
Progressive assessment for learning and certification: Some lessons from school-based assessment in Queensland

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Queensland abolished public examinations over 30 years ago and replaced them with a system of moderated school-based assessment. The system has flourished and has long since ceased to be contentious. It is now accepted as 'normal business'. This paper is about some of the characteristics of school-based assessment as practiced in Queensland for certification at the end of secondary education (the Senior Certificate), some of the principles that lie behind it and some of the lessons and caveats.

One of the original aims of the change to school-based assessment was to broaden the curriculum, both through what is assessed (extending beyond paper-and-pencil examinations) and what courses are offered (extending beyond academic subjects and pre-university studies). This broadening has occurred and is continuing. Over the past 30 years, the range of available academic subjects has increased substantially, a range of subjects of a more general nature has been developed, and vocational education and training options have been introduced. Further broadening of the available 'learning packages' has been announced in the Queensland Government's White Paper, *Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF)*. Some aspects of these reforms are still being discussed, some are being developed and some are being trialled. The aim is to cater to the learning needs of all students, require all students to be 'learning or earning' until they are 17 years of age, and to provide young people with appropriate foundation for further learning and work. It is premature to focus on these reforms at this stage.

School-based assessment for the Senior Certificate assumes the following characteristics:

- Assessment involves teacher judgments of the quality of student learning
- Student learning is demonstrated through performance (evidence of learning)
- Evidence of learning is collected over time and collated in a student portfolio
- Quality of student learning is judged against specified performance standards
- Performance standards are expressed as a rubric or 'criteria and standards matrix'
- Criteria are the qualities or dimensions on which performance is to be judged
- Standards are graded categories indicating different levels of performance
- Standards are represented by descriptive statements and illustrative exemplars
- Five graded categories (levels of achievement) are used for formal reporting.

The integrity of the Senior Certificate is protected by a moderation system directed at quality assurance of the reported levels of achievement. An important tenet of the moderation system is that assessments do not have to be identical to be comparable. The contents of student portfolios can differ substantially but can be judged appropriately against common standards. The comparability question is not whether two portfolios are identical but whether they are equivalent in terms of the specified standards. This involves judgment—an interpretation of the quality of student performance, synthesised across all the components of the portfolio.

To understand Queensland's approach to moderation, it is first necessary to understand that courses are based on subject syllabuses. These syllabuses are broad frameworks that allow flexibility of local implementation. Thus each subject that

a school intends to teach needs to be turned into a teaching and assessment plan ('work plan') by the school. The criteria and standards matrix for final ('exit' or 'end of course') levels of achievement (for recording on the Senior Certificate) is restated in terms of the specifics of the school's work plan.

Appropriate coverage of all the intended learning outcomes of the syllabus requires the use of a variety of assessment activities. It would, for example, be inappropriate for assessment to involve only written examinations. All subjects involve other forms of learning than those assessable through written examinations. This expansion of the forms of learning was one of the original intentions of the move to school-based assessment. It allows for more authentic assessment to occur, connecting with student interests and making learning and assessment more meaningful and applicable for students (Cumming and Maxwell, 1999; Darling-Hammond, Ancess and Falk, 1995).

An important principle, therefore, is that the forms of assessment allow for all the intended learning outcomes to be appropriately assessed. A corollary is that any judgment of student learning should be appropriate and justifiable (valid) in terms of the evidence on which it is based. That is, unwarranted conclusions should not be drawn about the student's learning—as, for example, would be the case if inferences were drawn about a student's capacity to deliver a speech based on a written examination. Further, the total context in which the student's performance occurs is important for interpreting the evidence—for example, whether assistance has been provided for completing an activity when the intention is to assess the extent of the student's unassisted capability. This is not to say that assistance is inappropriate but that the extent to which assistance has been provided changes the nature of the inference concerning what the student actually knows and can do. Scaffolding student learning in this way is best provided at the limits of the student's knowledge and capability so that the student is not prevented from demonstrating the actual extent of their knowledge and capability. Assessment should allow the student to stretch themselves to the limits of their knowledge and capability before any assistance is provided to assist them to go further.

Progressive or continuous assessment

An important principle of school-based assessment is that the assessment is progressive or continuous. One of the aims of school-based assessment is to alleviate the peak pressure of a single final examination—the one-shot test on which everything depends. This requires not only that assessment is tailored to the way in which each subject syllabus is implemented by the school but also that assessment occurs progressively over the whole course of study. In other words, the validity of the assessment is improved by assembling the portfolio from a variety of assessment types and contexts. So too is the reliability improved by having many opportunities for the student to demonstrate their knowledge and capability and by collecting the information on many different occasions.

