

# ***Years 1-10 Curriculum Framework for Education Queensland Schools. Policy and Guidelines***

Queensland Studies Authority, 2001

## **Overview of the document**

19 page statement of policy with guidelines that define “the approach to core learnings and associated pedagogy, assessment and reporting that is required for all students of Education Queensland schools in Years 1-10 at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”, in particular linking “system-wide requirements to syllabuses developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC)”. (p. 2)

## **Keywords**

Core learnings; pedagogy; assessment; reporting; key learning areas; moderation; changing futures; futures scenarios.

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## **Summary of Contents**

### **PREAMBLE AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- Sets out two major goals: “to provide quality educational experiences and ensure quality outcomes for all students”; and “to raise the completion rate of Year 12 or its equivalent to 88 per cent of students.” (p. 1)
- Notes that the purpose of this document is to provide the structure to allow schools to achieve the curriculum objectives of QSE-2010 and to enable schools to respond to geographical and cultural complexity and diversity, meaning the needs of learners situated in the local community, while responding to global realities. (p. 1)
- States that “School curriculum plans that give substance to this framework will:
  - increase intellectual engagement and relevance in Years 1-10;
  - strengthen learning and teaching in the middle years of schooling;
  - conceptualise and develop multiple pathways through schooling into changing workforces and tertiary studies;
  - engage with relevant futures scenarios and technologies.” (p. 1)

### **CONTEXT**

- Emphasises the commitment of Education Queensland to prepare students for “the challenges of a changing society through dynamic curriculum and sound pedagogy”. (p. 2)

- Notes that the Curriculum Framework was written in the context of a number of contemporary initiatives involving curriculum reform and renewal, 13 of which are listed.
- Notes that pre-readings central to understanding the context in which this policy document is set are:
  - Queensland State Education – 2010, ‘Objectives and Strategies’, p. 15; and
  - New Basics-Curriculum Organisers, ‘Comparisons with other curriculum organisers’, p. 7.

## **GUIDING VALUES AND PRINCIPLES**

- Lists and outlines the following guiding principles:
  - “Education as a social investment”: Described as “equipping students with the skills and knowledges...that have power and salience in the world”. (p. 3)
  - “Balanced responsibilities”: Described as the establishment of equilibrium between school-based management and system-wide mandate and corresponding accountability. (p. 3)
  - “Ideal school environments”: Described as “safe, accepting and disciplined environments”. (p. 3)
  - “Futures-oriented curriculum”: States that “greater value is placed on the knowledges, understandings and skills that will equip students to engage with the future. Networked learning communities enhance a futures orientation.” (p. 3)
  - “Differentiation”: Notes that this involves placing a premium on “diversity, flexibility, and building the social capital of communities”. (p. 3)
  - “Accountability”: Described as the clear and comprehensible matching of a curriculum plan and its results. (p. 3)
  - “High expectations for student achievement and teacher/school development”. (p. 3)
  - “Teacher professionalism”: States that “Teachers are empowered through school-based decision making... and by being connected with learning and development opportunities”.
  - “Knowledgeable community”: Emphasises the importance of a “shared understanding of the theory and practice of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment”. (p. 3)

## **POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

### **School curriculum plan guidelines**

- Makes the following points:
  - a) Schools may choose their own format for curriculum plans as the plan is for it “to be a living document”. (p. 4)
  - b) Schools need to respond to four key challenges in developing curriculum plans:
    - “to increase intellectual engagement and global and local connectedness across Years 1-10;
    - to improve teaching and learning, especially in middle years of schooling;
    - to conceptualise and develop multiple pathways through school into changing workforces and tertiary studies;
    - to engage with relevant futures scenarios and technologies.” (p. 4)

- c) Schools have the flexibility to “organise, schedule and deliver core outcomes in ways that meet the needs of students and the demands of their school community”. (p. 4)
- d) “There is an overlap of outcomes in some key learning area (KLA) syllabuses.” (p. 4)
- e) “Teachers may need to work collaboratively in teams across learning areas and develop strong links with communities.” (p. 4)
- f) “A school is free to introduce other curriculum offerings” than core learnings “to meet the differentiation and the specialised needs of its education community”. (p. 4)
- g) “A school should consider diverse pathways that students may take through Years 11 and 12”, e.g.
  - “introducing at Level 6 some discretionary outcomes that are pertinent preparation for a senior Board subject”; and
  - “planning for students to demonstrate Level 6 outcomes part way through Year 10 and using the remainder of the year as preparation for Years 11 and 12, whether for Board subjects or vocational education and training.” (p. 4)
- h) Specialised methodologies and support may be needed to enable all students (including from LOTE background, with disabilities, the ‘gifted and talented’) to access the curriculum.

