

I am an experienced senior mathematics/physics teacher. I have taught in both Queensland and Northern Territory schools. My opinion about the QSA staff is that they must be teachers that haven't been in a classroom for years and have forgotten the importance of inspiring our students. I see my job as a teacher to show my passion for the subject and hopefully inspire my students to have that same passion.

To emphasise my point I would like to give an example of a student I teach. This student always had a passion for science. His results in year 10 were straight A's. Humanities wanted him to continue with their subjects in years 11 & 12 but he always wanted to follow the science/ maths path. He is currently the top English, Maths, Physics and Chemistry student in year 12. He is in the mid/high VHA band for these subjects along with Japanese and English. This term he told me he didn't want to have anything to do with the sciences after year 12. His passion has died because of the workload in his science subjects and his need for perfection. This student's EEI would make most university students work look inadequate. The detail and insight he shows inspires me to want to know more.

The assessment that the students have to undertake is unfair to all students. If a student can research well and write well then their results are good. However these students often don't understand the physics. The fact is that most schools only have one piece of assessment in class time (SRI or Supervised Assessment) for the entire year. Often there is a great discrepancy between EEI/ERT results and in-class supervised assessment results. Usually not a lot of criteria are addressed and therefore the weighting of that piece is very low compared to the EEI and ERT. Hence the students get an inflated mark for Physics. The criteria marking also makes it difficult to distinguish a high VHA from a mid/low VHA.

I myself find it impossible to even ask for a top VHA. Panel would certainly just pull it down, no matter how good the evidence is in their portfolio. It's easy for panel to look at criteria and make an argument to back up their point of view. It is very subjective. In my opinion there is no consistency amongst schools, even amongst teachers at the same school.

Bronwyn Miller

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