Shaping the Future: Report of the Review of the Queensland School Curriculum Volume 1

Queensland. Review of the Queensland School Curriculum, 1994 (Chair: Kenneth Wiltshire)

Overview of the document

Volume 1 contains the Panel's recommendations and supporting analysis totalling some 324 pages. The first three chapters address the guiding principals established for the Review, the remaining nine describe the current Queensland curriculum. (Volume 2 of the Report contains papers commissioned by the Panel and Volume 3 contains papers commissioned from external consultants). The Report recommends a P-12 school-based curriculum which is knowledge referenced, based on a shared Charter of Values, future oriented, dynamic, and capable of continuous adaptation.

Keywords

Curriculum; core curriculum; values; futures orientation; Key Learning Areas; key competencies; Lifeskills; knowledge-referenced syllabuses; literacy and numeracy; flexibility; accreditation; certification; teaching to difference; gifted and talented students; open learning.

Terms of Reference

1. Curriculum development, management, assessment and accreditation.
2. The relationships with national curriculum developments and progress in the post-compulsory schooling areas.
3. The content and scope of the curriculum for P-12.
4. The most effective forms of remedial intervention in literacy and numeracy.
5. Resource implications of the current and future curriculum.
6. The current and possible roles of schools in curriculum matters.
7. The relationship between schooling and the basic skills required in the employment market and the wider community.

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Summary of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

➤ States that "Schools have a duality of purpose: the personal, social and intellectual development of individuals to their full potential; and the meeting of societal needs and aspirations." (p. vii)

➤ Notes that "Queensland requires a P-12 school-based curriculum which is knowledge referenced, based on a shared Charter of Values, futures oriented, dynamic, and capable of continuous adaptation." (p. vii)

➤ Argues that Queensland should "participate actively in a national curriculum" while retaining the strengths of its school system; it should continue to take the initiative rather than be passive in the face of educational changes." (p. vii)

➤ Notes that "The comprehensive syllabus system becomes the foundation for the operation of the new curriculum system." Promotes the need for a core curriculum organised initially within Key Learning Areas, then by subject, then "with commensurate options and choice progressively fanning out in later years". (p. vii)

➤ Stresses the need for greater assistance in career and vocational guidance and for greater accountability to the public.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

➤ Recalls key features of major changes to Queensland's school curriculum, drawn from the Review's research paper (Creighton 1993).

➤ Outlines the terms of reference.

➤ Provides details on the resources and conduct of the review.

CHAPTER 2: SHAPING THE FUTURE THROUGH THE QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM

➤ Overviews the following key principles that "appear as current themes or threads":

  o Schools have a duality of purpose: individual development and societal needs.

  o "The curriculum should be anchored in a set of explicitly-stated, shared values."

  o "The curriculum of a school has a role in shaping the future."

  o "The curriculum should be dynamic and capable of responding to change."

  o "Knowledge is central to the purpose of the school curriculum."

  o "The curriculum is best served...by coherent planning of learning experiences across the spectrum of preschool to Year 12."

  o "The definition of curriculum...is the totality of experiences which the school provides for its students." (pp. 14-15)

➤ Discusses the primacy of values and notes that the Panel contends it can identify a set of values fundamental to Australian society and agreed to by consensus and that in this light it produces the following Draft Charter of Values for the Queensland curriculum (p. 17), affirming four fundamental beliefs current in Australia today:

- o each person (the individual) is uniquely valuable;
- o we all share a responsibility to contribute to the welfare of society;
- o all people interdependently share stewardship of the earth and its riches; and
- o all people share a need for knowledge and meaning.
- ➢ Beneath each belief lists relevant commitments that the Queensland curriculum should value. Notes that against the anticipated objection that a Charter of Values will be "vague and meaningless, a collection of motherhood statements", it is contended that its incorporation "can only enhance the extent to which values are recognised and made explicit within the curriculum". (p. 18)
- ➢ Argues that "It is not so much a compliance to a centralised set of values that is being sought as much as an engagement with them at every level of schooling." (p. 18)
- ➢ Stresses the importance of the Charter in "integrating 'the liberal democratic tradition that has emerged in Western culture and Australian history'." (p. 18)
- ➢ Discusses the centrality of knowledge and notes that "Society has...assigned schools a special role with respect to the acquisition of knowledge (and meaning), and so, for them, this value is of particular concern." (p. 19)
- ➢ Notes that "The Panel takes the view that all four types of knowledge (viz. propositional, procedural, action, acquaintance) are important and inseparable" and that its commitment to the four types in combination "leads it to conclude that...the current 'competency movement'...is an inadequate basis upon which to construct a school curriculum." (p. 20)
- ➢ Discusses the ways that the other values of the Draft Charter can feature within the curriculum.
- ➢ Makes the following recommendations:
  - o Recommendation R2.1: "The Queensland curriculum be based on a number of principles:
    - ▪ P-12 planning;
    - ▪ futures planning;
    - ▪ a set of shared values to underpin the curriculum goals
    - ▪ a dynamic and change-responsive design;
    - ▪ the centrality of knowledge." (p. 26)
  - o Recommendation R2.2: The proposed Queensland Charter of Values be adopted on an interim basis and the eventual "agreed, shared values...exert a pervasive influence" on the curriculum. (p. 26)
  - o Recommendation R2.3: The on-going development of Queensland's school curriculum continue to be informed by the guiding principles established for this Review.

