



# About the QCS Test

For distribution to Year 11 students and their parents

## The QCS Test is:

- a common statewide test for Queensland Year 12 students
- an achievement test — not an intelligence test nor an aptitude test
- grounded in the Queensland senior curriculum
- accessible to all Year 12 students, regardless of individual differences in subject patterns.

# About the QCS Test

## What is the QCS Test?

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## What does it test?

It tests 49 common curriculum elements (CCEs) of the Queensland senior curriculum.

These 49 elements are listed on the back of this brochure.

The level of sophistication demanded by the test is appropriate to Year 12 students. Particular knowledge of specific senior subjects is not tested. However, the test assumes basic levels of general knowledge and vocabulary, and a Year 10 knowledge of mathematical operations.

## What is the purpose of the test?

The QCS Test provides:

- individual results reported on a five-point scale
- group results for comparing the achievement of students in different subject groups and different schools in order to calculate Overall Positions (OPs)
- group results for calculating Field Positions (FPs) — up to five per student, depending on subject choice.

## When is it held?

The QCS Test takes place over two consecutive days late in Term 3.

For next year's dates, check with your school or the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) website.

## What is in the test?

The QCS Test consists of four papers — Writing Task (WT), Short Response (SR), and two Multiple Choice (MC) papers.

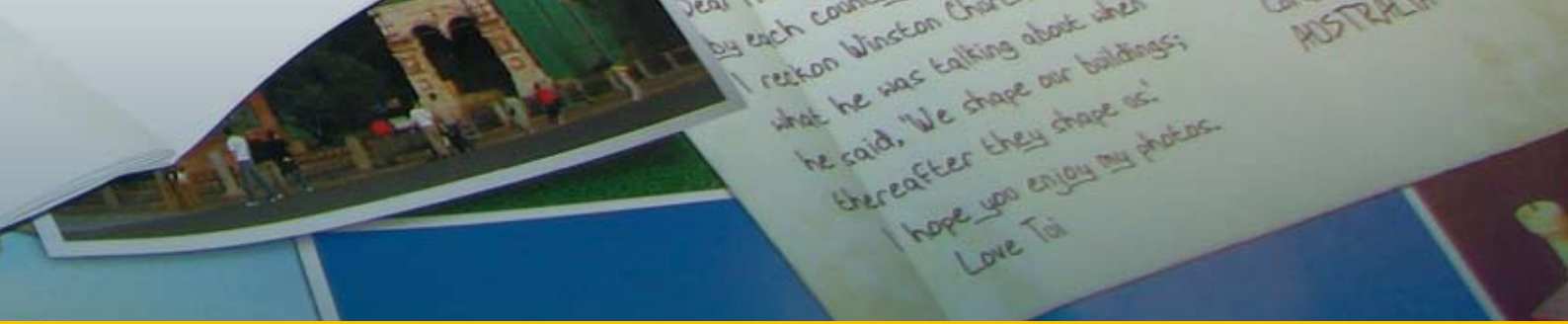
	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
MORNING	<b>PAPER 1</b> Writing Task 2 hours	<b>PAPER 3</b> Short Response 2 hours
AFTERNOON	<b>PAPER 2</b> Multiple Choice I 1 hour 30 minutes	<b>PAPER 4</b> Multiple Choice II 1 hour 30 minutes

In the test, you will be expected to respond to varied stimulus material, such as prose passages, poetry, graphs, tables, maps, mathematical and scientific data, cartoons and reproductions of works of art.

The WT will test your command of the written English language and your expressive and productive skills. You will be asked to compose an extended piece (about 600 words) of continuous prose in response to the stimulus material provided.

Items on the SR paper will ask you to respond in different ways, such as by writing a sentence or paragraph, drawing a diagram, performing a calculation, sketching, etc.

For each item on the MC papers there are four alternative answers (options). You will be asked to select the best answer.



## What preparation is useful?

The common curriculum elements are generic skills that you work with across your subjects; therefore your preparation for the test goes on all the time and in every subject. However, you can also prepare for the test by becoming familiar with the common curriculum elements, how to recognise them, and how they might be assessed in the test. You could work on strategies that will help you to do your best in the curriculum elements you have difficulty with.

Refresh your knowledge of mathematical common curriculum elements by reviewing concepts such as percentage, ratio, angle, power of ten notation, and elementary algebraic procedures.

Read widely in the subjects you are studying and beyond.

