

Education and Innovation Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 13 May 2013 4:24 PM
To: Education and Innovation Committee
Subject: Mathematics Assessment

<PLEASE WITH HOLD MY NAME WHEN PUBLISHING.>

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

Dear Committee Members,

I have been teaching mathematics and science for 7 years. I am frustrated about the approach to assessment in QLD. My workload I feel is outrageous. The reason I say this is that I spend more of my time setting and marking assessment than I do planning quality lessons. What concerns me is that my students complete a course which consists of assessment that is written by a teacher who has 7 years' experience and spends the majority of her time writing and checking assessment instead of planning quality lessons. The assessment is different for students in my school compared to other schools in my area. I am on panel and the only similarities between my students' work and the next school is that they study the same topics. It is absurd that every school has to reinvent the wheel when it comes to setting assessment. You compare that to students in NSW who study a course that is that is well planned and has an assessment component which is written by experts in assessment setting as well as the content area.

Once teachers have spent all their time writing assessment we then have to try to award a standard. The standards are terrible and open to interpretation. Regardless of the amount of internal and external moderation it is almost impossible to award a standard consistently. Internally there are a number of heated discussions trying to justify a level of achievement. Externally, the way one school awards standards is completely different to the way another school awards standards. These students are studying the same course but assessed differently. HOW IS THIS FAIR?

Often teachers spend so long matching the standards to the task that the task then loses its meaning. The students end up with an assignment that the best students often do not understand or know what is asked of them. Often these assignments take the students 10-15 hours to do and students may have 4 or 5 of these assignments occurring at once. These kids are also having to balance a number of other commitments. No wonder what they produce is often below an acceptable standard.

People complain that student outcomes in QLD are so low. Our students are no better or worse than any other state, however, our teachers spend more time doing paper work then they do planning quality lessons. Students are required to complete assessment that is poorly constructed and they lose quality learning time to complete these tasks in class. It is no coincidence then that our students do poorly.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]