CHAPTER 3: A FUTURES PERSPECTIVE FOR THE QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM

- ➢ Discusses the necessity of introducing a "futures perspective into the curriculum, and developing higher-order thinking in a range of knowledge areas" and provides supporting arguments from recent literature, Australian 'futurists' interviewed for this Review, and the Australian Commission for the Future. (p. 29)
- ➢ Notes that the model of curriculum design with a futures perspective that is favoured by the Panel is one of "additions and extensions" (adapted from Longstreet and Shane 1993) that has three major elements: the key area of study, the disciplines currently forming part of the curriculum and additions and extensions, to be incorporated as new knowledge and information becomes available. (p. 31)

- Notes that there is also a "need to provide students with the skills of learning and thinking which will take them confidently into the future". (p. 35)
- Discusses the importance of empowering students through thinking and learning with a focus on the "transferability and adaptability of knowledge and skills to new situations" and "lifelong learning", "learning how to learn", "learning as an active process" and "teaching-for-thinking". (pp. 35-37)
- Discusses the commitment of teachers and notes that "It is essential that a futures perspective becomes embedded in the hearts and minds of teachers." (p. 38)
- Notes that "the future is the place where humans can have most impact." (p. 38)
- Makes the following recommendations:
    - Recommendation R3.1: "Every syllabus have a futures perspective so as to provide a dynamic, proactive and responsive curriculum that will prepare our youth for the 21st century." (p. 39)
    - Recommendation R3.2: "Every syllabus has critical-thinking skills included... Relevant elements of each syllabus should seek to develop higher order thinking, creative solutions and problem solving." (p. 39)
    - Recommendation R3.3: "Education organisations...work to a clearly stated vision that is shared by all stakeholders, with possible, preferable and probable alternative futures considered." (p. 39)
    - Recommendation R4.4: "A futures perspective be included in pre-service teacher education." (p. 40)
    - Recommendation R4.5: "Queensland's new curriculum structures have a strong research base...to keep abreast of change." (p. 40)

CHAPTER 4: THE FORMAL QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM: ITS ORGANISATION, DELIVERY AND APPRAISAL

- Notes that this chapter describes the current formal Queensland curriculum.
- Lists 7 surveys, as well as appraisals of syllabus documents undertaken by independent specialist consultants. (p. 42)
- Discusses the organisation of the formal curriculum under the following headings:
    - Organisation of the primary curriculum: Sets out the percentage of time allotted to eight learning areas (approximating the KLAs).
    - The breadth and depth of formal curriculum offerings in Queensland government secondary schools: Sets out the range of curriculum areas and the number of subjects within each.
    - Curriculum emphases in Queensland government secondary schools: Discusses the percentage of total student class time that is allocated to the curriculum area concerned.
    - Student enrolments in Years 11 and 12 in government schools by gender, with respective enrolments in curriculum areas.
    - Student enrolments in Years 11 and 12 in government schools by location, with respective enrolments in curriculum areas.
    - Board, Board-Registered, Board-Recorded and School Subjects in Years 11 and 12.
- Discusses the delivery of the formal curriculum under the following headings:
    - Delivery within the primary schools: Overviews document variation in school size, class sizes and staffing complements as well as the "extent to which

schools operate as professional units" and the results of a study into the assessment procedures used by teachers.
- o Delivery within the secondary schools: Presents the results of a report on the levels of experience and qualifications of secondary teachers and the freedom they have to decide about teaching practices and discusses assessment procedures.
- o Delivery by means of distance education: Discusses the Schools of Distance Education associated with the Open Access Support Centre (OASC) and issues of Distance Education and Open Learning.
- ➢ Discusses the appraisal of the formal curriculum under the following headings:
  - o Reactions of Year 7 students to the curriculum (based on an ACER questionnaire).
  - o Reactions of Year 9 and 11 students to the curriculum.
  - o Reactions of primary teachers to syllabus documentation.
  - o Teacher reactions to syllabus documentation at the secondary school level.
  - o Parental reactions to parental participation, assessment, and scope of the current curriculum.
  - o Appraisal of Syllabus Documents by Curriculum Specialists: Provides a summary of appraisals commissioned from a number of curriculum specialists including five major concerns: the lack of articulation between levels of schooling; internal inconsistencies and fragmentation; the failure to target the particular curriculum area; the concept of knowledge; and propositional knowledge versus process knowledge.
  - o Where to from here? Directions to shape the future: Summarises a commissioned paper by Campbell ('The Upper Secondary-School Curriculum: Expectations, Realities and Challenges') that argues for a domain-referenced curriculum.
- ➢ Makes the following recommendations:
  - o Recommendation R4.1: The Queensland School Curriculum Board (QSCB) develop comprehensive syllabuses for all Key Learning Areas and subjects from P-12.
  - o Recommendation R4.2: The proposed QSCB capitalise on the external consultancy reports.
  - o Recommendation R4.3: The new syllabuses be knowledge-referenced and there be recognition that content is not subordinate to process but complementary.
  - o Recommendation R4.4: "The new syllabuses recognise that learning requires the active engagement of the learner in the learning process – the importance of learning how to learn in lifelong learning." (p. 89)
  - o Recommendation R4.5: "The new syllabuses recognise the critical importance of the key skills of literacy and numeracy across the levels of schooling and the curriculum." (p. 89)
  - o Recommendation R4.6: Schools minimise the number of subjects offered that do not have accreditation potential beyond the school.
  - o Recommendation R4.7: Parties on both sides of a division take responsibility for ensuring a smooth transition for students and the continuity of their educational experiences.