Develop your skills of writing clearly, simply and economically, whatever your purpose.

Practise writing 600 word responses to past WT papers. Become aware of how much space 600 words of your writing takes up. Experiment with various forms or styles of writing to see which is your strongest.

Find out the meanings of the key terms used in the SR paper. They will help you understand what type of response to provide. The key terms are listed in the booklet *All you need to know about the Queensland Core Skills Test* provided to all Year 12 students.

Learn to manage your time on tasks.

## What if you need special consideration?

If you have a recognised long-term physical condition that may make it difficult for you to sit the test, we may be able to vary some of the test conditions for you. Talk to your teachers or the school guidance officer now if you think you will need some variation in the arrangements.

## What equipment is necessary?

You will need your normal writing equipment (pens, pencils, ruler, eraser, etc.). Except for recording your responses to the MC papers, you are not to use pencil unless you are told to do so for particular test items. The front covers of past papers will tell you the essential and optional equipment for each testpaper.

You may use an approved hand-held, solar or battery-operated, noiseless calculator. An approved calculator is one that does not have in it a spell checker, any form of dictionary, or a translator.

You may not take any unauthorised equipment, including a mobile phone or any other communication device, into the test room. A supervisor may inspect your equipment at any time during the test.

## Who sits the test?

All Year 12 students may sit the QCS Test. If you are eligible for an OP you **must** sit the QCS Test. If you are not eligible for an OP you **may** sit the QCS Test but your result will not contribute to the calculation of OPs.

If you are otherwise eligible for an OP but you are absent from the QCS Test without a valid reason and documented evidence, you will not be awarded an OP.

Note that private entry is available to non-school-based applicants who wish to apply for tertiary entrance, that is, those who are not Year 12 students of a Queensland secondary school. People who have previously completed Year 12 or who are at least 18 years of age in the year in which the test is taken may apply to sit the test as private-entry candidates.

## How is the test marked?

The responses to the WT paper are marked by trained markers who mark according to predetermined standards developed for a set of criteria. Each response is marked at least three times by different markers working independently. There is a process for monitoring marker consistency.

The responses to the SR paper are marked by trained markers who are given detailed instructions and a specific marking scheme for each item. Each response is marked at least twice by different markers working independently. A referee marking occurs when markers disagree. There is a process for monitoring marker consistency.

The responses for the two MC papers are marked electronically. Each correct answer scores one mark, each incorrect answer scores zero, and each unattempted question scores zero.

As your test responses are retained by the QSA, you may like to keep your draft WT response to remember what you wrote about.



# Common curriculum elements

Recognising letters, words and other symbols

Finding material in an indexed collection

Recalling/remembering

Interpreting the meaning of words or other symbols

Interpreting the meaning of pictures/illustrations

Interpreting the meaning of tables or diagrams or maps or graphs

Translating from one form to another

Using correct spelling, punctuation, grammar

Using vocabulary appropriate to a context

Summarising/condensing written text

Compiling lists/statistics

Recording/noting data

Compiling results in a tabular form

Graphing

Calculating with or without calculators

Estimating numerical magnitude

Approximating a numerical value

Substituting in formulae

Setting out/presenting/arranging/displaying

Structuring/organising extended written text

Structuring/organising a mathematical argument

Explaining to others

Expounding a viewpoint

Empathising

Comparing, contrasting

Classifying

Interrelating ideas/themes/issues

Reaching a conclusion which is consistent with a given set of assumptions

Inserting an intermediate between members of a series

Extrapolating

Applying strategies to trial and test ideas and procedures

Applying a progression of steps to achieve the required answer

Generalising from information

Hypothesising

Criticising

Analysing

Synthesising

Judging/evaluating

Creating/composing/devising

Justifying

Perceiving patterns

Visualising

Identifying shapes in two and three dimensions

Searching and locating items/information

Observing systematically

Gesturing

Manipulating/operating/using equipment

Sketching/drawing

## Further information

Other publications on the QCS Test are available from your school and also from the QSA. Past testpapers are also available. For information about prices and availability of publications or for further information about the QCS Test, and OPs and FPs, contact:

### Queensland Studies Authority

Ground floor, 295 Ann Street, Brisbane. PO Box 307 Spring Hill Qld 4004  
Phone: (07) 3864 0299 Fax: (07) 3221 2553 Email: [office@qsa.qld.edu.au](mailto:office@qsa.qld.edu.au)  
Website: [www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)