As discussed at the previous ACEAB Conference (Maxwell, 2002), progressive assessment blurs the boundary between formative and summative assessment. All progressive assessment necessarily involves feedback to the student about the

quality of their performance. This can be expressed in terms of the student's progress towards desired learning outcomes and suggested steps for further development and improvement. The point about progressive assessment is not just that there are several assessments distributed over a period of time but that later assessments allow further improvement on knowledge and skills that were also assessed on earlier assessments. As well, as the course unfolds, the assessments become more challenging as they encompass more of the learning expectations of the course. This operates like a 'spiral curriculum'.

For this approach to work, it is necessary to express the learning expectations in terms of common dimensions of learning (criteria). Then, there can be discussion about whether the student is on-target with respect to the learning expectations and what needs to be done to improve performance on future assessments where the same dimensions appear.

As the student builds up the portfolio of evidence of their performance, earlier assessments may be superseded by later assessments covering the same underlying dimensions of learning. The aim is to report 'where the student got to' in their learning journey, not where they started or where they were on the average across the whole course. Earlier assessments may be less important than later ones, and therefore given less weight, but they also may become redundant in the light of later, better and more comprehensive performance as the course unfolds. In a portfolio approach of this kind, assessments are not aggregated by some mathematical formula to produce an overall result. Rather, the final result involves an interpretation of the final (exit) portfolio by a judgment of the standard it demonstrates when compared to a set of grade descriptors.

Example of criteria from the 'Drama' syllabus

In the 'Drama' syllabus, there are three criteria for judging the quality of the exit portfolio, each with two sub-criteria:

- *Forming*: creating and shaping dramatic action to communicate meaning and to realise a range of dramatic forms and styles through:
 - managing the elements of drama and dramatic conventions
 - integrating content and context.
- *Presenting*: the performance and communication of dramatic action to others by realising dramatic forms and styles through:
 - using elements of drama and dramatic conventions in performance
 - using acting techniques.
- *Responding*: reflecting on the elements of drama and dramatic conventions, content and context, dramatic forms and styles by demonstrating:
 - knowledge, understanding and communication
 - analysis, synthesis and evaluation. (from the Drama syllabus)

Appendix 1 gives some examples of assessment approaches in Drama, showing how a range of assessment tasks may be involved. Appendix 2 gives the exit criteria and standards, that is, standards descriptors for judging the quality of a student's portfolio.

Another example of criteria, from a Mathematics syllabus, is shown in Appendix 3. In Appendix 4 there is a rubric for just one of the criteria of the Earth Science syllabus (*working scientifically*). Appendix 5 gives two global standards across the three criteria in the English syllabus, one for the top (very high) level of achievement and the other for the middle level (sound). Together, all these examples illustrate the way in which criteria and standards are represented in the syllabuses and reveals something of the diversity involved.

Updating the portfolio

For any course of study, in reporting the progress made by the student, what is of interest is the final state of student's knowledge and capability. It is of no consequence what the state of the student's knowledge and capability was at the beginning of the course. Nor is it particularly relevant what the state of the student's knowledge was at any point earlier than the end of the course. On the other hand, progressive or continuous assessment means that evidence of the student's learning is being collected throughout the whole course. Clearly, the point of progressive assessment is to diversify the evidence over time and not to depend on a single final piece of assessment. So, necessarily, some evidence has been collected earlier than right at the end of the course. The question is, then, what emphasis to place on earlier information versus later information, or alternatively how to interpret earlier performance in the light of later performance.

Some systems of assessment attempt to resolve this dilemma by a numerical process of weighting and aggregating marks. Earlier and less significant evidence can be weighted less than later and more significant evidence. Some earlier assessments might not count at all, that is, receive zero weighting. This is not the approach adopted in Queensland. Rather, a holistic judgment is made about the quality of the exit portfolio by comparison with the specified exit standards for reporting levels of achievement.

The exit portfolio is made up of assessment tasks that represent the *fullest and latest* information on the student's knowledge and capability. *Fullest* information means that assessment information must be available on all mandatory aspects of the syllabus. Important criteria cannot be skipped; the assessment evidence in the portfolio must cover all the required aspects of the course. In some cases, a minimum number of different kinds of assessment may be required.

