

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

This joint statement outlines the purpose of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) within Queensland state schools, as well as practices that support students to prepare for NAPLAN and ensure appropriate use of NAPLAN data to inform decision making.

While the Department of Education (the Department) and Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) acknowledge that the future of NAPLAN and its role in school and system improvement is under review, this statement describes the current applications.

Curriculum planning

A fundamental principle as agreed by the parties is that, in accordance with the Department's *P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework* (P-12 CARF), all Queensland state schools must systematically deliver the Australian Curriculum, a three-dimensional curriculum that comprises disciplinary knowledge, skills and understanding in eight learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

The Australian Curriculum must be the focus of teaching and learning in Queensland state schools. Students acquire the literacy and numeracy skills required to successfully complete NAPLAN tests through classroom teaching and learning of the Australian Curriculum.

Throughout the school year, teachers plan and provide differentiated instruction as set out in the P-12 CARF and agreed between the parties in the joint statement on *Planning, preparation, differentiation and planning for individual students, including individual curriculum plans*.

School leaders determine explicit improvement agendas for their school in response to local needs and system priorities, and in consultation with staff and the school community. Assistant Regional Directors work in partnership with principals as they navigate their schools' improvement journeys. Regional officers offer a range of advice and support to school leaders, teaching teams and members of the wider school community. They contribute to school improvement by empowering state school leaders, building expert teaching teams and fostering professional collaboration and community partnerships.

Assessment

Most Queensland students from Prep to Year 10 are assessed against relevant learning area achievement standards.

NAPLAN assesses a selection of literacy and numeracy skills of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students at one point in time each year. Consequently, student performance in NAPLAN is not considered a comprehensive assessment of the full curriculum taught in classrooms.

Standardised tests, like NAPLAN, are an example of assessment data that teaching teams sometimes use to provide additional insights and/or assist in validating inferences drawn from other classroom data.

The Department and the QTU agree that formative and summative assessments closely aligned to curriculum teaching and learning allow continual monitoring and can provide accurate, timely data to inform differentiated teaching and learning.

Academic reporting

Teachers make on-balance judgements based on folios of student work and report twice yearly on students' achievement using a five-point scale, for most students this is an A-E scale.

NAPLAN data should not be considered when reporting on student achievement in any learning area.

The focus of written and face-to-face reporting to parents/caregivers is to give an account of student progress in learning the Australian Curriculum. In addition, social and emotional development, behaviour and other contextual factors such as school-based programs can be reported on, in accordance with the P-12 CARF.

These reporting processes are agreed at the local level in accordance with the joint statement on *Planning, preparation, differentiation and planning for individual students, including individual curriculum plans* agreed between the QTU and Department in 2016.

Use of NAPLAN data

NAPLAN provides common data sets and helps explore questions about relative impact to determine whether resource allocation and improvement strategies have affected student outcomes as planned or intended.

As agreed in the joint statement on the *Purpose and use of data in Queensland schools*, NAPLAN data allow school, regional or system improvement to be quantified; enable changes in performance to be tracked over time; and may contribute to a school's data plan.

The QTU and Department acknowledge that NAPLAN only provides information in relation to literacy and numeracy, and only to the extent assessed in each test.

Schools – through direct contact and their school websites – are best placed to provide up-to-date information about their context, their students, their wider community and the enriching learning experiences they offer to students and staff.

The parties acknowledge that every school in every community is unique and that while teachers and school leaders influence student learning and engagement, many factors contribute to students' performance in NAPLAN and in school.

A student's NAPLAN data should not influence a school's decision to enrol a prospective student nor should their past results be used to discourage or encourage students to undertake the test.

Annual performance review, recruitment and selection

The annual performance review (APR) process for teachers in Queensland state schools is framed against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). As part of the APR process, teachers identify and reflect on evidence that provides insight into the effectiveness of their practice.

Evidence relating to student outcomes includes student learning, engagement in learning and personal wellbeing, and these can be measured in a variety of ways. The parties agree that evidence of student learning and achievement of the curriculum taught in the classroom is a better measure than NAPLAN data.

When undertaking recruitment and selection processes, candidates may choose to provide NAPLAN data as part of a range of supporting

evidence of suitability. However, the QTU and Department agree it is not essential that NAPLAN data be included, and promotion should not be based just on favourable NAPLAN data – a wide variety of evidence of school improvement is suggested. In addition, the referencing of a school's NAPLAN performance should not be the sole evidence used by panels when determining the overall effectiveness of an applicant or comparative merit.

External providers

Individual schools select programs and resources in consultation with the wider community and to meet the specific needs of their students. The parties acknowledge that the Department does not endorse or approve non-departmental programs or resources.

The parties also agree that schools choosing to use third party providers, programs and products must safeguard the privacy of their students and families, and must meet all mandatory restrictions that surround the security, use and sharing of student data.

Student wellbeing

The Department and the QTU agree that student wellbeing is paramount. Schools actively foster student and parent understanding of the purpose and value of assessment as a tool to exchange feedback, inform teaching and enhance learning. Any recognition or celebration of individual student academic achievement should be in relation to reported grades rather than NAPLAN performance.

The parties agree schools must work to minimise the stress or anxiety some students may experience in relation to assessment, particularly NAPLAN tests, and assist students to develop the strategies needed to succeed at school.

Schools must provide families with advice on supporting their children to thrive at school and, more specifically, on ways to prepare for NAPLAN. The parties acknowledge that families must be supported to make informed decisions in the best interests of their children.

The parties acknowledge that there is a legitimate place for limited NAPLAN preparation activities related to the mode and conditions of testing itself.

However, as the NAPLAN website states, 'excessive test preparation using previous tests is not necessary nor useful'. Familiarisation activities should only be conducted in the vicinity of the tests. The parties do not endorse repeated or regular NAPLAN practice tests or the implementation of pre-tests to capture data for the purpose of shaping teaching and learning specifically related to NAPLAN.

The Department and the QTU remain committed to ensuring

- all Queensland state schools are supported to implement the Australian Curriculum
- all teachers are supported to know their students and how they learn, to monitor and assess their student learning, and to make consistent, reliable judgments about student achievement
- all students are supported when they sit the NAPLAN test
- current, comprehensive, school-based evidence of student learning and achievement is used to inform next steps for teaching and learning, school improvement and equity in educational outcomes.

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25/10/18



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