

Education and Innovation Committee

From: [REDACTED]
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To: Education and Innovation Committee
Subject: Assessment in QLD schools

Categories: Blue Category

I am currently in my 40th year of teaching. I have spent those years working in a variety of schools in Qld-State and Catholic schools. For 17 years of that time I taught adults Senior Maths B preparing them for an external exam. At present I am head of Maths at a large p-12 school.

My concerns with the current assessment process in Qld schools are:

1. The vague criteria, especially the Communication and Justification Criterion in Maths A,B and C.
2. The time taken for both students to do and teachers to mark the EMPS/EEI/ERT pieces of assessment
3. The ownership of the assignment work submitted by students

1. At our school we use marks for the KP criterion in Maths A, B and C. We also use marks for each question in MPS although these are not totalled. This system has wide spread support amongst the staff at our school. However we have received negative feedback from panels for using marks to arrive at our decisions. The CJ criterion is marked by “ticking boxes” and is very subjective. Most of our Maths teachers even with many years experience find it very difficult to separate the marking of CJ from KP and/or MPS.

2. Although the QSA argues there is a word limit for EEIs etc most staff say that it is not possible for 16/17 yr old students to adequately address the criteria within these limits. Hence the documents become extremely large, taking an inordinate amount of time for students to do and very importantly for staff to correct. One consequence of this in our school, apart from it turning students off the subject, is that the staff members with young families are finding the work load prohibitive. These very gifted teachers are opting not to teach years 11 and 12.

3. Very often with Maths results there is a great difference between assignment results and test results. This is because many students have tutors who virtually do the work for them. I know this to be true as I have two sons who are tutors and there is an expectation that they will do the assignments as this is what the parents consider they are paying for. The inequity in these situations is frustrating. Students from less wealthy families are disadvantaged.

I recently heard on a Radio National science program that the number of enrolments in courses at Universities needing Maths/Physics is dropping faster in Qld universities than in other states. If as the QSA oft repeated catch-cry “that we are the envy of the western world for our assessment methods” is true, I wonder why our students are opting out of continuing with these subjects at uni. Hopefully as the Australian curriculum moves

into years 11 and 12 we will see streamlining of assessment procedures throughout the country. I am very confident that NSW and Vic will NOT adopt criteria marking in Maths.

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