

Experimentation on science syllabus puts feelings before facts

Science is a social and cultural activity through which explanations of natural phenomena are generated. It incorporates ways of thinking that are creative and critical.

Currently accepted scientific concepts, theories and models may be viewed as shared understandings that the scientific community perceive as viable in light of the available evidence and arguments presented, and that have a predictive value.

Extracts from the Queensland Syllabus Authority

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academic and were informed by research, the emphasis in tertiary courses and a review of practice nationally and internationally.

Education Minister John-Paul Langbroek has written to Premier Campbell Newman asking to refer the state's syllabuses and the QSA to the parliamentary committee on education and innovation.

Mr Langbroek said he recently

met a group of teachers and academics concerned about the curriculum and the assessment of maths, science and physics in Queensland schools.

"The Newman government is committed to ensuring that Queensland school students receive the best education experience possible," he said.

"Part of that commitment involves reviewing all aspects of the department including those that

affect the educational outcomes of Queensland secondary-school students."

Mr Langbroek said this included a number of statutory bodies within the department such as the QSA, as well as the department itself.

Professor Rice said the national science curriculum made a similar error, oversimplifying the idea of scientists proving and disproving hypotheses to suggest that scien-

tific knowledge was agreed by consensus among scientists.

The national science curriculum for students up to Year 10 describes science as providing "an empirical way of answering interesting and important questions about the biological, physical and technological world".

"Science knowledge is contestable and is revised, refined and extended as new evidence arises," it says.