- o Recommendation R4.8: The establishment of the Queensland Schools Open Learning Network (QSOLN).
- o Recommendation R4.9-4.11: The broader use of Open Learning methods and materials.

CHAPTER 5: THE QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM AND THE NATIONAL CONTEXT
- ➤ States that "In order to appreciate the context within which this state can endeavour to shape its future school curriculum, it is necessary to have an appreciation of the past and current developments in this broader environment." (p. 92)

Collaborative Curriculum Development in Australia
- ➤ Outlines the collaborative curriculum developments in Australia including the 10 agreed goals for schooling in Australia in the Hobart Declaration on Schooling, the program of national curriculum developments from 1989 to 1993, the proposed National Curriculum, consisting of eight Key Learning Areas and corresponding profiles, and the history of its partial adoption.

National Statements: Overarching Issues
- ➤ Notes that "The Panel is of the belief that Queensland can and should both encourage and participate actively in a national curriculum which is broad...Indeed, Queensland should take the initiative." (p. 96)
- ➤ Identifies the advantages of a broadly framed national curriculum as: it does not make economic sense to duplicate or differentiate state initiatives entirely from national ones; interstate and intrastate mobility is on the rise; and schooling systems can be increasingly responsive to emergent national trends and changes.
- ➤ Notes that the Panel has "a strong preference for a curriculum which is knowledge referenced" (p. 97) and in this light "believes that the eight Key Learning Areas should be considered purely as a framework within which the Queensland curriculum can be developed." (p. 98)
- ➤ Details how the curriculum might be developed in the light of national statements.

The Queensland LOTE Initiative and the National Context
- ➤ Notes that "The study of other languages and cultures is one of the most powerful ways to develop both a sympathetic and a disciplined imagination" (p. 99) and outlines the benefits of LOTE and a plan for mandating LOTE from Years 4 to 10.

Key Competencies
- ➤ Discusses how key competencies can be developed as part of the curriculum.

National Profiles: Overarching Issues
- ➤ Notes that the national profiles have outcomes as a predominant emphasis and that at present the profiles extend only to Year 10, with 8 levels so that assessment and reporting can focus "more upon the progress of the individual student than normative comparisons with the performance of others". (p. 103)
- ➤ Notes concerns regarding the shorter school day and the year less of schooling in Queensland.

- ➤ Notes that Queensland has been "endeavouring to develop reporting frameworks which meet idiosyncratic needs and are compatible with (without being driven by) the emerging national profiles." (p. 104)
- ➤ States that "The Panel is of the view...that the appropriate vehicle for achieving compatibility between Queensland's reporting mechanisms and the national profiles should be a new Student Reporting Framework (SRF)." (p. 104)
- ➤ Identifies the advantages of this as follows: "it will permit teachers to make judgments about the performance of students...within the context of a stable and consistent reporting framework throughout the state"; it "would emphasise the positive in the identification of a student's successful attainment"; it will require teachers "to introduce students to the relevant concepts and processes and assess the extent of the achievement"; public accountability; and it would provide accurate data about the maintenance or improvement of standards which is good for teachers' morale. (p. 105)
- ➤ Notes that another strength and weakness is the dependence on teacher judgment and that this means that a "form of moderation, external assessment, or some other monitoring mechanism" is necessary. (p. 105)
- ➤ Notes that the SRF would address all Key Learning Areas to prevent a narrowing of the curriculum.

