it is harder at verification eg 'can't hide students'. A VH1 had been dropped to HA1 at recent verification.
 - There is a need for the subject to be recognized for tertiary entrance purposes at all Universities in Australia. Five of last year's 18 exiting international students all went to Universities in Victoria, so this is a real issue for this school. If it is not resolved, the school may discontinue offering it and move to offering the Trial English Syllabus (2008).
- The Deputy commented, however, that the subject has served its purpose well and allowed a bit more time to do more language development work and different tasks.

Teachers:

- One teacher is in her 4th year teaching English to ESL students, is English trained and has taught Authority English. The second teacher, also English trained, did ESL teacher training ('ESL in the Mainstream' Course through SA) and also teaches yrs 8-10 ESL students. The teachers feel it would be very difficult teaching English for ESL Learners without having taught Authority English.
- The teachers quite like the criteria in the amended syllabus (March 2009) and feel the Cognitive Skills criterion is easier to work with.
- They will continue offering Language for Academic Learning first up in year 11, giving students the topic 'Implications for International Students in Australian Schools'.
- While they feel it will be hard to restrict drafts to one in year 12, they have a process which they follow viz accept draft, give feedback on content and make a general comment about what needs to be fixed eg spelling, syntax or whatever. If it is a spelling error, they do not correct the spelling; rather they indicate a spelling error with 'sp' and similarly for other errors. Students are asked to fix up and provide a new draft for review. The teachers feel this process helps students to become more independent.
- The two top students were dropped down at verification; the rest were fine.

- The teachers believe the ‘trade-off’ table is appropriate, with a standard C being required in the Communication criterion in order for students to receive an overall SA level of achievement.
- The teachers like the revised eligibility statement – believe it has been ‘opened up’.
- A resource they use and would recommend is ‘English Grammar in Use’ (Murphy, R), with CD. While it is pitched at quite a high level, it is still good. The teachers said they create examples from students’ own work. They feel a lot of ESL resources are not age appropriate (mostly primary level). Students are currently doing interviews – looking at Denton.
- School is very well equipped with computers and these are used a lot.
- The teachers feel the QSA conferences have been very good. They would like to see an English for ESL Teachers network established and cluster meetings held at least once per semester.

Students (yr 11):

- The evaluator spoke with 12 students who came from a variety of countries viz China, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China, Vietnam, Maldives, Iran, Indonesia, Somalia.
- The students said that at this school there is a hierarchy of English subjects – that this subject is seen as easier than Authority English but harder than English Communication.
- The students had a choice and chose this subject because it was OP and they thought it would be easier.
- Most of the students said the subject is their easiest subject and about half said there was less workload in English for ESL Learners than in their other subjects. A number said that they get their best marks in English for ESL learners and just over half said this was their favourite subject.
- Aspects they liked about the subject included:
 - ‘the teachers consider your ability and you get lots of help’
 - ‘it is very easy and there is less pressure’
 - ‘we work through assignments step-by-step in class’.
- The students said that while other subjects ‘care about content’ and not so much the standard of English, they have to be more precise with English in English for ESL Learners.
- Some of the activities they have been undertaking or texts they have read include:
 - Read ‘The Spare Room’, ‘The Burnt Stick’, ‘Stolen Generation’, ‘Rabbit Proof Fence’
 - Have done one oral communication task, another coming up – all students indicated they like doing these and get better marks for these than for written work.
 - Did a lot of grammar in terms 1 and 2 but don’t do much grammar now.
 - Have read newspaper articles and completed a previous exam paper.
 They said they have not studied any Shakespeare and do not like the unseen assessment tasks.
- The students said that what they had learnt in Language for Academic Learning had helped them with their other subjects.
- They said that they feel more comfortable in this class to discuss things in class.
- They said it was really difficult for the teachers as they (the students) came in with all different levels of English proficiency and need more practice than other students. One student commented that she thinks ‘efficiency of learning is low because of this ... but guess it takes time’.
- The students felt the drafting guidelines in the syllabus were appropriate.

- The students felt that the name should be changed to English as an Additional Language and said that 'people here think ESL is easier or dumber'.
- The students said they had not covered anything much yet from Language of the Media and had focused on Language for Academic Learning which they didn't like but which had helped them.
- They indicated that they would like to have a textbook and that students should be encouraged to read more.
- They all agreed that the subject was really helpful, that they were glad they had taken it and added that they had nice teachers.

APPENDIX D: TEACHER WORKSHOP TASK – OCTOBER 2009 TEACHER CONFERENCE

GROUP TASK:

In your group, please consider the criterion (and associated standards) allocated to you ... consider the comments of teachers made in relation to this criterion, as outlined in the evaluator's 2nd interim report and repeated below ... indicate with a highlighter which of these issues your group as a whole considers need to be addressed and add (in the table on p4) any additional issues that should be taken into account in relation to this criterion (and associated standards) in the revision of the syllabus ...

EXTRACT FROM EVALUATOR'S 2ND INTERIM REPORT

The amended syllabus (2009) has taken some of the teachers' feedback, as outlined in the first interim report, into account and teachers report that the criteria and standards are now somewhat improved; however, trial teachers have identified a number of aspects associated with the criteria and standards in the amended syllabus that require refinement.

Teachers' comments on the criteria and standards in the amended syllabus (March 2009) are outlined below, followed by comments of Principals and teachers about the equivalence of this subject to Authority English.

