



YEAR 11/12 CURRICULUM HANDBOOK 2027

Welcome

Earlier this year you were welcomed to your Senior Studies, and it is now time to consider what form your Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) will take.

Year 11 is an exciting new phase of learning; it is usually a very different experience of school.

- Often you are in smaller classes
- Sometimes you will have composite classes
- There is opportunity to individualise your learning pathway in line with your interests
- You can integrate other qualifications into your schooling
- You are given more responsibility for your own learning and directing your pathway beyond your schooling years

It is very common for people your age to have little idea about what you want to do when you finish school. If that is the case for you, it is good to keep your options open, and choose courses that:

- a) Enable you to gain your QCE
- b) Enable you to receive an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) which is one of the main ways to enter a university course
- c) A Certificate III and above can contribute towards your Rank that is used for admission into various university courses
- d) Consider other Certificate courses which prepare you well for further training/studies and/or the workplace

As you begin your journey toward selecting a future pathway, we are here to provide information and support you. In addition to teachers and key people who will be sharing information with you, this document provides information on subjects and important contact information.

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Introduction

Subject selection process – SETPLAN

In Senior Schooling lessons, during Year 10, students investigate their strengths and challenges, their talents and abilities in certain fields, and set goals for their future careers. They engage with people through Work Experience, Gateway Partnerships, University Visits, TAFE and Career Expos so they can make informed decisions about their subject choices. Future Pathways Careers & Beyond is an opportunity to talk with teachers, RTO and Industry Professionals about subject offerings in Year 11 and 12. SETPLAN interviews take place with students, parents and a member of staff to discuss the future goals of students such as graduating Year 12 with a QCE, career choices, tertiary courses, apprenticeships and lastly subject choices for Year 11 and 12 to help achieve these goals.

Senior Education Profile

Students in Queensland are issued with a Senior Education Profile (SEP) upon completion of senior studies. This profile may include a:

- Senior Statement
- Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)
- Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA).

For more information about the SEP see www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/certificates-and-qualifications/sep.

Senior Statement

The Senior Statement is a transcript of a student's learning account. It shows all QCE-contributing studies, and the results achieved that may contribute to the award of a QCE.

If a student has a Senior Statement, then they have satisfied the completion requirements for Year 12 in Queensland.

Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)

- Students are working towards a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) by the end of their senior schooling.
- Students must achieve 20 credits of learning, at the set standard, in a set pattern, while meeting literacy and numeracy requirements.
- Students who do not meet the QCE requirements can continue to work towards the certificate post-secondary schooling. The QCAA awards a QCE in the following July or December, once a student becomes eligible. Learning accounts are closed after nine years; however, a student may apply to the QCAA to have the account reopened and all credit continued.

Students can find more information about QCE eligibility requirements, example pathways and how to plan their QCE on the myQCE website at <https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/your-qce-pathway/planning-your-pathway>

Senior Subjects

The QCAA develops five types of senior subject syllabuses — Applied, General, General (Extension), General (Senior External Examination) and Short Course. Results in Applied and General subjects contribute to the award of a QCE and may contribute to an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) calculation, although no more than one result in an Applied subject can be used in the calculation of a student's ATAR.

- Typically, it is expected that most students will complete these courses across Years 11 and 12. All subjects build on the P–10 Australian Curriculum.
- For more information about specific subjects, schools, students and Parents/Guardians are encouraged to access the relevant senior syllabuses at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/subjects and, for Senior External Examinations www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/see

At St Mary's College the following syllabuses apply:

Applied and Applied (Essential) syllabuses

Applied subjects are suited to students who are primarily interested in pathways beyond senior secondary schooling that lead to vocational education and training or work.

General syllabuses

General subjects are suited to students who are interested in pathways beyond senior secondary schooling that lead primarily to tertiary studies and to pathways for vocational education and training and work.

Underpinning Factors

All senior syllabuses are underpinned by:

- literacy — the set of knowledge and skills about language and texts essential for understanding and conveying content
- numeracy — the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need to use mathematics in a wide range of situations, to recognise and understand the role of mathematics in the world, and to develop the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.

Applied and Applied (Essential) Syllabuses

In addition to literacy and numeracy, Applied syllabuses are underpinned by:

- applied learning — the acquisition and application of knowledge, understanding and skills in real-world or lifelike contexts
- community connections — the awareness and understanding of life beyond school through authentic, real-world interactions by connecting classroom experience with the world outside the classroom
- 21st Century skills — the attributes and skills students need to prepare them for higher education, work and engagement in a complex and rapidly changing world. These include critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration and teamwork, personal and social skills, and digital literacy.