### **School curriculum plan policy**

- Makes the following points:
  1. “Each school will develop own school curriculum plan.” (p. 5)
  2. This will detail the school’s curriculum offerings in terms of the following elements: core learnings; teaching strategies; utilisation and development of a range of assessment devices; reporting on student progress and achievement.
  3. The school will decide on “all elements of the school curriculum plan”. (p. 5)
  4. “The school curriculum plan will reflect and respond to the educational needs of all students.” (p. 5)
  5. “The school curriculum plan will be approved in accordance with current systemic requirements for school-based management.” (p. 5).

### **Core learnings guidelines**

- Makes the following points:
  - i) Outcome levels typically relate to year levels as follows:
    - Level 2 outcomes demonstrated at end of Year 3.
    - Level 3 outcomes demonstrated at end of Year 5.
    - Level 4 outcomes demonstrated at end of Year 7.
    - Level 5 outcomes demonstrated at end of Year 10.
  - j) “The key learning area outcomes are used in planning to ensure that the full intent of the key learning area is realised and developed over Years 1-10.” (p. 6)
  - k) Core learning outcomes “should form the basis of curriculum planning”. (p. 6)
  - l) “Planning should take into account the developmental needs of students”, those who need more time to demonstrate an outcome, and those ready to demonstrate outcomes at a higher level. In schools with students with disabilities, curriculum plan should emphasise outcomes as appropriate to

each student, with short-term goals identified through the Individual Education Plan process. (p. 6)

- m) “In the context of an outcomes approach, it is not necessary to specify associated time.” (p. 6)
- n) “In the Arts, in Years 1-7, students should be provided with the opportunity to demonstrate core learning outcomes in all five strands; in Years 8-10, all core learning outcomes in one or more strands”. (p. 8)
- o) Lists 5 examples of support materials available to assist an outcomes approach to education. (p. 8)

### **Core learnings policy**

➤ Makes the following points:

- 6. “The school curriculum plan will describe how the core learnings are to be organised, scheduled and delivered.” (p. 7)
- 7. “All students will be provided with opportunities to learn what they have to know and be able to do in order to demonstrate core learning outcomes.”
- 8. “Core learnings for all students will be key learning area outcomes and core learning outcomes for all strands in all key learning areas as described in syllabuses developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Council” within 7 syllabus parameters. (p. 7)
- 9. “Individual schools will maintain, for each student in their school, a comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date record of the core learning outcomes demonstrated by that student.” (p. 9)

### **Pedagogy guidelines**

➤ Makes the following points:

- p) “Effective pedagogy, incorporating an array of teaching strategies ... should be implemented across all key learning and subject areas.” Benefits of effective pedagogical practice are outlined. (p. 10)
- q) “Engaging in new and possibly different pedagogical practice can be supported by the creation of a networked learning community.” (p. 10)
- r) “Intellectual quality is promoted by developing, for example, higher-order thinking.” (p. 10)
- s) “Authentic and powerful pedagogy” should be connected to learners’ worlds. (p. 10)
- t) The effects of supportive social environments that can be promoted by pedagogical practice.
- u) The effects of pedagogical practice when it recognises difference.
- v) IT “will not improve student outcomes” of itself, but “should be accompanied by relevant pedagogical practice”; IT should be used not just to reproduce information but “to produce new and relevant information”. “Old technologies are not made redundant by the new technologies”, but old and new should be blended. (p. 10)
- w) Further readings are listed at the end of the document.

### **Pedagogy policy**

➤ Makes the following points:

- 10. “The school curriculum plan will describe the array of teaching strategies the school will embrace.” (p. 11)

11. "Teaching strategies will promote the following:
  - intellectual quality;
  - global and local connectedness;
  - supportive social environments;
  - recognition of difference." (p. 11)
12. "Effective teaching strategies will prepare students for current and prospective demands of new economies, new social institutions, and increasingly diverse communities and complex cultures, by reflecting:
  - the design of relevant, inclusive, flexible, intellectually challenging and innovative learning experiences and assessment devices;
  - the use of information technology;
  - the fostering of social development and participation of young people;
  - working across generations to share and develop new blends of knowledges and skills;
  - working collaboratively in professional teams;
  - working with parents, community organisations and business." (p. 11)