Core and Common Curriculum for Years 1-10 Students
- ➤ States that "Research commissioned by the Review consistently supports the introduction of a core curriculum...Curriculum documents were seen as valuable in guiding the work of teachers...Teachers are requesting very clear guidelines on what to teach." (p. 106)
- ➤ States that "The Panel is in favour of an indication of relative emphases...to be devoted to the various learning areas in the Years 1-10 span. There are strong arguments for the specification of such emphases (or times in the case of separate subjects) for the core curriculum." (p. 106)
- ➤ Identifies those arguments as follows: the more time spent on a task, the greater the likelihood of higher achievement in that area; it enshrines the important place in a broad school curriculum of areas outside English and mathematics which are subject to system-wide assessment; it allows statewide curriculum development to be realistic; it helps make student performance results between schools valid and reliable; and it helps ensure accountability to the public.
- ➤ States that the Panel "envisages a new system whereby within each Key Learning Area or core subject there would be essential learnings and elective learnings", so "a core within a core, or more accurately a core within a common curriculum...Thus the right of entitlement to a core is preserved across the state; but scope for innovation, development and relevance is also retained." (p. 107)

Core and Common Curriculum for Full-time Students in Years 11 and 12
- ➤ Notes that the required approach entails "a minimalist attitude to mandating whilst at the same time preserving the holistic nature of the P-12 curriculum and its fundamental concern to promote literacy and numeracy, be knowledge referenced, dynamic, and based on shared values." (p. 108)
- ➤ Argues that "students should study an English subject and a mathematics subject in Years 11 and 12" and "be encouraged to pursue a balanced curriculum". (p. 108)

- Expresses support for the development of "moderation procedures and scaling devices which would allow a relaxation of the two-year completion time for full-time students but simultaneously meet public demands for school comparability and equity in exit rank determination." (p. 108)

Recommendations:
- Makes the following recommendations:
    - Recommendation R5.1: Future comprehensive P-12 syllabuses be prepared.
    - Recommendation R5.2: Competencies be regarded only as templates on the existing knowledge bases in the curriculum.
    - Recommendation R5.3: A statewide professional development strategy be developed...to enable teachers to be become familiar with the key learning areas.
    - Recommendation R5.4: An "adequately staffed curriculum section" attached to the proposed Queensland School Curriculum Board be established.
    - Recommendation R5.5: A Student Reporting Framework be developed within the Key Learning Area framework from Years 1 to 10.
    - Recommendation R5.6: From 1995, for Years 1-8, the core areas of the curriculum should be English, Mathematics, Studies of Society and the Environment, Science, Health and Physical Development, The Arts and Technology. Within each core area there should be both essential and elective learnings; LOTE would be core from Years 4-8 from 1996.
    - Recommendation R5.7: From 1995, for Years 9-10, the core areas of the curriculum should be English, Mathematics, Studies of Society and the Environment and Science. LOTE would be core from Years 9 and 10 as resources become available and 'Lifeskills' would also be core.
    - Recommendation R5.8: The Queensland School Curriculum Board determine the minimum emphases to be devoted to the various areas of the core curriculum.
    - Recommendation R5.9: The current Year 10 certificate be abolished, to be replaced by a Certificate of Attainment for students who leave school before completion of Year 12.
    - Recommendation R5.10: The core curriculum continue to be available for students with learning disabilities and difficulties.
    - Recommendation R5.11: For Years 11 and 12, the core should be at least one subject in each of the Key Learning Areas of English and Mathematics, Studies of Society and the Environment and Science. Schools should encourage the notion of a balanced curriculum and maximum flexibility of student choice. 'Lifeskills' would also be core in Years 11 and 12.
    - Recommendation R5.12: Students who need three years to complete the equivalent of Years 11 and 12 should have the opportunity to do so.

CHAPTER 6: RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS ON THE POST-COMPULSORY SCHOOLING AREAS: INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLING AND THE BASIC SKILLS REQUIRED IN THE EMPLOYMENT MARKET AND WIDER COMMUNITY
- Notes that "most would agree that unemployment and a rationing of post-school education and training have accelerated retention to Year 12" and that emphasis

should be on upgrading the knowledge and skill-based competencies of the bottom 70 per cent of school achievers. (p. 112)

➢ Summarises the Finn (1991), Mayer (1992) and Carmichael (1992) reports.

➢ Identifies concerns with the focus on the employment-based emphasis of these reports, and the narrowing of focus that may be entailed in the key competencies.

➢ Notes that "The Mayer competencies to Level 1 exist in most of the Board's syllabus documents for Years 11 and 12" and that "preliminary work by the BSSSS indicates the potential of the Queensland Core Skills Test to report on student achievement in many of the competency areas." (pp. 115-118)

➢ Discusses tertiary entrance trends and pathways and identifies seven main categories into which the various pathways can be grouped: Higher Education-Degree (application through QTAC); Higher Education-Diploma (application through QTAC); Higher Education-Associate Diploma (application through QTAC); TAFE Advanced Certificate/Certificate program (application directly to college); TAFE Certificate (application directly to college); Short Vocational and Training Courses (TAFE/private providers - application directly to college); and Employment.

➢ Discusses the increasing competition for places in higher education between Year 12 applicants and those following other pathways.

➢ Stresses the concept of lifelong learning.