Latest information means that earlier assessments that are no longer relevant may be discarded and replaced by more recent evidence. That is, later assessments of the same type or covering particular criteria may supersede the earlier assessments. This process of replacement is itself a matter of on-balance judgment. In some cases, where exceptional circumstances apply (illness or other unavoidable absence), the later assessment may be unavailable or may not be representative of

the student's performance. Whether to include an assessment item in the portfolio is a decision made by the teacher(s) on the basis of the contextual knowledge they have about the student. The ultimate aim is to represent the state of knowledge and capability as typically demonstrated by the student towards the end of the course.

Issues and implications

The approach to assessment described here is one that privileges teacher judgment. Necessarily, a large amount of information about student performance must be synthesised. The portfolio contains a great deal of information—about each piece of assessment and about the whole collection. A comparison is made between the overall content and characteristics of the student's portfolio and the global standards for different levels of achievement. This comparison involves judgment, not aggregation. That is, it involves determination of the relevance and significance of different aspects of the student's overall profile of performance and the making of an on-balance judgment of its merit. This is a deliberate decision. It does not involve the application of an algorithm.

One advantage of this approach is that it allows adaptation to different circumstances. While the standards are constant, the way in which students demonstrate their knowledge and capability against the standards can vary.

Judgments of the standards demonstrated in the portfolio can also be made more carefully. It is not unusual for teachers to take some time to arrive at a final judgment about the exit level of achievement of a student, particularly a student who may be borderline between two levels, or who may have a variable profile across levels, or who may be unusual in some way. This is possible because the portfolio is built up over the whole course and teachers have a very rich amount of information of the student's capability available to them. While a final decision is needed by a particular date, this is known well in advance and there is no reason for a last minute rush.

At the end of the course, there should be no surprises (for both teachers and students). Students do not need to wait to learn their final result. It is available to them as they exit the course. To a large extent, they are aware of the standard of their performance well in advance of the end of the course because they have been receiving feedback and advice on the quality of their performances all along the way. A final piece of assessment, even if completed on the final day of the course, is unlikely to have much impact of the overall message conveyed by the portfolio materials collected over the whole course.

The principles of 'selective updating' and 'fullest and latest' allow poor starts, atypical performances, and earlier and temporary confusions (for whatever reason) to be ignored and for stronger finishes, more typical performances and later and sustained enlightenment to be treated as more important. The spiral nature of assessment—where the various underlying criteria or dimensions are revisited in different assessments over time, that is, where there are several opportunities to demonstrate learning outcomes related to the different criteria—allows some degree of forgiveness for missed assessments, for example, through illness. In some cases this means that earlier assessments are retained in the portfolio because there is no

update available. It is conceivable that students might make choices about whether they wish to update the portfolio or not. Some students will be satisfied with a lower level of achievement than they might achieve with further effort.

The feedback loops involved in this process ensure an emphasis on *assessment for learning* as well as *assessment of learning*. That is, there is opportunity for improvement right through the course. The portfolio is not complete until the end of the course. Although assessments along the way become part of the portfolio, selective updating allows earlier and weaker performances to be replaced by later and stronger performances. It is expected that students will benefit from the feedback on earlier assessments and improve their performance on later assessments that involve the same criteria or dimensions of learning.

A recent issue has been whether students should be allowed to revisit previous assessments to improve the quality of their portfolio. Revisiting might involve 'having another go' at an assignment, submitting additional assessments or 'repeating' a portion of the course. In all these cases, the issue is whether a valid interpretation of the student level of achievement is made from the evidence. Where work is refined and resubmitted on the basis of teacher feedback, it is sometimes difficult to determine the current state of the student's knowledge and skill, that is, to separate the student's input from the teacher's. In these circumstances, it may be necessary to ask the student to undertake another assessment of a similar nature to discover whether the knowledge and skill has been consolidated and is now truly 'owned' by the student. The same problem may arise with examination questions that the student has seen before, as may occur if the student 'repeats' a portion of the course. In order to gauge the true state of the student's current knowledge and skill when the student is retaking previous assessments, it is necessary to have the student complete alternative assessment tasks, that is, assessment tasks that are similar to but different from the assessment tasks previously completed.

