

Dear Committee Members,

I have been teaching Mathematics/Physics for 10 years during which Queensland moved from the old syllabus to the new around 2008. I was concerned about the new syllabus when the pilot trials were done and the changes that had been made to assessment but the new syllabus was brought in despite the difficulties foreseen.

The main area of concern was the approach to assessment, the workload it put on the students and the teachers, with no benefit to enhanced learning. The assessment items such as EEIs, ERTs and Maths assignment are arduously long, and cut into learning time in the classroom, take up the students homework and consolidation time along with revision time. The time taken by teachers to mark these cumbersome assessment items cuts into a teachers' time to prepare classes, do up examinations, do the professional development expected of them and to assist students with the help they need.

For students that choose to do all the sciences and the high level maths subjects the work load is just enormous. The extensive assessment items are not conducive to gathering the extensive knowledge needed for university courses. We need to have intensive content covered in senior school to equip students with as much information as possible to them to compete in university. The writing of massive assignments will come along later in university when their minds are more mature and students are ready to cope with the enormity of the task.

Assessing Science and Mathematics through long written assignments causes many validity problems with who is actually producing the work. Many students cannot cope with the number, size or complexity of the tasks that are expected of them and parents get them help through tutors. Also many seek help outside of classes from teachers tying up themselves on tasks. This means that students are in most cases not able to do the assessment on their own.

Grading of assessment using criteria based definitions is tedious and ineffective. They are subjective and do not lend themselves to be fully understood by any of the interested parties, students, teachers, parents or employers.

Over the years most assessment items within panel regions have become almost exact replicas of each other as schools try to please panel and meet the so called requirements. This has come about mainly due to schools not wanting their students levels of achievements questioned. This leads me to believe if we are all forced into having identical type assessment items would it not be far more beneficial to all to move to external examinations and reduce the workload on students during a time when maximum learning should be occurring within and out of class time. I don't believe that we are enhancing our students learning through the current assessment.

I also believe that teachers' put in far more of their own time with EEIs and ERTs and maths assignments than previously done with exams. I also know that students cannot learn the content required to do well in exams when they spent all their time writing assignments. It is a flawed system and our students are behind the other states and find it difficult to gain entry into interstate universities.

I want my students to grow in knowledge to assist them to gain placements in any university in Australia or overseas, and depart high school in good stead to achieve well.

With Australian Curriculum looming for senior years it is time for us to move to a productive system, in line with other states, comparable with other states and yet better than other states.

Sincerely

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