➢ Notes the following concerns about the developments taking place in the areas of high demand for tertiary places:
  o Comparability of Assessment: Notes that following the Viviani report recommendation 10.2, the Committee to Review Assessment and Moderation Processes in Queensland Senior Secondary Education (CRAMP) was set up in June 1992 which has recommended a program of change. Discusses the comparability within a subject between schools and notes that "this comparability is a crucial issue for a school-based assessment system where the results are used for selection for entry to higher education". Argues that "To further enhance the achievement of comparable school standards it is proposed that exemplars of standards of students' work be established". (pp. 121-122)
  o SAIs and scaling: States that "Subject Achievement Indicators...and the extent to which they can accurately reflect student comparative achievement is a concern", especially when their impact on the scaling process to achieve OPs and FPs is considered. Argues that "the prospects of greater comparability and community acceptance of that comparability will be more achievable by the use of reference tests and…in the high-stakes, competitive situation of tertiary entrance in Queensland, reference tests in English and mathematics are appropriate." (pp. 122-123)
  o QCS Test. Highlights concerns regarding: the fairness of using the QCS test result in scaling; the tendency for teachers to teach to the test and thereby place pressure on the curriculum; and possible bias against students from low socio-economic background. Concludes that such concerns are "apparently based on rather selective use of data on certain applicants only". (pp. 123-124)
  o The effects of tertiary selection requirements on the secondary curriculum and subject choice: Discusses the factors that restrict subject choice and notes the importance of subject choice for pathways, and the desirability of minimising the effects of tertiary entrance requirements on secondary curriculum.

- o Public and media perceptions about schools and learning: Notes the unfairness of using tertiary entrance results to classify schools.
- ➢ Discusses vocational education and notes that "The concept of 'situated learning' or 'integrated learning' offers a new and hopeful approach to a problem that is deeply rooted in schools", i.e. the provision of high quality education and training, including vocational education, to all students. (pp. 128-129)
- ➢ Discusses an issues paper prepared by the BSSSS that: noted that "the introduction of competency-based training is the cornerstone for reform of the vocational education and training system"; summarised the current situation whereby vocational curricula are accredited and recognised; and identified the principles of cooperation between BSSSS and VETEC and possible alternative arrangements.
- ➢ Discusses the relationship between education, work and the economy, including a perceived move towards a more "economically rational" system (p. 133), the question of whether increased spending on education and training is reflected in improved performance of the economy and overall competitiveness and productivity and the economic effects of a lack of education.
- ➢ Outlines the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development's goals for "the role of education in international competitiveness and the preparation of students for the challenges of a rapidly changing labour force". (p. 138)
- ➢ Discusses the relationship between school and employers, particularly in regards to small business and work experience programs.
- ➢ Discusses the relationship between school and TAFE and outlines the Cooperative Programs between schools and TAFEs, and the provision of vocational along with academic subjects.
- ➢ Makes the following recommendations:
  - o Recommendation R6.1: Further research be undertaken in relation to the Finn, Mayer and Carmichael Reports to determine: the extent to which Key Competencies occur in current syllabus documents; and the potential of current assessment procedures, including the Queensland Core Skills Test, to report on the Competencies.
  - o Recommendation R6.2: The fundamental elements of Queensland's Student Education Profile for tertiary entrance should be modified minimally.
  - o Recommendation R6.3: Schools should be encouraged to utilise career guidance and subject selection packages for Year 10 students in their choice of subjects for Year 11.
  - o Recommendation R6.4: Universities in conjunction with TEPA should be encouraged to: conduct annual reviews of their prerequisite subjects for entry requirements to determine their educational appropriateness and their relationship to the school curriculum; reconsider the age for mature entry to enable students with vocational education qualifications of various kinds to gain entry through this route; continue to give increasing recognition to vocational education qualifications in criteria for university entrance especially through formal articulation arrangements; discourage short term 'parking' by students in vocational education courses by insisting on completion of such courses prior to consideration for university entrance; and encourage joint enrolment for university and vocational education.
  - o Recommendation R6.5: Research should be conducted immediately by the central curriculum authorities together with TEPA on the implications of

reducing the minimum requirements for the attainment of an Overall Position with the equivalent of five Board subjects to determine the potential for freeing up subject choice for school students for Years 11 and 12.
- o Recommendation R6.6: A state industry-schooling forum be established to more closely link the education system with business and industry.
- o Recommendation R6.7: The forum review existing arrangements and recommend new approaches for enhancing the school-industry interface.
- o Recommendation R6.8: The involvement and contribution of the business community in the provision of vocational education should be formalised and ongoing.
- o Recommendation R6.9: The principle of convergence between general and vocational education should be endorsed and the implications of convergence should be further investigated by the proposed Queensland School Curriculum Board and vocational education and training authorities to determine, in particular, the further potential of schools in terms of: within-subject embedding; articulation of courses; accreditation and certification of subjects; registration of subjects; registration of schools as providers; and offering of national modules. (pp. 142-143)

CHAPTER 7: EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION TO HELP ALL STUDENTS ACHIEVE THEIR LITERACY AND NUMERACY POTENTIAL