General Syllabuses and Short Course Syllabuses

In addition to literacy and numeracy, General syllabuses and Short Course syllabuses are underpinned by:

- 21st Century skills — the attributes and skills students need to prepare them for higher education, work and engagement in a complex and rapidly changing world. These include critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration and teamwork, personal and social skills, and digital literacy.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Students can access VET programs through the school if it:

- is a registered training organisation (RTO) that is Nationally Recognised
- offers opportunities for students to undertake school-based apprenticeships or traineeships

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) eligibility

The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) has responsibility for ATAR calculations.

The calculation of an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) will be based on students:

- best five scaled General subject results or
- best results in a combination of four General subject results plus an Applied subject result or a Certificate III or higher VET qualification.

English Requirement

- Eligibility for an ATAR will require satisfactory completion of a QCAA English subject.
- Satisfactory completion will require students to attain a result that is equivalent to a C Level of Achievement in one of five subjects — English, Essential English, Literature, English and Literature Extension or English as an Additional Language.
- While students must meet this standard to be eligible to receive an ATAR, it is not mandatory for a student's English result to be included in the calculation of their ATAR.

Applied and Applied (Essential) syllabuses

Syllabuses are designed for teachers to make professional decisions to tailor curriculum and assessment design and delivery to suit their school context and the goals, aspirations and abilities of their students within the parameters of Queensland's senior phase of learning.

In this way, the syllabus is not the curriculum. The syllabus is used by teachers to develop curriculum for their school context. The term *course of study* describes the unique curriculum and assessment that students engage with in each school context. A course of study is the product of a series of decisions made by a school to select, organise and contextualise units, integrate complementary and important learning, and create assessment tasks in accordance with syllabus specifications.

It is encouraged that, where possible, a course of study is designed such that teaching, learning and assessment activities are integrated and enlivened in an authentic applied setting.

Course Structure

Applied and Applied (Essential) syllabuses are four-unit courses of study.

The syllabuses contain QCAA-developed units as options for schools to select from to develop their course of study.

Units and assessment have been written so that they may be studied at any stage in the course. All units have comparable complexity and challenge in learning and assessment. However, greater scaffolding and support may be required for units studied earlier in the course.

Each unit has been developed with a notional time of 55 hours of teaching and learning, including assessment.

Curriculum

Applied syllabuses set out only what is essential while being flexible so teachers can make curriculum decisions to suit their students, school context, resources and expertise.

Schools have autonomy to decide:

- which four units they will deliver
- how and when the subject matter of the units will be delivered
- how, when and why learning experiences are developed, and the context in which the learning will occur
- how opportunities are provided during study for explicit and integrated teaching and learning of complementary skills such as literacy, numeracy and 21st century skills

Careful consideration to each of these decisions can lead teachers to develop units that are rich, engaging and relevant for their students.

Assessment

Applied syllabuses set out only what is essential while being flexible so teachers can make assessment decisions to suit their students, school context, resources and expertise.

Applied syllabuses contain assessment specifications and conditions for the two assessment instruments that must be implemented with each unit. These specifications and conditions ensure comparability, equity and validity in assessment.

Schools have autonomy to decide:

- specific assessment task details within the parameters mandated in the syllabus
- assessment contexts to suit available resources
- how the assessment task will be integrated with teaching and learning activities
- how authentic the task will be

Teachers make A–E judgments on student responses for each assessment instrument using the relevant instrument-specific standards. In the final two units studied, the QCAA uses a student's results for these assessments to determine an exit result.

More information is available in Applied senior syllabuses in Section 7.3.1 of the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*.

Essential English and Essential Mathematics – Common Internal Assessment

For the two Applied (Essential) syllabuses, students complete a total of *four* summative internal assessments in Units 3 and 4 that count toward their overall subject result. Schools develop *three* of the summative internal assessments for each of these subjects and the other summative assessment is a common internal assessment (CIA) developed by the QCAA.

The CIA for Essential English and Essential Mathematics is based on the learning described in Unit 3 of the respective syllabus. The CIA is:

- developed by the QCAA
- common to all schools
- delivered to schools by the QCAA
- administered flexibly in Unit 3
- administered under supervised conditions
- marked by the school according to a common marking scheme developed by the QCAA.

