

Dear Dr Matters,

Please accept this letter and attached response to ACER's 'Focus Questions' as my submission to ACER's OP Review*.

(*Qld Review of Senior Assessment and Reporting and Tertiary Entrance)

I am concerned by reading that ACER -

1. is **not** considering external exams;
2. is **not** considering scaling school assessment according to external exam results; and
3. is considering continuing its current system of moderation.

I have experienced firsthand both external exams, and the QSA school-based assessment/moderation/scaling via QCST systems, and there is no comparison – external exams are demonstrably a fairer and more authentic system.

e.g. 1 - Moderation meetings – An “VHA” from north Queensland is not the same as an “VHA” from inner-Brisbane schools, and I have heard even the QSA admit this. Yet this is fundamental to the current Queensland system.

e.g. 2 – International Baccalaureate (largely external exams) markers are sacked if they are more than a couple of marks outside tolerances, whereas in Verification (QSA) meetings, debates rage about whether a sample of work is a whole achievement band different.

e.g. 3 – The logic of scaling a Maths mark and a Music mark and a History mark etc by the result on the same test (QCS) is deeply flawed.

Why is ACER not seriously considering fast-tracking quality external senior subject exams counting towards senior assessment in Queensland, like every other Australian State and top-performing countries?

ACER's approach is contrary to Qld's 2013 EIC parliamentary inquiry recommendations and contrary to ministerial direction for maths and sciences.

There is no doubt that Queensland's current system has failed students, and it is about time that the system was changed. In no other enterprise is there a risk that a failed system gets re-invented and returned except in the public service.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to make a change to restore a level playing field and outcomes – do not squander it!

This submission urges you to –

- adopt the recommendations below, in response to your Focus Questions;
- put an end to this state's 40-year experiment with unproven assessment and tertiary entrance methods.

This submission may be published but I request that my name, address and contact details be kept confidential.

Yours sincerely,

Name withheld