### **Assessment guidelines**

- Makes the following points:
  - x) Principles of assessment: In the context of outcomes-based education, assessment should:
    - "focus on student demonstration of planned core learning outcomes as planned for"; (p. 12)
    - "provide evidence that student performances are consistently judged in accordance with prescribed outcomes"; (p. 12)
    - "be comprehensive", incorporating "judgments from a range of sources...and comprise a range of processes for gathering evidence of student achievement"; (p. 12)
    - "be an integral part of the learning process..."; (p. 12)
    - "inform programs of teaching and learning"; (p. 12)
    - "be valid"; (p. 12)
    - "produce reliable results". (p. 12)
  - y) "To be effective, assessment should:
    - reflect social justice principles;
    - accommodate the diverse needs of learners;
    - be sensitive to issues of gender, disability, culture, background language, socioeconomic status and geographical location;
    - reflect current knowledge of child and adolescent development;
    - develop student capacity to self-monitor progress;
    - take place as close as possible to the place of learning;
    - be authentic." (p. 12)
  - z) "Formative assessment occurs when assessment, whether formal (for example, testing) or informal (for example, classroom questioning)" helps "a student attain a higher level of performance." (p. 12)
  - aa) Diagnostic assessment results do not count towards summative assessment.
  - bb) "Summative assessment is designed to indicate the achievement status or level of performance attained by a student at the end of a course of study" and "is geared towards reporting or certification". (p. 12)
  - cc) "Moderation is a quality assurance process designed to assure state-wide comparability of standards awarded to student work." (p. 12)

- dd) “Social moderation is the process of validating teacher judgments of the standard of student work” by peer review. (p. 12)

### **Assessment policy**

- Makes the following points:
  13. “The school curriculum plan will describe:
    - the purpose of assessment;
    - what will be assessed;
    - the techniques and instruments to be used.” (p. 13)
  14. “Assessment will:
    - enable judgments to be made on student demonstrations of core learning outcomes that have been planned for;
    - promote student development;
    - take account of special considerations for students with special needs;
    - be formative, summative and diagnostic;
    - be aligned with the school’s curriculum plan;
    - be moderated by a social moderation process in accordance with further advice from the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce;
    - reflect the principles of assessment”. (p. 13)

### **Reporting guidelines**

- Makes the following points:
  - ee) “Characteristics of a good reporting system” include:
    - The school is responsible for whole-school approach and regular reviews.
    - There are opportunities for report recipients to discuss progress and achievement.
    - “Reporting practices provide for the diverse needs of individuals and groups.” (p. 14)
    - Reporting mechanisms are grounded in “good theory and practice”. (p. 14)
    - “The modes of reporting incorporate a broad range of communication strategies.” (p. 14)
    - “Teachers and schools are committed to recording student progress and achievement in all areas of study.” (p. 14)
  - ff) “Useful information a formal report would include”:
    - documentation of core learning outcomes since previous report;
    - documentation of core learning outcomes now being worked towards;
    - “information about the relationship between outcome levels and year levels”;
    - “additional information that is specific to individual students.” (p. 14)
  - gg) The set of outcomes that have been planned for could include core learning outcomes for a key learning or subject area, and include transdisciplinary learnings.
  - hh) The importance of suitable format for reports, stressing the value of qualitative data over electronically produced reports.
  - ii) What qualitative data might refer to in a report.
  - jj) Reports are to be issued at least once per semester; beyond that the frequency is school’s decision. Frequent formative and/or diagnostic reports in addition to summative reports are appreciated by parents/carers.

- kk) “Students should also be provided with ongoing informal and formal reports regarding their progress.” (p. 14)

### **Reporting policy**

- Makes the following points:
  15. “The school curriculum plan will:
    - include the purposes of reporting;
    - reflect the characteristics of a good reporting system;
    - describe what will be reported, who will receive the report, and when reporting will occur.” (p. 15)
  16. “Formal reporting to parents/carers will:
    - occur at least once per semester;
    - communicate information on the student’s achievements against the set of outcomes planned for that reporting period;
    - for students with disabilities working on Individual Education Plans, communicate information on the student’s achievements of goals planned for that reporting period;
    - also provide qualitative data on the academic and social skills acquired by the student during that reporting period;
    - indicate if there is insufficient evidence for an assessment to be made.” (p. 15)
  17. For students completing Year 10, formal reporting will include a Year 10 statement.
  18. Parents/carers will receive additional reports “that are reported to the system”. (p. 15)

### **Roles and responsibilities policy**

- Outlines the following:
  19. A list of what students will expect to do which includes: engage in intellectually challenging pursuits, be motivated to learn, experience sense of ownership of learning process, self-monitor and receive regular reports. (p. 16)
  20. A list of roles and responsibilities of principals. (p. 16)
  21. A list of roles and responsibilities of teachers. (p. 16)
  22. A list of roles and responsibilities of District Directors. (p. 17)
  23. A list of roles and responsibilities of Central Office. (p. 17)