

To: The Education and Innovation Committee eic@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Members,

As a parent and husband to a mathematics teacher, I wish to address the following:-

1. Ensuring assessment processes are supported by teachers.

I am very concerned about the QSA and its approach to assessment. I have witnessed my wife's workload increase over the years and hence her stress levels, particularly since the introduction of assignments in maths. These unnecessarily lengthy assignments are extremely time consuming to mark. As a result, I have seen my wife spend many hours marking at home, taking her away from our own children, who often need her assistance with their own homework and assignments. Based on my wife's experiences, I believe that the current assessment processes are not supported by the majority of teachers, especially those in higher level, more academically rigorous, subject areas.

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

Assessing mathematics through long-winded written assignments is not valid for many reasons, including:-

- a) According to my wife, cheating is common.
- b) Students do not learn much maths because they often cheat.
- c) The assignments are pitched at a more mature audience, so it's unrealistic to expect the students to be doing them by themselves.
- d) These assignments use up too much time, which could be more productively spent learning the fundamentals of maths.

The wordy, subjective criteria, called standards, imposed by the QSA, are the most ridiculous thing I have ever seen. Surely the old system of marks and percentages would be a more effective method of assessing students (and certainly more readily understood by parents who just want a clear picture of their child's progress so that any weaknesses can be identified and addressed).

The QCS exam and OP calculation is an unfair method of assessing a student's entry into University. The fact that the results of a school's cohort influences an individual's result, is highly unfair. Students should be examined on the subjects they have studied. Little wonder some University Faculties set their own entrance exams - a clear indication that the current assessment system is flawed!

I believe that state-wide exams, set by an external panel of experienced maths teachers and other experts, (but certainly not the QSA, given its track record to date), would be far better than the current system.

Sincerely,
Greg Comben