Lessons

Clearly, since Queensland has been doing assessment for high-stakes assessment this way for some time, this approach to assessment is possible. The opportunities such an approach presents for making assessment serve learning as well as certification, expanding the range of what is learned and assessed, and making assessments more authentic, contextualised and meaningful are very attractive. It can also be extended to encompass other forms of learning outcomes, for example, 'personal learning' (Cumming, 2002). It also enacts many of the principles identified in the landmark research study of assessment by the (USA) National Research Council (2001) as desirable in the light of what we now know about human learning.

What is needed to make such an approach successful? Foremost, it is necessary to believe that teachers can acquire the appropriate expertise and that they will act professionally and ethically. Certainly, a premium is placed on assessment expertise. However, the need for teachers to become skilled in conducting assessment programs and judging the quality of student performance against defined assessment standards creates its own impetus for teachers to acquire these skills. Teachers typically take up the challenge when they are given the responsibility.

The most powerful means for developing professional competence in assessment is the establishment of regular professional conversations among teachers about student performance (moderation conversations). This is best focussed on actual examples of student portfolios. Looking at actual examples and discussing the conclusions that can be drawn about the student's performance when compared to explicit standards sharpens teacher judgment and builds knowledge and expertise about assessment more successfully than any other process.

In systems where teacher expertise in assessment is low, it might be preferable to begin with lower stakes assessment. Plenty of examples already exist where portfolio approaches are being tried in primary schools (for example, see Chetcuti & Grima, 2002). These can provide inspiration but ultimately local circumstances must be accommodated. The best approach in one situation may not be the best in another.

Selective updating of the student portfolio so that its contents reflect the current state of the student's knowledge and skill is a natural way to ensure that feedback from earlier assessment is useful for encouraging student development. It also supports assessment for learning as well as assessment of learning. Judgments of the student's level of achievement at particular points in time, such as at the end of a course of study, then can be made on the basis of the fullest and latest information on the student's progress.

References

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Appendix 1

DRAMA SENIOR SYLLABUS

Table 6: Examples of techniques, instruments and tasks

Criterion	Technique	Instrument	Brief task description
Forming	Dramatic exploration	Improvisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small group improvisation based on themes and characters in an Australian drama playtext
		Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual directing workshop managing nominated elements of drama
		Practical demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual demonstration of a student-devised drama managing a nominated dramatic form
	Creative writing	Playwriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> scriptwriting exercise managing nominated elements of drama, content and context
		Dramatic treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing a dramatic treatment for an issues-based drama using themes from a World drama playtext as the stimulus
Design	Design concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create and justify a set design concept for a performance of a play, identifying specific elements of drama from the playtext 	
Presenting	Dramatic presentation	Dramatic statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual performance of a dramatic statement using appropriate material from Australian drama playtexts and self-devised material
	Performance	Performance of scripted drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance of a scene or extracts from an Australian drama playtext demonstrating <i>presenting</i> skills performance of a monologue from a World drama play demonstrating a particular dramatic style
		Student-devised performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student-devised performance demonstrating a range of conventions associated with a particular dramatic style such as epic theatre
Responding	Extended writing	Critical essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> critical review of a live theatre performance by a professional company focusing on an analysis of nominated elements of drama.
		Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an article for a drama magazine comparing two emerging forms of theatre in terms of the ways in which selected dramatic conventions have been used to create meaning for an audience.
		Playtext analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> script analysis focusing on content and context to evaluate a community theatre script
	Oral	Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual multimedia seminar presentation on teacher-nominated topics related to Australian theatre
	Written examination	Extended examination answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance analysis question based on a scene from a play shown on video for the purposes of the examination

6.5.1 Exit criteria and standards

Table 9: Minimum standards associated with the exit criterion—Forming

	Standard A	Standard B	Standard C	Standard D	Standard E
Elements of drama and dramatic conventions in forming	The student consistently and astutely selects and manages elements of drama and dramatic conventions, successfully creating and shaping dramatic action that realises a range of forms and styles	The student consistently selects and manages elements of drama and dramatic conventions, creating and shaping dramatic action that clearly realises a range of forms and styles	The student selects and mostly manages elements of drama and dramatic conventions that are usually suitable, creating and shaping dramatic action that adequately realises some forms and styles	The student selects elements of drama and dramatic conventions that are often inadequate and/or inappropriate, managing them such that the forms and styles are not realised	The student uses few of the elements of drama and/or dramatic conventions
Content and contexts	communicates meaning through perceptively creating and shaping the content, effectively integrating content with the selected context, making insightful connections to the subject matter.	communicates meaning through competently creating and shaping the content, integrating content with the selected context, making relevant connections to the subject matter.	adequately communicates meaning through creating and shaping the content, usually linking content with the selected context, making connections to the subject matter.	communicates meaning that is unclear through creating and shaping content that is barely linked to the selected context, making tenuous connections to the subject matter.	makes rare connections to subject matter and the content is extraneous to the context.

