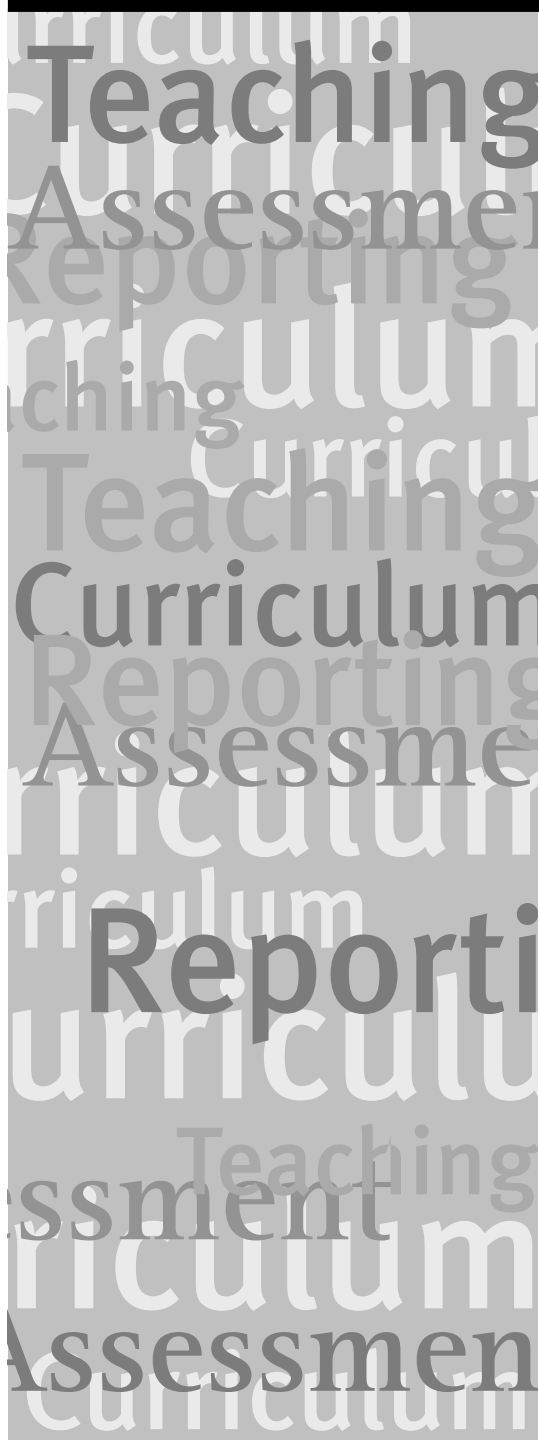


Smarter Learning: The Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework

April 2005



**Queensland
Government**
Department of
Education and the Arts

A smarter start for all Queensland students

Queensland education leaders are developing a framework to improve student learning and increase comparability of assessment and reporting across schools.

The Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework will set new standards to define what is studied in Queensland schools, and how it is assessed and reported.

The framework will address concerns raised by teachers and the community about the amount of material required to be covered in the Years 1-10 curriculum, which is hindering in-depth learning.

Concerns have also been raised about a lack of clarity around what must be taught across schools and what standards of student achievement are expected.

The new framework will define the essential curriculum and set standards of achievement for students across the state from the Preparatory Year to Year 10 (P-10).

For teachers, this will mean clearer direction on what needs to be taught, and access to new tools and resources to support their teaching.

For the first time in Queensland's P-10 years there will be rigorous, comprehensive assessment against defined standards that will be comparable across schools.

The framework will bring clear and measurable standards and progressive assessment to the early and middle years of schooling. Queensland's education system is widely recognised as doing this well in the senior years.

Queensland schools already achieve excellent results for young Queenslanders and these changes will help them do even better.

The policy direction for the framework is being developed by the Department of Education and the Arts in collaboration with the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, the Association for Independent Schools Queensland, Education Queensland and the Queensland Studies Authority.

New framework

The new Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework will align:

- curriculum (what is taught)
- teaching (how it is taught)
- assessment (how students demonstrate what they have learnt) and
- reporting (how learning is recognised and communicated to students, parents, teachers, community members, employers and systems).

The framework will:

- define what is essential curriculum for all students in Years P-10
- assist schools to continue to provide other curriculum appropriate to local needs
- set standards of student achievement in the essential curriculum
- create a bank of assessment tools for teachers that link to the essential curriculum and standards
- establish, at three key points (yet to be determined) in the P-10 years, rigorous comparable assessment against the defined standards, which will result in consistent teacher judgments of student achievement
- specify a common framework for reporting student achievement against standards
- provide for ongoing review and refinement of Queensland's P-10 syllabuses based on a rigorous evidence-based approach.