- ➢ Notes the importance to society of high levels of literacy and numeracy, defines both literacy and numeracy and calls for a "particularly strong commitment" on the part of schools to ensure all students attain the highest levels possible in them. (pp. 149-150)
- ➢ Outlines the intervention programs currently in operation and notes the directions that need to be taken.
- ➢ Makes the following recommendations:
    - o Recommendation R7.1: Early-age prevention, identification and intervention relating to students experiencing difficulties with literacy and numeracy be given priority by teacher education programs, system- or sector-level structures, schools and teachers (identifies seven ways this can be done).
    - o Recommendation R7.2: During professional development in connection with syllabuses, reference be made to identification of, and effective responses to, students experiencing difficulties relating to literacy and numeracy throughout the P-12 levels of schooling as well as the role of language in all learning.
    - o Recommendation R7.3: Literacy and numeracy reporting records and the student reporting framework be integrated across the Key Learning Areas.
    - o Recommendation R7.4: The 'key teacher' concept be utilised, where schools support the training of a teacher in literacy and numeracy techniques intervention and preventive measures so that the key teacher is on site and available to serve as a mentor to other staff in the school.
    - o Recommendation R7.4: Support be continued across Queensland of formal parent-school partnerships in literacy and numeracy programs.
    - o Recommendation R7.6: A systematic program of parent/caregiver awareness of their role in the development of their child's literacy and numeracy be undertaken.

CHAPTER 8: TEACHING TO DIFFERENCE

- States that "The concern in this chapter is with how best to service the educational needs of Queensland's diverse school population" and notes that "recognition that diversity requires, and warrants, a positive response is a relatively recent achievement." (p. 156)
- Discusses the shift towards inclusive practices and the reasons for the adoption of 'Inclusive Education' in Queensland and makes the following points:
  - There has been "a shift in societal values towards respect for all humans, irrespective of their capabilities or other characteristics." (p. 157)
  - "It is claimed by some that the fundamental principle of inclusive education is the positive valuing of diversity within the human community." (p. 157)
  - "It is argued on grounds of social justice and equity, that all students should be educated in the least restrictive environment possible." (p. 158)
  - "It is argued that the ideal Australia is a coherent community which capitalises upon and celebrates the diversity of its constituent elements." (p. 158)
  - "It is claimed that children who differ benefit directly from association with 'normal' peers." (p. 158)
  - "It has been argued that inclusive practices have a direct beneficial effect upon the regular students." (p. 158)
  - "It is claimed that the inclusive movement has the potential to revolutionise education for all by sensitising schools to the need to individualise offerings for the full range of students." (p. 159)
- Notes that the problems with inclusive practices include that "empirical support for the claims concerning inclusion is sparse" (p. 159); and that "successful implementations will require, inter alia, the transfer of a special education information base to regular school settings." (p. 160)
- Taking such arguments into account, argues that "Until such time as the resources and structures are in place in regular classes, there is merit in retaining alternative arrangements for the delivery of education services to the diverse school population." (p. 160)
- Discusses the supporting structures for inclusive education and stresses the need for schools to place as much value on a humane ethos as tertiary entrance scores or sporting or cultural achievements; the development of strong school-community relationships; and the organisation of schools as "cohesive professional units which are prepared to accept responsibility on a 'whole school' basis". (p. 162)
- Discusses issues of provision of adequate resources and models and procedures for inclusive education.
- Discusses measures that may be taken to respond to the needs of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and of non-English speaking background.
- Makes twelve recommendations for the enhancement of teaching to difference.

CHAPTER 9: THE NATURE AND ROLES OF STRUCTURES IN QUEENSLAND CONCERNED WITH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT, ACCREDITATION AND ASSESSMENT, AND THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THEM

- Notes that currently most facets of the Queensland school curriculum are divided between P-10 (under the Department of Education) and upper secondary (under the

Board of Senior Secondary School Studies). Notes that the question of formal external oversight of assessment and accreditation arises only at Year 12.

➢ Discusses the new curriculum process and notes its basic characteristics as:
  o A P-12 school-based curriculum process.
  o A curriculum that is knowledge referenced, organised within a framework of KLAs, based on a set of values, with a futures perspective, dynamically oriented, and capable of continuous adaptation and change.
  o A philosophy that incorporates comprehensive syllabus design, and flexible and student-responsive delivery patterns in schools to achieve comparable teaching and learning outcomes.
  o A reporting framework which has as a minimal standard annual assessment by teachers, supplemented at various points by: a diagnostic net at Year 2; a literacy, numeracy and basic skills test at Year 6; light sampling at Year 10; use of career guidance packages at Year 10; a new form of attainment certificate for students exiting before Year 12; and a student education profile leading to multiple pathways after Year 12.
  o A core curriculum 1-12 proceeding from a broad core to a narrower one.
  o Convergence in relation to school and vocational education curriculum.
  o A variety of remedial strategies and flexible approaches for Queensland's diverse student population.
  o A curriculum delivery approach that has as its centrepiece the school as a partnership among students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community.
  o A new regime of accountability, particularly to students and parents.
  o A flow of curriculum leadership from the highest echelons of the systems to the point of curriculum delivery.

