

The CSE in Australia

Steiner Schools in Queensland are now free to use the CSE as a secondary qualification to gain access to Australian universities without compromising the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum at the end of Class 12.

We had to go through a two-step process. Firstly, we had to document the curriculum meeting the requirements of the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). This was tackled in the main by Pep Wright (soon to be SEDT's new General Manager) and Tim Dunn who were the education leaders in the Samford Valley Steiner School in Brisbane in 2019. This covered English, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences (SOSE) and Art, and used CSE's Learning Outcomes and moderation protocols to demonstrate students' achievement.

The Art curriculum was the most difficult to write as this is where the Waldorf curriculum diverges most strongly from state curriculums, but it was finally accepted. We assumed this was all we had to do to gain university entrance status for the CSE but, much to our dismay, the graduating Class 12 from Samford Valley in 2019 still had to sit the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) exams.

We discovered there was another state government body, Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC), responsible for approving qualifications for direct university entrance. We contacted QTAC in early 2020 and made a submission for the CSE level 3 as a UE qualification in Queensland. QTAC agreed to this in November 2020. However, there was a catch...

We'd included in our submission data on NZ CSE graduates data since 2012 which showed that CSE graduates achieved at higher levels than their state counterparts. We weren't boasting; just what the data showed. QTAC was concerned our students would out-compete state students for university placements so they decided to scale our results *downwards*. This means CSE graduates in Queensland can currently only achieve a score of 80 out of a possible 100 no matter how excellent their grades are. That gives them access to most degree-level courses but courses like medicine and engineering need scores between 80 and 100. To gain access to these courses, regrettably they will still need to sit a SAT to combine with their CSE score to get at a higher score. Apparently, the same happens to students sitting the International Baccalaureate for the same reason. Don't like the outcome, move the goal posts? We intend to revisit this in time.

Despite this, CSE graduates from the 2020 Class 12 at Samford all managed to get into the courses of their choice with several being offered early placements. QTAC have said they will review this in time and now that we have set a precedent in Queensland the other Australian states might be easier to deal with. I must say that QTAC has been very easy to deal with and supportive and helpful in this first intake.

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