Table 10: Minimum standards associated with the exit criterion—Presenting

	Standard A	Standard B	Standard C	Standard D	Standard E
Elements of drama and dramatic conventions in performance	The student communicates complex meaning to audiences, sensitively and confidently exploiting the elements of drama and dramatic conventions to realise a range of forms and styles	The student communicates meaning effectively to audiences, purposefully and competently uses the elements of drama and dramatic conventions to realise a range of forms and styles	The student communicates meaning to audiences using the elements of drama and dramatic conventions to realise some forms and styles	The student occasionally communicates meaning to audiences, ineffectively using the elements of drama and dramatic conventions, rarely or inconsistently realising forms and styles	The student uses few of the elements of drama and dramatic conventions and communicates little meaning to audiences
Acting techniques	applies acting techniques with skill, control and versatility to a range of forms and styles, convincingly and consistently delivering polished performances.	applies acting techniques with skill and control to a range of forms and styles, consistently delivering polished performances.	applies acting techniques with some skill and/or control to most forms and styles and delivers performances that are usually polished.	reveals little skill or control in applying acting techniques to forms and styles and delivers performances that are unpolished.	occasionally uses an acting technique and this may also be unsuitable.

Appendix 2

Table 11: Minimum standards associated with the exit criterion—Responding

	Standard A	Standard B	Standard C	Standard D	Standard E
Knowledge, understanding, communication	The student: effectively and coherently communicates relevant ideas and information, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and understanding; consistently and accurately uses drama terminology and correct written and/or oral language	The student: coherently communicates relevant ideas and information, demonstrating essential knowledge and understanding; for the most part, accurately uses drama terminology and correct written and/or oral language	The student: communicates mostly relevant ideas and information, demonstrating basic knowledge and understanding; uses some drama terminology and mostly correct written and/or oral language	The student: communicates ideas and information that demonstrate superficial and often incorrect knowledge and understanding; uses drama terminology with numerous errors, and inaccurate written and/or oral language	The student: communicates few ideas and information, demonstrating little knowledge and understanding
Analysis, synthesis and evaluation	thoroughly and insightfully analyses dramatic action and meaning, effectively and coherently synthesises and justifies evaluations with relevant examples.	thoroughly analyses dramatic action and meaning, coherently synthesises and justifies evaluations with relevant examples.	analyses aspects of dramatic action and meaning, partially synthesises evaluations some of which are justified with relevant examples.	describes aspects of dramatic action and identifies some meaning and, when occasionally justifying evaluations, provides only personal opinion or a few relevant examples.	describes some obvious aspects of dramatic action that are unsupported, or are supported with irrelevant or inappropriate examples.

Appendix 3

MATHEMATICS A SENIOR SYLLABUS

3.3 OBJECTIVES

The general objectives for each of the categories in section 3.1 are detailed below. These general objectives incorporate several key competencies. The first three categories of objectives, Knowledge and procedures, Modelling and problem solving, and Communication and justification, are linked to the exit criteria in section 7.3.

3.3.1 Knowledge and procedures

The objectives of this category involve recalling and using results and procedures within the contexts of Application, Technology, Initiative and Complexity (see section 3.2).

By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

- recall definitions and rules
- access and apply rules
- demonstrate number and spatial sense
- demonstrate an ability to use technologies such as computers, calculators, measuring instruments, geometrical drawing instruments and tables
- recall, select and use appropriate mathematical procedures
- apply mathematical procedures to situations that are similar to situations already encountered
- work accurately and manipulate simple formulae
- recognise that some tasks may be broken up into smaller components.

3.3.2 Modelling and problem solving

The objectives of this category involve the uses of mathematics in which the students will model mathematical situations and constructs, solve problems and investigate situations mathematically within the contexts of Application, Technology, Initiative and Complexity (see section 3.2).

In achieving these objectives, the emphasis should be on using observations, data, diagrams, formulae, graphical and other representations to investigate and model situations, and hence make informed decisions.

