

Submission on Maths, Chemistry & Physics Assessment

My name is Ross Grimley. I hold a B. Sc., Dip. Ed., both from UQ and a Grad. Dip. in IT. (Applied Physics) from UCQ.

I have worked in Industry, was awarded ARACI status and have taught in Regional and Remote Area Schools in Queensland for the past 25 years. I have taught Chemistry, Physics, Maths A and B in each of these sectors. I have been a QSA Panel member in Maths, Chemistry and Physics.

I have also worked in External Studies where I taught Maths B and Physics and was the Chief Examiner for Physics from 2009-2012.

I am not advocating any system to be preferable to another. I intend to provide evidence from my experience in the above sectors.

In the school systems educators are competing with:

- Sport, school based and external.
 - Musicals
 - Excursions
 - Trips during school holidays
 - Formals etc..
 - Months of QCS practice
- During the course of the school year. All of these wonderful opportunities are part of our great education system, and feature extensively in school year books.

Unfortunately, what often happens is that these offerings(Athletics and football finals proliferate Term3) and assessment timelines overlap and it is not uncommon to see multiple assessment tasks being undertaken by students. Some are unduly onerous and students are often heard to be spending inordinate amounts of time doing them. Many students have part-time jobs, and this increases the burden. It is very easy to talk about 'falling standards', yet Teachers perform great juggling acts during the Education Process from Prep. To Year 12.

The External System I worked in prepared students for the Senior External Examinations which were run in November. Students mostly worked, attended classes in the evening and adhered as best as possible to a syllabus that was prescriptive. Practical offerings were not as extensive as those within the school system, yet this was offset by experiences from the work place and a wonderful camaraderie that developed in the classes. My experience would indicate that students attending either system were advantaged or disadvantaged in any

way. The External students I taught included students presently at school, returning to school, mature age, migrants and refugees. All students who had chosen the appropriate subjects and attended classes with the right attitude succeeded in both systems currently offered within Queensland.

As far as a National Curriculum is concerned all States need consistency here. The flaws in the internal assessment model ie. Tests within schools do not have the rigour of the external model, and often conflict where, say a Biology and Physics test are run on the same day, not all schools are using anti-plagiarism software etc., could be offset by some External assessment. This would allay much of the current criticism. Trust me, there is nothing to fear from External Exams under the current system. I wrote External Assessment for four years, stayed within the Syllabus and had to justify almost every component of assessment . The level of Quality Control was equivalent to working in a NATA laboratory.