5.13.2 Knowledge about language criterion

- In the footnote to the Knowledge about language criterion, in relation to non-verbal, there is no reference to pause, pace, pitch, etc.
- Criterion 1 – is ambiguous, particularly in relation to grammar, which is trickier to pinpoint
- In the Knowledge about language criterion, verbal features should be a separate dimension to give it more weight
- There is only one dimension within Knowledge about language devoted to oral/verbal and within that dimension is also non-verbal, visual and auditory language features
- Would like to see more specificity in the Knowledge about language criteria and standards
- Speech elements seem to be restricted to one criteria. Are we able to tease out the various elements as appropriate on our task sheets such that we can assess elements separately?
- Standard B .5 reads - *Sustained use of appropriate paragraphing, a range of punctuation and spelling*. To judge punctuation and spelling it may read *sustained use of a range of punctuation and spelling*. Whilst the word *range* has been useful in documents in the past to describe vocabulary, it seems to have little merit when trying to assess spelling and punctuation. How would teachers make a judgment?
- Standard C.1 - I question the use of the word *suitable* in relation to characteristics of oral response. The word seems a little too nebulous - why not *appropriate* as English teachers may be more familiar with that and it is the word that appears in most other documents elsewhere. After all, judgments here may determine SA or LA and teachers need clear guidance in descriptors when making such critical judgments. Likewise standard C.1

- Standard C.5 What is *appropriate punctuation and spelling*?
- Standard E.2 The following syntax seems awkward: *basic sentence structures grammatically accurate*
- For spoken tasks, the very general *wide range of non-verbal conventions* could be made more specific (maybe dot points eg audibility/clarity/intonation, etc)
- Hard to distinguish between A & B descriptors (eg *precise, efficient*).
- Not sure what the difference is between *efficient control* (B standard) and *precise and sustained control* (A standard)
- More descriptors pertaining to verbal
- Given that this is an English for ESL Learners course, I believe that verbal (and non-verbal) features should be marked separately as in previous draft. This emphasises the importance of both in communication ideas.
- The non-verbal features are not clear.
- In the Knowledge about language criterion, visual and non-visual should be in separate dimensions as they are in the English 2002 syllabus. ... because all of these things (verbal, non-verbal, visual and auditory language features) are lumped together in the one dimension, they have to be assessed together and that is unrealistic.
- Why is *eye contact* not included in the list of non-verbal features?
- ...verbal features such as the following could be included – modulation, eye contact, body language/gestures.

5.13.3 Cognitive processes criterion

- Criterion 2 is very confusing .. there needs to be greater clarity between the standards as it is difficult to differentiate between them as they are now.
- In relation to criterion 2, there is a wide range of opinion amongst teachers (and QSA) about what an A analysis or B analysis would be. ...it is not helpful to have such a wide range of interpretations ..
- A.1 Problem with vocabulary overlap (and resulting confusion) when you consider the word *analysis* and the glossary definition of subject matter. Also, this (Halliday?) way of defining subject matter may be extremely problematic for teachers given that subject matter usually means content.
- A.3 lower case needed on *insightful*
- B.3 What is a realistic position - I was not alone in being concerned by this imprecise/ambiguous wording ie *realistic*.
- E.1 reversal of words typo
- Still a bit 'fuzzy' – cognitive process are not JUST in relation to other texts but should be evident in own texts.
- Subjective – Really want key indicators on a continuum of language development
- Still having difficulty distinguishing between *well-substantiated* and *well thought-out*
- Amended syllabus – first bullet point *analysis of subject matter from ... variety of texts* does not read *in response to texts* as implied at conference. For research report, particularly as first task (yr 11) this might be read as analysis of texts to collect suitable content for report but analysis of texts not explicit in the composition of report. More flexibility needed. Likewise *evaluations* does suggest *suitable to the context*.
- *Wide variety of texts* needs clarifying.

- The cognitive skills criterion needs reworking as, with the way it stands, students cannot get credit for the full range of tasks they are doing ... the tasks I am setting are quite complex and students have to draw substantial conclusions from the content. While the tasks demanded implicitly that the students could analyse a wide range of texts and genres, this was done 'by the way' rather than explicitly. When they are looking at narrative genres then, the students cannot be assessed on the cognitive skills criterion. Another dimension should be added relating to the construction of the students' own texts.
- Criterion 2 is very confusing and there needs to be greater clarity between the standards as it is difficult to differentiate between them as they are now.

5.13.4 Communication skills criterion

- Criterion 3 – also a bit ambiguous eg ... *integration of language features ... strengthening meaning* – this is a hard thing to judge. Similarly with the dimension ... *logical selection* ... it is difficult to differentiate between the standards for both of these dimensions (2nd and 3rd within the criterion);
- In the Communication skills criterion what exactly is meant by *insightful* and *perceptive*? The terms are too vague. The wording of the standards overall needs considerable work to enable teachers to more readily differentiate student work. Another example of this is in the Cognitive process criterion where the gradation in one dimension from standard A-B was from *insightful* to *realistic* – these are two different things. Similarly the same thing occurs in the 2nd dimension within cognitive processes, with the terms *thorough* and *effective* which are also two different concepts rather than two levels within the one concept.
- There is a big jump between a D and an E standard in criterion 3 and it is not clear what is meant by some of the dimensions in these such as .. statements of *simple ideas* and *language features that respond to the particular audience, purpose or context*.
- A.3 Comma needed before *enhancing*?
- C.3 Grammatically, should it be 'suit' rather than 'suits'?
- E.2 *language features* - need to quantify this?
- The standard for speaking tasks requires the addition of words/terms to more accurately differentiate student work
- Not a fine distinction between B and C standards-genre. B *control of patterns and conventions* – C *control of patterns*. Don't the conventions establish the patterns? Last dot point in B standards incomplete.