By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate modelling and problem solving through:

- understanding that a mathematical model is a mathematical representation of a situation
- interpreting, clarifying and analysing problems
- identifying the variables of a simple mathematical model of a situation
- forming and/or selecting a mathematical model of a life-related situation
- deriving results from consideration of mathematical models
- interpreting results from a mathematical model in terms of the given situation
- examining the strengths and limitations of mathematical models
- developing strategies in modelling
- using a range of problem-solving strategies such as estimating, identifying patterns, guessing and checking, working backwards, using diagrams, considering similar problems and organising data

MATHEMATICS A SENIOR SYLLABUS

- understanding that there may be more than one way to solve a problem
- selecting the appropriate mathematical procedures required to explore, investigate and solve problems
- developing a solution consistent with the problem
- investigating open-ended situations
- reflecting on conjectures and making modifications if needed
- making decisions from a range of choices.

3.3.3 Communication and justification

The objectives of this category involve presentation, communication (both mathematical and everyday language), logical arguments, interpretation and justification of mathematics within the contexts of Application, Technology, Initiative and Complexity (see section 3.2).

Communication

By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate communication through:

- organising and presenting information
- communicating ideas, information and results appropriately
- using mathematical terms and symbols accurately and appropriately
- using accepted spelling, punctuation and grammar in written communication
- understanding material presented in a variety of forms such as oral, written, symbolic, pictorial and graphical
- translating material from one form to another when appropriate
- presenting material for different audiences, in a variety of forms (such as oral, written, symbolic, pictorial and graphical)
- recognising necessary distinctions in the meanings of words and phrases according to whether they are used in a mathematical or non-mathematical situation.

Justification

By the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate justification through:

- developing logical arguments expressed in everyday language, mathematical language or a combination of both, as required, to support conclusions, results and/or propositions
- evaluating the validity of arguments designed to convince others of the truth of propositions
- justifying procedures used and decisions made
- recognising when and why results of a given problem are clearly improbable or unreasonable
- use supporting arguments, when appropriate, to justify results obtained by calculator or computer.

Appendix 4

SENIOR EARTH SCIENCE

	Standard A	Standard B	Standard C	Standard D	Standard E
Criterion Working scientifically	<p>Either individually or as a member of a group, the student consistently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises and identifies investigation questions for a range of problems including those that are novel and/or complex plans a range of scientific investigations of problems including many with elements of novelty and/or complexity implements investigations using scientific techniques and following procedures safely and correctly records and organises relevant information logically and systematically assesses and critically evaluates the validity and adequacy of qualitative and quantitative data 	<p>Either individually or as a member of a group, the student consistently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises and identifies investigation questions for a range of problems including some with elements of novelty and/or complexity plans a range of scientific investigations of problems including some with elements of novelty and/or complexity implements investigations using scientific techniques and following procedures safely and with few errors records and organises relevant information assesses the validity and adequacy of qualitative and quantitative data 	<p>Either individually or as a member of a group, the student consistently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises and identifies investigation questions for a range of straightforward problems plans a range of scientific investigations of straightforward problems implements investigations using scientific techniques and following procedures safely but with some errors records relevant information assesses some aspects of the validity and adequacy of qualitative and quantitative data 	<p>Either individually or as a member of a group, the student consistently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises a range of straightforward problems participates in planning some scientific investigations of straightforward problems implements investigations using scientific techniques and following procedures safely but with many errors records some information offers observations about the validity and adequacy of qualitative and quantitative data 	<p>Either individually or as a member of a group, the student consistently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises some problems participates in some aspects of planning scientific investigations of straightforward problems follows instructions for some aspects of investigation but with little attention to safety issues and with little procedural accuracy records minimal information offers observations about qualitative and quantitative data

