Emerging Directions and Details

Presentation by
Dr Gabrielle Matters and Professor Geoff Masters
+ Q&A session

29 April 2014
Re-modelling the Secondary–Tertiary Interface
The Secondary–Tertiary Interface
The review will consider the effectiveness of the systems and identify ways to improve, revitalise or reform them.
The early questions

External exams?

ATAR?
The short answers

Revitalised school assessment

+ New species of external assessment

OP not sustainable

ATAR not the long-term solution
Terms of Reference
Senior Assessment System

Comparability
Moderation
Assessment instruments
Exit levels of achievement
Terms of Reference
Tertiary Entrance System

OP
QTAC Rank
ATAR
QCS Test & CCEs
Referrals from Parliamentary Inquiry
Assessment methods used in senior mathematics, chemistry and physics
Desiderata
(1–4 of 8)

Centrality of student learning
Validity
Reliability
Futures orientation
Desiderata
(5–8 of 8)

Privileging subject-specific achievement
Transparency
Operability
Separation of responsibilities
Review’s current position on senior assessment

- Revitalise school assessment
- Revamp moderation
- Introduce external assessment
- Combine school and external assessments to give subject results
- Produce subject results on a finer scale
- Produce valid, reliable, credible, stand-alone subject results
Review’s current position on tertiary entrance

• The OP is not sustainable
• The ATAR’s integrity is being examined (Aus)
• There are alternatives to the OP/ATAR
The OP system
(1–7 of 13)

Right for its time
Breaking down in technical terms
Not well understood
Myths abound
Gaming
Marketing tool for schools
Negative backwash effects
OP eligibility 1992-2013

Proportion of Year 12 students

Year


OP%

OP ineligible%
Year 12 university applicants – OP eligibility

Admissions period (Sem 1)

Percentage of Year 12 applicants

%OP eligible applicants
% OP ineligible applicants

Australian Council for Educational Research
Enrolments through QTAC 2013

- Degree or higher award: 6.6%
- Advanced Diploma: 0.05%
- Diploma: 0.3%
- University-incomplete: 19.6%
- TAFE-Advanced Diploma: 0.3%
- TAFE-Diploma: 4.3%
- TAFE-Incomplete: 2.5%
- Other tertiary study: 17.7%
- Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT): 1.6%
- Other qualification: 0.03%

Year 12 or equivalent: 47.1%

Australian Council for Educational Research
### Year 12 QTAC applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admissions Period Sem 1</th>
<th>Year 12 Students</th>
<th>Year 12 Applicants</th>
<th>% Year 12 Students</th>
<th>Offers</th>
<th>% Offers received</th>
<th>Enrolments</th>
<th>% Enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>35,501</td>
<td>27,853</td>
<td>78.5%</td>
<td>18,968</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>12,984</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>37,032</td>
<td>24,133</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>22,097</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>16,065</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>44,196</td>
<td>22,058</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>21,140</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
<td>15,472</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>48,205</td>
<td>24,716</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>24,323</td>
<td>98.4%</td>
<td>18,232</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2013, 393 Year 12 students who applied for university missed out on an offer.

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Australian Council for Educational Research
Gaming the system

Using the rules and procedures meant to protect a system to, instead, manipulate the system for a desired outcome
The OP system

(8–13 of 13)

Procedural emphasis of moderation
Rationales not revisited
Lack of research into comparability
Certain philosophical positions
Mobility of students
Universities require more information
Change in OP distribution
An examination of the ATAR

Cohort instability
Assumptions of comparability
Overall achievement
Single index
Error of measurement
Same measure for all year 12 applicants/courses/universities

Australian Council for Educational Research
## ATAR variations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State / Territory</th>
<th>Handles applications</th>
<th>Does ATAR calculations</th>
<th>Sets eligibility rules</th>
<th>Released through</th>
<th>Students know their ATAR?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>UAC</td>
<td>ACT Board</td>
<td>By ACT Board</td>
<td>ACT Board</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>UAC</td>
<td>UAC (&gt;)</td>
<td>Through UAC</td>
<td>UAC</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>QTAC</td>
<td>QSA</td>
<td>By QSA</td>
<td>QSA</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA/NT</td>
<td>SATAC</td>
<td>SACE Board obo SATAC</td>
<td>By universities and TAFE</td>
<td>SACE Board</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>UTAS</td>
<td>TQA</td>
<td>By UTAS and TQA</td>
<td>TQA</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>VTAC</td>
<td>VTAC</td>
<td>Through VTAC</td>
<td>VTAC</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>TISC</td>
<td>TISC</td>
<td>Through TISC</td>
<td>TISC and SCSA together</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Universities, as is their right, make decisions about the characteristics of the students they want in their universities and the methods by which they select them.

