

Education and Innovation Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 11 May 2013 7:40 PM
To: Education and Innovation Committee
Subject: External Senior Examinations

Categories: Blue Category

To Whom It May Concern

Given the ease that people, particularly young people, can use the internet to purchase or copy assignments, the only way to manage questionable assignments and gain clean data is by students undertaking examinations. Plagiarism is flourishing in lots of courses; if society believes in merit, equity and fairness, the only effective method of achieving these outcomes is through External Senior Examinations combined with defined standards rather than grades.

Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology students have had judgements made on their ability to write in sentences/paragraphs and these impact on their results considerably. This raises the question, why do very capable Maths students who gets everything correct, but end up with a 'B's because they did not communicate or explain themselves clearly in sentences/paragraphs etc.? Marks would fix that issue. (We are not talking about a logical well-sequenced response being penalised.)

Students undertaking External Senior Examinations escape the extended experimental investigations (EEI) that internally-assessed students are plagued by, BUT they are assessed using criteria and NOT marks.

My son was unable to cope with continuous assessment at a private school due to medical reasons. Continuous assessments made my son ill. He needed an alternate option to assignments that caused him considerable stress. Fortunately for my son he could sit examinations and he was successful in achieving results through the External Senior Examinations. I feel very fortunate that my son was able to undertake examinations and in particular, he was happy to undertake the External Senior Examinations. This option needs to remain open to all, so that young people with and without disabilities, in particular males, have the opportunity to sit an examination rather than be continuously assessed. My son gained entry to the University of Queensland's Engineering degree/Biotechnology double degree but he was unable to cope with the assessment tasks as it placed too much stress on him. I remain grateful that my son had the opportunity to sit the External Senior Examinations, so that his intellect and ability could be formally acknowledged in an educational system with valid and reliable reporting processes.

I request the following:

- **Immediately** preserving the 100% external exam system because they produce valid and reliable outcomes.
- **from January 2015**, implementing 90% external exams to scale internal school-based assessment because that brings validity and reliability into all schools
- **from January 2014**, replace QSA method with transparent numerical marking guidelines for right and wrong answers (for internal and external assessment, i.e. including Hubbard's) – because that reduces

subjectivity AND teacher time and students can easily see why they got a 'C', 'B' or 'A' because they got 60% or 70% or 90%.

- **Assignments need to be stopped** in Maths, Chemistry and Physics as assignments are not effective learning instruments.
- **from January 2014**, assignments in Chemistry and Physics to count for no more than 10% of overall senior assessment; assignments to become optional to count for zero to a maximum of 10% of senior assessment; no more long assignments and maximum word caps to enforced - because we want our students taught and not 'reading, writing then forgetting' key maths and science knowledge and skills.

In summary, the External Senior Examinations were a valuable part of my son's education. If he only had access to assignments my son would have left school early and have never continued on to further studies. He now studies externally and is happy to undertake examinations and my son's future is looking positive because examinations cause him less stress than assignments. I know that the results my son gained through him undertaking examinations genuinely reflected his academic ability and the data was not skewed by unreliable and invalid assessment techniques.

I would like my private details to be withheld from the public.