Queensland's current syllabus materials will be enhanced to better support schools in their planning of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting. Schools currently organise their curriculum in various ways, including by subject areas and by topics, and the new framework will allow schools to continue this practice.

The new framework will be based on the eight Key Learning Area syllabuses – The Arts, English, Health and Physical Education, Languages other than English, Mathematics, Science, Studies of Society and the Environment, and Technology – as well as other curriculum materials.

Support for teachers

The framework will support teachers and teaching that is tailored to meet the unique needs of students. The framework will not add to teacher workload or dictate how to teach. In fact, it will make teachers' work clearer and easier.

The essential curriculum will be described specifically, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the learning opportunities that must be provided to students.

For teachers, there will be a shared understanding of, and common language for describing, what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do in the essential curriculum.

The standards for the essential curriculum will help teachers judge how well a student is performing at a particular stage of schooling.

The bank of assessment tools will provide high-quality assessment resources that teachers can choose to use. The assessment bank will complement, but not replace school-devised assessment.

In-depth learning and better reports

The framework is designed to ensure that standards and assessment have a positive effect on student learning.

Rigorous comparable assessment against defined standards at key points will allow students to demonstrate a broad range of learning and deep understanding.

The new assessment will also support school and system-level planning by providing more comprehensive and comparable data on school performance.

For parents, the framework will deliver easy-to-read reports that show how well their children are performing compared with others and what is expected at their year level. At present, it can be difficult for parents to clearly understand their children's level of achievement.

Building on current reforms

Queensland is a leader in educational reform. In recent years, a range of initiatives has been implemented across all schools, including the Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF) and Schools Reporting.

Through the ETRF initiatives the Queensland Government has taken action to:

- provide a solid foundation for early education through the introduction of a universally available non-compulsory Preparatory Year from 2007
- improve engagement and achievement in the middle phase of learning
- establish new 'earning or learning' laws which require young people to be in learning, training or work until they achieve a Senior Certificate, a Certificate III or turn 17.

The recent changes to Schools Reporting guarantee better quality and more frequent information about school and student performance, including at least two student reports per year and parent-teacher meetings each semester.

Building on these reforms, the new Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework will help ensure:

- all students are equipped to actively contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the community
- all students make worthwhile progress in their learning and are inspired to become lifelong learners
- reporting of student achievement is reliable and comparable across schools.

Queensland is working with other states to achieve greater national consistency in curriculum outcomes. The framework will link to this national project.

Where to from here?

There are two components to the development of the framework for Queensland schools – setting the policy direction and creating materials and tools.

To progress the policy direction, two groups have been established.

The Policy Steering Committee provides advice to the Minister for Education and the Arts. It includes the chief executive officers of the Catholic, Independent and state education sectors and the Queensland Studies Authority.

The Expert Advisory Group comprising leading academics and expert practitioners has been established to support the Policy Steering Committee. This group provides independent advice on the intellectual rigour of the policy direction for the framework, particularly theoretical and technical issues.

From this, the Queensland Government will set parameters to guide the creation of the materials and tools that make up the framework.

The Queensland Studies Authority will develop the materials and tools for Queensland schools. This includes the essential curriculum, the standards of student achievement, the bank of assessment tools, the rigorous comparable assessment and the reporting framework.

The Queensland Studies Authority will consult with key stakeholders – teachers, principals, parent groups, employers, unions and those representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, special needs, rural and remote, and higher education groups.

Schools will be involved in trials under the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework from 2006. The new framework will be implemented statewide in 2008.

Project partners

Policy Steering Committee	Expert Advisory Group
Chair	Chair
Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of Education and the Arts	Professor Peter Freebody, The University of Queensland
Members	Members
Joe McCorley, Queensland Catholic Education Commission	Professor John Elkins, Griffith University
Dr John Roulston/Dr Barry Arnison, Association of Independent Schools Queensland	Professor Royce Sadler, Griffith University
Jenny Cranston, Education Queensland	Associate Professor Claire Wyatt-Smith, Griffith University
Kim Bannikoff, Queensland Studies Authority	Margaret Forster, Australian Council for Educational Research
Professor Peter Freebody, The University of Queensland	Dr Gabrielle Matters, Department of Education and the Arts
	Dr Graham Maxwell, Queensland Studies Authority
	Practitioner representatives from Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Association of Independent Schools Queensland and Education Queensland

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