What is different in the new model is the location of the processes.
Alternatives to a single queue could be considered. Some are used elsewhere. Some have been used here in the past. Some are new ideas.

- Greater use of pre-requisites
- Using fewer subjects for selection
- Weighting subjects differently for different courses
- Specifying subject combinations for overall measure
- Multiple ranks
- Entrance tests
- Some exams, some subjects, high-demand courses
- Sophisticated points system
We have the opportunity to propose some options that have greater validity as selection tools and convey much more useful information than the single ranking statistic created by ATAR.
It is a peculiarly Australian practice for universities to expect the school sector to rank their applicants for them.
Has the time passed for trying to place all applicants from Year 12 in the same queue, regardless of course or institution?

There are now multiple pathways, multiple entry points, and multiple criteria for ranking and selecting students into particular courses.

Under the demand-driven university systems, selection is now a non-issue in many courses in some universities.
Operations at the secondary–tertiary interface
Input and output
At the interface

- No SAIs from teachers/schools
- No QCS testing for students
- No scaling to QCS group parameters
- No calculation of OP (or FPs)
- No QTAC rank for OP-ineligible students
- Subject Results
Universities and new model

May choose to compile an ATAR
Are encouraged to consider other selection devices
Decide if they wish to use Subject Results provided by QSA and, if so, advise QTAC on how they wish to use them
Roles

QSA
Quality control of SAs including quality of assessment instruments, comparability of standards, and accountability of the school

All aspects of EAs including conceptualisation, development and marking

Combining of SAs and EAs for all or some subjects (variable weightings) to produce SR

Technical issues to be resolved such as minimum inputs for devising a rank order list if such is required

QTAC
All aspects of university selection including conceptualisation and development of various measures for TE as required by universities

Undertake any necessary calculations required by the universities (or commission others to do this work) say for the ATAR or a points system or other mechanisms

As Year 12 completers no longer have status of OP-eligible or ineligible, there would be no need to compile the QTAC ranking

Apart from these, QTAC’s role is unchanged (note: we only make suggestions about Year 12 completers)
Some realisms

Chaos
Colonisation
Communication
Cost
Curriculum backwash
Governance
Timing
The devil is in the detail

External assessments, nature and weighting
Combining SA and EA results
Expressing standards for 15-point scale
Determining how ATAR could be calculated from SRs
Determining how other measures could be derived
And many others that would require the operation of expert groups in a short period of time
Le Chatelier’s Principle: If a system at equilibrium is disturbed by a change ... the system will shift its equilibrium position so as to counteract the effect of the disturbance.
Some ideals

Consensus
Coherence
No ‘cherry picking’
There could be some change
There may be no change
There may be significant change

John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Australian Council for Educational Research
If a system is not well understood, that is not, of itself, a reason for changing it. Some people seem to be unwilling or unable to understand complexity.
If a system is deemed too complex, that is not, of itself, a reason for changing it. Fairness and simplicity are rarely, if ever, accomplished simultaneously.
If a system is being gamed, then maybe it is time to disturb the equilibrium.
If a system has passed its used-by date, then that is a reason for changing it. But the rationale for the system’s existence and its original strengths must be understood before changes are made.
Any system built on the notion of re-modelling the secondary–tertiary interface has the potential to change the education experiences and life chances of a generation of Queenslanders.
ACER is conducting an independent review and will deliver a report to the Minister on 31 July 2014. The Government will, of course, seek its own responses. The information in this presentation represents the position of the reviewers at the time of the stakeholder gathering on 29 April 2014.