➢ Notes that the curriculum functions outlined in the Terms of Reference in this Review include: curriculum development; curriculum management; curriculum assessment and curriculum accreditation. Notes the tensions (sometimes creative) that often exist between those responsible for the functions of a curriculum system.

➢ Notes that the following principles appear to arise in most curriculum systems:
  o Representation: school curriculum is a community responsibility.
  o Professionalism: curriculum ought to be based on sound professional judgment.
  o Leadership: the need for the structures which guide curriculum to provide leadership.
  o Efficiency: the need to ensure the effective and efficient utilisation of the community's resources.
  o Equity: all aspects of curriculum must consider equity as a prime objective.
  o Systemic model: "Curriculum can best be conceptualised systemically and holistically with the various curriculum functions being interrelated." (p. 174)
  o National-state interface: there is an expectation of higher national standards and increasing portability, universality, equity, accessibility and responsiveness in the delivery of services.
  o Accountability: the need to maintain the maximum degree of openness and accountability.

➢ Provides an overview of efforts at curriculum reform elsewhere including Britain and New Zealand, outlines the various models used by Australian states and territories and

discusses the powers of the Minister, the Chief Executive Officer, Non-government schools registration and the Boards of Study.

➢ Discusses a number of issues regarding curriculum structures that are raised often, including the danger of assessment driving curriculum.

➢ Makes some observations regarding the relationship between government and public policy, and what might be the minimum role for government in managing elements of the school curriculum.

➢ Outlines seven characteristics that should underpin the new curriculum structures for Queensland's school system.

➢ Proposes a new statutory authority to oversee curriculum research development, authorisation and dissemination, the Queensland School Curriculum Board (QSCB), to be supplemented by a commercial arm, the Queensland Curriculum Development Corporation (QCDC) and a new Queensland Curriculum Accreditation and Quality Assurance Agency (QCAQA).

➢ Makes 18 recommendations, dealing with the establishment of the QSCB, QCDC and QCAQA, their roles, membership, and operational framework.

CHAPTER 10: THE CURRENT AND POSSIBLE FUTURE ROLES OF SCHOOL AUTHORITIES IN CURRICULUM MATTERS IN QUEENSLAND

➢ Notes that this chapter is based on school visit data.

➢ Discusses a school based-approach to curriculum and notes that "A school-based curriculum encourages schools to develop their own unique solutions within their particular educational context." (p. 193)

➢ Highlights some existing complications and concludes "It is now time to refocus attention on curriculum and any aspects of its design and delivery. This will require a greater level of curriculum support and leadership for schools from school authorities." (pp. 194-195)

➢ Discusses curriculum responses within Queensland schools and notes the following:
   o The school visits revealed praiseworthy responsiveness to student needs by both secondary and primary teachers.
   o The main modes of school-based curriculum development noted by the Review were: school-based programs based on externally accredited or system mandated framework documents; school devised programs, with or without external or system accreditation; and school adoption of curriculum or programs from elsewhere.
   o The benefits of central decision making bodies about curriculum are that they "reinforce coherence and stability in the schooling system" and contribute to "a commonality which overarches the diversity of practices which is highly valued at school level…They also have important roles in research, making sense of national trends, and encouraging best practice, and often can constitute a critical mass of expertise in curriculum matters." (pp. 196-197)
   o The Panel "advocates the maximum degree of flexibility to achieve the required outcomes, and is impressed with the ingenuity shown by schools in meeting local circumstances across such a vast state." (p. 197)
   o "The Panel recommends a model of curriculum which will incorporate comprehensive syllabuses, flexible delivery, and outcomes which are comparable and of a high standard. The school-based curriculum model for

program writing should be retained, but should respond to comprehensive and definitive centrally accredited syllabus documents." (p. 197)
- Discusses the curriculum process and its leadership in dynamic schools.
- Discusses the curriculum leadership structure within schools and notes that:
  - "The centrality of curriculum activity to the life of the school should be recognised. This recognition will be clearly reflected in the leadership structures and priorities evident within the school community." (p. 199)
  - The classroom teacher is at the centre of the curriculum process. Better models of teacher collegiality and professional interaction within the school are recommended.
  - "The position of Advanced Skills Teacher could provide a valuable form of curriculum leadership within schools." (p. 199)
  - Curriculum leadership should be emphasised in position descriptions of Heads of Departments, and of Principals.
- Notes that the Panel sees it as essential that the values, goals and objectives of a school be seen as a key part of planning and policy making, be made explicit, be decided by all members of a school community and be developed under the leadership of curriculum leadership personnel.
- Argues that some school-based curriculum development should continue that is: situated in the context of pre-existing curriculum values, goals and objectives, in the context of the school curriculum as a whole, and in cognizance with curriculum development across the state; undertaken by a school curriculum committee; and as collaborative as possible. States that "The role of curriculum leadership within the school is to ensure that curriculum development…is rationalised and coordinated, collegial as far as possible, and supported in terms of appropriate resource allocation." (p. 205)
- Discusses curriculum management and notes that:
  - Of curriculum delivery structures: the role of the principal is probably the most important factor in how curriculum decisions are made and the timetable is the one of the "most obvious and important", and needs to be based on curriculum values, goals and objectives rather than itself being a determinant of curriculum arrangements. (p. 205)
  - School-based decision making is constrained to an extent by financial considerations.
- Discusses curriculum accreditation and argues that "The role of schools clearly is to prepare programs of work which are capable of gaining accreditation with appropriate bodies." (p. 206).
- Discusses curriculum delivery and notes that the quality of interaction between teachers and students is the responsibility of the school and that "a crucial role of curriculum leadership in the school is to encourage the development of a collaborative, reflective and well-informed staff in terms of their teaching practice", "to play a major part in the provision of quality teaching and learning through the professional development of staff." (pp. 207-208)
- Notes the following in regards to curriculum assessment and reporting:
  - "Assessment policies should be drawn up within the school to enhance teaching and learning and to reflect the school's curriculum values, goals and objectives." (p. 208)