Appendix 5

ENGLISH SENIOR SYLLABUS

6.7.3 Mid-range standards associated with exit criteria

Table 2: Very High Achievement

At Very High Achievement, the student has consistently shown a discriminating knowledge and understanding of how texts are constructed across a range of texts in a range of social and cultural contexts. The student has demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge, understanding and control of the interrelatedness of purpose, genre, register, textual features and discourses in texts. The student has demonstrated a thorough understanding of the implications of tasks.		Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts
Knowledge and control of texts in their contexts	Knowledge and control of textual features	
<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge that meanings in texts are shaped by purpose, cultural context and social situation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploiting the patterns and conventions of genres to achieve cultural purposes selecting and synthesising substantial, relevant subject matter interpreting, inferring from, analysing and evaluating information, ideas, argument and images in great depth substantiating opinions with well balanced and relevant argument and evidence exploiting the ways writers, speakers/signers, shapers' roles and their relationships with readers, listeners, viewers are affected by power, distance and affect exploiting modes and media, integrating them to effect if appropriate. 	<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge of appropriateness of textual features for purpose, genre, and register by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploiting the sequencing and organisation of subject matter in stages making discerning use of cohesive ties (and hyperlinks) to emphasise ideas and connect parts of texts exploiting an extensive range of apt vocabulary, including figurative uses combining a wide range of clause and sentence structures for specific effects, while sustaining grammatical accuracy sustaining control of paragraphing and a wide range of punctuation controlling conventional spelling integrating visual (graphic, still and moving images), auditory (music, silence and sound effects) and/or digital (graphic design elements) features to enhance meaning in layout or presentation of texts sustaining use of a wide range of spoken/signed and nonverbal features that contribute to meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pronunciation, phrasing and pausing for emphasis, audibility and clarity, volume, pace facial expressions, gestures, proximity, stance, movement. 	<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge of the ways in which texts are selectively constructed and read by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thoroughly examining how, and³ exploiting the ways discourses in texts shape and are shaped by language choices evaluating how, and exploiting the ways cultural assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes underpin texts making subtle and complex distinctions when evaluating and when shaping representations of concepts and of the relationships and identities of individuals, groups, times and places thoroughly analysing how readers are invited to take up positions in relation to texts and demonstrating with subtlety and complexity the position(s) s/he adopts as a reader making purposeful and discerning choices that very effectively invite readers to take up positions.

³ The use of the italic indicates that all dimensions of the descriptor will be demonstrated across the course, and not necessarily within an individual task. In this descriptor, a task might ask students either to examine the ways ... or exploit the ways and so on for each descriptor.

Table 4: Sound Achievement

At Sound Achievement, the student has shown reasonable knowledge and understanding of how texts are constructed across a range of texts in a range of social and cultural contexts. The student has demonstrated a general knowledge, understanding and control of the interrelatedness of purpose, genre, register, textual features and discourses in texts. For the most part, the student has demonstrated understanding of the implications of tasks.	Knowledge and control of textual features	Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts
<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge that meanings in texts are shaped by purpose, cultural context and social situation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the main, employing the patterns and conventions of genres to achieve particular cultural purposes • selecting sufficient relevant subject matter • interpreting and explaining information, ideas, argument and images, with some analysis and evaluation • supporting opinions with relevant argument and evidence • establishing writers, speakers/signers, shapers' roles and maintaining the ways their relationships with readers, listeners, viewers are influenced by power, distance and affect • usually making effective use of modes and media, in combination if appropriate. 	<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge of appropriateness of textual features for purpose, genre, and register by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the main, sequencing and organising subject matter in stages • usually linking ideas with cohesive ties (and connecting parts of texts using hyperlinks) • using suitable vocabulary • using a range of clause and sentence structures with occasional lapses in grammatical accuracy • controlling paragraphing and punctuation, such as commas, apostrophes, capitals and full stops • using conventional spelling, in the main • using, with some success, visual (graphic, still and moving images), auditory (music, silence and sound effects) and/or digital (graphic design elements) features to make meaning in layout or presentation of texts • using a range of spoken/signed and nonverbal features that contribute to meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – pronunciation, phrasing and pausing for emphasis, audibility and clarity, volume, pace – facial expressions, gestures, proximity, stance, movement. 	<p>The student has demonstrated knowledge of the ways in which texts are selectively constructed and read by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explaining how, and⁵ employing ways, discourses in texts shape and are shaped by language choices • identifying and explaining and making use of the ways cultural assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes underpin texts • making broad distinctions when identifying and explaining and when shaping representations of concepts and of the relationships and identities of individuals, groups, times and places • identifying and explaining ways readers have been invited to take up positions in relation to texts and broadly demonstrating the position(s) s/he adopts as a reader • making purposeful choices that, in the main, invite readers to take up positions.

⁵ The use of the italic indicates that all dimensions of the descriptor will be demonstrated across the course, and not necessarily within an individual task. In this descriptor, a task might ask students either to explain how ... or make use of and so on for each descriptor.