Hello, I am Gordon Stobart. I am Emeritus Professor of Education here at the Institute of Education in London and it is my pleasure to introduce this DVD.

You’re probably asking: What’s a ‘Brit’ doing fronting a DVD for Queensland’s teachers? Well the answer is, I am somebody who looks at assessment systems across the world, and Queensland has something that is really remarkable — a system of high-stakes certification in which the teachers are at the centre. That school-based assessment is trusted as a way of arriving at a reliable decision about student achievement.

You’ll be well aware that elsewhere in the world teachers would not be trusted like that. That we rely heavily on external exams. In some other countries teacher assessment does play a part, but it is a minor part because nobody is sure about standardising the teachers, the quality of the assessment and the like. So Queensland has something remarkable and to maintain this we need a process of continuous development, continuous professional development. And that’s what this DVD is assisting you with. What we are going to see on this is, for example: How do we align our curriculum? Our teaching and learning with our assessment? We are going to look at: How do we move to reliable judgment about student achievement.

So my message is: keep up the good work, Queensland. There’s many of us watching you as a model of what can be done. And there will be many teachers across the world who would be amazed that teachers can be given this responsibility. So we look to you and I hope this DVD will help you in this process. Thank you.

Teachers, as professionals, become involved in the assessment process by using the syllabus: they use the syllabus objectives; they use the syllabus standards to design effective assessment; they develop work programs; and they then will develop teaching and learning. So, as informed professionals, they are able then to conduct assessment and then make judgments.
The assessment processes relies on teachers as professionals using the syllabus dimensions or general objectives to design courses of study, and assessment programs for students in their classrooms. They deliver the general objectives through their teaching and learning, they make decisions about assessment design and they implement the assessment with their students.

School-based assessment gives me the opportunity to tailor assessment instruments to best suit the needs of my students. I'm the one who's taught them. I've prepared the learning experiences for them, so it makes sense that I can also prepare the assessment instruments that I use to judge them against the demands of the syllabus.

School-based assessment is something that I've seen as being on the job. It's, it's at school, we see the students learning, we see them finding out how to do things, and that way we can assess them from where they are at.

And while we're all using the same syllabus, some of the stimulus that we've used — some of the activities we've done — they'll be different in different classrooms, different in the same school let alone different schools. So it allows me to assess them on the work that we've done together.

As a classroom teacher I value school-based assessment because I am the one responsible for the teaching and learning that caters to the needs of my students. The syllabus is flexible enough to allow me to design assessment instruments that not only caters to the needs of my students but also allows opportunities for them to demonstrate the general objectives.

The school-based assessment means that we can have a lot more control and a lot more openness about what we can actually teach and we can do in our classrooms. So, it means that I can tailor my learning experiences to the assessment and vice versa. If my class goes in a particular direction with its learning experiences, then I can be confident that my assessment will match that because I'm setting that.

Students at different schools have different needs and by having a school-based assessment model, coming from the syllabus, schools can develop work programs and assessment pieces which suit the class that they teach for that particular year, for that cohort. And that's the key reason why we have school-based assessment. It allows for a diversity of assessment to be practised, whether that is multimodals, in-class essays, assignments. So that diversity of assessment allows for the different ways that students might present or the different strengths to be provided as evidence for a teacher to demonstrate their learning.

The teacher has a number of roles in the assessment process. The first is that they would design the assessment. They would do that based on the teaching and learning experiences that they provide for their students. They then make judgments about the assessment when the students have responded to it. And finally, they make judgments at the completion about a student's performance across the folio of evidence.