

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education and Innovation Committee](#)
Subject: Submission - Assessment Methods for Senior Maths, Chemistry and Physics
Date: Thursday, 21 March 2013 10:58:30 PM

Dear Sir/Madam,

I request that my personal details be withheld from publication to avoid any influence on my school children whatsoever.

I make this submission for your consideration in the Inquiry into the Assessment Methods for Senior Maths, Chemistry and Physics in Queensland.

As a parent I offer the following insight to your terms of reference:

- Ensuring assessment processes are supported by teachers

I am a parent concerned about the scoring system being used for maths type subjects. Comments by my children intrigued me and led me to seek explanation from teachers. The scoring system today is much different from when I was a student, it seems much more cumbersome. Teachers expressed how time consuming it was to score papers full of individual alphabet scores (e.g. A,B,C,D) and that they weren't allowed to average these scores in a mathematical sense. When the range of A+,A,A-,B+,B,B- etc. scores are considered, the permutations become many.

I also give credit to the teachers that were frank with me and acknowledged that the long assignments in these subjects at times detracted from the subject matter.

- Student participation levels

How perplexing it was for me as a parent to hear my school children make statements about a maths exam such as "I have to get the last question right because it's worth an A." "I can't get an A for the exam (or assignment) if I get the last question wrong, even if I get every other question right." "I'm going to spend more time on the last question, the other questions don't matter because they are only C and D level questions". The alphabet scoring system of maths type subjects adds a confusing layer of concern, rather than allowing the student to focus on and be rewarded for calculating every question correctly. A scoring system should be simple, clear, intuitive and unambiguous.

How moving it was for me to hear that my child was scored down on their maths "assignment" despite spending many hours accurately surveying and calculating a land area with incredible accuracy. The system has gone mad when the focus of the subject has been lost and the student is penalised instead of being rewarded.

- The ability of assessment processes to support valid and reliable judgments of student outcomes

Having had the current scoring system (alphabet scores tallied by "feeling") explained to me by teachers, my first instinct and even studied consideration makes me believe the only way to gain an accurate collation of the alphabet scores (for example in the scoring of a 20 question exam) is to convert all the alphabet scores to numeric scores. However, apart from being very time consuming, the teachers have been instructed not to convert to numbers! Therefore the alphabet score will forever be unreliable. It is impossible to accurately compare students who have sat the same exam let alone compare cohorts across multiple campuses.

How simple it would be to score a maths exam with a numeric scoring system. How simple it

would be to compare results of students sitting the same exam throughout the state.

Yours sincerely

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