- o There must be mechanisms in place by which students and parents can have input into assessment policy. Once the policy is devised, it is its management that is critical.
  - o Primary schools have a different assessment policy and management focus.
- ➢ Makes a number of recommendations including: the use of standardised reporting formats for the sake of comprehensibility and comparability; and the preferable scheduling of formal parent-teacher consultations every semester. (p. 210)
- ➢ Discusses curriculum research and evaluation and recommends that "all schools should engage in periodic or cyclic processes of collaborative school review or renewal", with a major focus on the effectiveness of curriculum and on all aspects of curriculum delivery. (p. 210)
- ➢ Discusses the role of the school system authorities and notes that because of the diversity of the school sector across Queensland, "it is difficult to put forward any clear model for curriculum leadership at system level. However, what can be said is that curriculum leadership should be a major priority for system authorities and peak bodies." (p. 211)
- ➢ Briefly discusses partnerships between schools, school authorities and other educational institutions and authorities.
- ➢ Makes the following recommendations:
  - o Recommendation R10.1: Within the recommended model of curriculum (comprehensive syllabuses, flexible delivery, system-wide comparability of outcomes), "the school-based curriculum model of program writing should be retained...Schools should be able to continue to propose their own courses of study to QSCB for accreditation, but be subject to more coordination and clearer policy direction." (p. 213)
  - o Recommendation R10.2: "Within a school, curriculum development should be collaborative, as far as possible, involving the whole range of teaching staff…as well as drawing upon local or regional resources." (p. 213)
  - o Recommendation R10.3: All Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) should have a role in the mentoring of teachers...and be seen as key practitioners within the school." (p. 213)
  - o Recommendation R10.4: Position descriptions for Head of Department in the secondary school should emphasise curriculum leadership rather than just management.
  - o Recommendation R10.5 pertains to equivalent of Head of Department at primary schools.
  - o Recommendation R10.6-7 pertain to the emphasizing of curriculum leadership as a major part of roles of principals, deputy principals and other senior officials.
  - o Recommendation R10.8 pertains to the involvement of parents and whole school communities in curriculum matters.
  - o Recommendation R10.9: "Counseling services in schools should be strengthened to free the school administration and teaching staff for teaching and learning." (p. 214)
  - o Recommendation R10.10 pertains to the centrality of the Charter of Values and the explicit statement of a school's values.
  - o Recommendation R10.11 pertains to the establishment of curriculum committees by schools.

- o Recommendation 10.12: The organisation and process of subject provision and selection should respond as far as possible to student preference and aspirations.
  - o Recommendation R10.13: "Assessment policies should be drawn up within the school to enhance teaching and learning and to reflect the school's curriculum values, goals and objectives." (p. 214)
  - o Recommendation R10.14: Formal parent-teacher consultations should be scheduled at least once per year.
  - o Recommendation R10.15-17 relate to the role of School Support Centres, and to cooperation and collaborative relationships between schools and different sectors. (pp. 214-215)

CHAPTER 11: RESOURCING THE CURRICULUM (PP. 217-266)

- ➤ Analyses the resources required to fund education system programs, gives details of the current expenditure of the state government and the non-state sector and provides tabled interstate comparisons.
- ➤ Addresses the following issues which are seen to have an impact on the delivery of education programs:
  - o Inadequate systems regarding management systems in the Department of Education.
  - o Student numbers regarding the budgetary importance of obtaining accurate figures.
  - o Program management regarding problems from the implementation of Program Management.
  - o Resource allocations between sectors regarding the favouring of secondary students in expenditure terms over primary.
  - o Staffing location models.
  - o School banks accounts.
  - o Project definition.
  - o Funding new initiatives.
  - o Special needs.
  - o Professional development. (p. 232)
- ➤ Makes seven recommendations regarding macro-funding issues.
- ➤ Discusses the costs which will emerge from the panel's recommendations and provides a projected analysis for the next three financial years.
- ➤ Tables the resource implications of the recommendations.

CHAPTER 12: EPILOGUE – IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

- ➤ Makes five recommendations regarding teacher education.