The CIA is not privileged over the other summative internal assessment.

Summative internal assessment – instrument-specific standards

The Essential English and Essential Mathematics syllabuses provide instrument-specific standards for the three summative internal assessments in Units 3 and 4.

The instrument-specific standards describe the characteristics evident in student responses and align with the identified assessment objectives. Assessment objectives are drawn from the unit objectives and are contextualised for the requirements of the assessment instrument.

General syllabuses

Course overview

General syllabuses are developmental four-unit courses of study.

Units 1 and 2 provide foundational learning, allowing students to experience all syllabus objectives and begin engaging with the course subject matter. It is intended that Units 1 and 2 are studied as a pair. Assessment in Units 1 and 2 provides students with feedback on their progress in a course of study and contributes to the award of a QCE.

Students should complete Units 1 and 2 before starting Units 3 and 4.

Units 3 and 4 consolidate student learning. Assessment in Units 3 and 4 is summative and student results contribute to the award of a QCE and to ATAR calculations.

Assessment

Unit 1 and 2 assessments

Schools decide the sequence, scope and scale of assessments for Units 1 and 2. These assessments should reflect the local context. Teachers determine the assessment program, tasks and marking guides that are used to assess student performance for Units 1 and 2.

Units 1 and 2 assessment outcomes provide feedback to students on their progress during study. Schools should develop at least *two* but no more than *four* assessments for Units 1 and 2. At least *one* assessment must be completed for *each* unit.

Schools report satisfactory completion of Units 1 and 2 to the QCAA and may choose to report levels of achievement to students and parents/carers using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Unit 3 and 4 assessments

Students complete a total of *four* summative assessments — three internal and one external — that count towards the overall subject result in each General subject.

Schools develop *three* internal assessments for each senior subject to reflect the requirements described in Units 3 and 4 of each General syllabus.

The three summative internal assessments need to be endorsed by the QCAA before they are used in schools. Students' results in these assessments are externally confirmed by QCAA assessors. These confirmed results from internal assessment are combined with a single result from an external assessment, which is developed and marked by the QCAA. The external assessment result for a subject contributes to a determined percentage of a students' overall subject result. For most subjects this is 25%; for Mathematics and Science subjects it is 50%.

Instrument-specific marking guides

Each syllabus provides instrument-specific marking guides (ISMGs) for summative internal assessments.

The ISMGs describe the characteristics evident in student responses and align with the identified assessment objectives. Assessment objectives are drawn from the unit objectives and are contextualised for the requirements of the assessment instrument.

Schools cannot change or modify an ISMG for use with summative internal assessment.

As part of quality teaching and learning, schools should discuss ISMGs with students to help them understand the requirements of an assessment task.

External assessment

External assessment is summative and adds valuable evidence of achievement to a student's profile. External assessment is:

- common to all schools
- administered under the same conditions at the same time and on the same day
- developed and marked by the QCAA according to a commonly applied marking scheme.

The external assessment contributes a determined percentage (see specific subject guides — assessment) to the student's overall subject result and is not privileged over summative internal assessment.

Subject Offerings

General School-based

Biology	Legal Studies
Chemistry	Mathematical Methods
Drama	Music
English	Physical Education
Film, Television and New Media	Physics
General Mathematics	Study of Religion
Geography	Visual Art

[QCAA General Subject Outlines](#)

Applied School-based

Aquatic Practices	Media Arts in Practice
Essential English	Religion and Ethics
Essential Mathematics	Visual Arts in Practice
Industrial Technology Skills	

[QCAA Applied Subject Outlines](#)

Recommended FisherONE (online) Subjects

General Subjects (ATAR)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	Geography
Accounting	Health
Aerospace Systems	Italian
Ancient History	Japanese
Biology	Literature
Business	Mathematical Methods
Dance	Modern History
Design	Music
Digital Solutions	Philosophy and Reason
Economics	Physics
Engineering	Psychology
Food and Nutrition	Specialist Mathematics
French	Study of Religion

Applied Subjects

Information and Communication Technology
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Short Courses

Critical Thinking	Numeracy
Literacy	

Note: Other FisherONE options may be considered.

[FisherONE Subject Outlines](#)

Please refer to FisherONE Senior Subject Quick Guide for more information.

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