

Australian Society for Music Education – Queensland Chapter

Statement: 2024 Queensland State Election 22 October 2024

Who we are

The Queensland Chapter of the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME Qld) is the key music education professional association in Queensland, representing music educators in all sectors. We advocate for all individuals and communities to have access to ongoing and quality music education.

Background and Context

Queensland has had an established reputation as a leader in music education, particularly in State Schools. Policies implemented in the 1970s and 1980s saw the establishment of primary classroom music specialist teachers in the majority of Queensland state schools, and instrumental music programs, that provide a world-class music education, equitably to students across the state. The strength of these programs were highlighted in the 2005 National Review of School Music Education and the more recent report, Music Education: A Sound Investment commissioned by Alberts|The Tony Foundation.

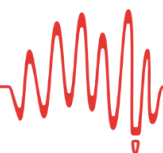
The Queensland Government's *Creative Together 2020-2030* plan emphasises the importance of arts, culture and creativity for the State's future economic success and social cohesion. However, the plan fails to recognise the crucial role of arts education in schools and a key part of the plan's implementation.

Enrolments in Arts subjects in Senior Schooling have been declining for some time. This has increased since the implementation of the new Queensland Certificate of Education in 2019, specifically in response to the poor scaling outcomes of General syllabus courses in the Arts Learning Area.

Intersubject scaling data from 2023

Subject	Top Raw Score	Scaled score	Percentage difference between raw score and scaled score
Dance	100	80.31	-19.68%
Drama	100	88.01	-11.98%
Film, Television and New Media	99	84.03	-15.12%
Music	100	90.38	-9.62%
Music Extension (Composition)	100	89.02	-10.98%
Music Extension (Performance)	100	87.96	-12.31%
Visual Art	99	87.29	-11.82%

Note: Scaling varies in each subject across the distribution of results. The above table provides a snapshot of the top raw score and the top percentile after scaling as an example only. The full scaling report is publicly available. This table also appears in the statement published by National Advocates for Arts Education (NAAE).



Key Concerns – Music Education in Queensland

Issue #1: QTAC's ATAR Scaling

The effect that the current QTAC ATAR Scaling practices are having on student enrolment in Senior Music and Music Extension in Queensland and the lowering of the perceived value of studying Music or Music & Music Extension in Years 11 and 12.

- The ideal outcome ASME Qld would like to see from the Qld government is the abolition of the ATAR from Queensland and replacing it with a system that utilises the QCAA raw score information and subject prerequisites as the method for university entry in Queensland. Such an approach recognises that all General senior syllabuses were designed to be equally rigorous and celebrates diverse individual student achievement equally.
- Short of that outcome, ASME Qld calls for an independent review of the QTAC ATAR algorithm to address:
 - an improved subject selection and career education program that informs students, parents and schools on a wider range of ATAR score pathways rather than a bias towards high ATAR scores
 - how schools provide subject section advice to students based on ATAR projections rather than students being able to choose subjects of passion and interest
 - the inherent bias the algorithm has with subjects where extensive outside school training and experience skews the overall achievement results towards full results
 - the removal of the results of non-ATAR students from the calculation of ATARs (like what occurred in the previous OP system)
 - the inconsistency with the VCE ATAR system so that Qld students can achieve 100% in all subjects regardless of the cohort pattern and trend
 - Extension syllabuses should be scaled higher than their parent syllabuses

Issue #2: Music for Every Child Every Week in Primary School

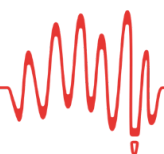
The need for weekly music classes, taught by a qualified music specialist teacher, to be considered a mandatory aspect of our Queensland education system, across all three sectors from Prep to Year 6.

- ASME Qld would call on the Queensland government to support the work of the Queensland Teachers Union's Primary Classroom Music Teachers' Specific Interest Group, and ensure all state schools provide a high-quality classroom music education to all students
- Furthermore, ASME Qld would call on the Queensland government to work with Catholic and Independent primary schools to provide a high-quality classroom and instrumental music education to all students.

Issue #3: Initial Teacher Education

Music taught by a qualified music specialist teacher provides the best opportunities for student learning. However, there are currently no Queensland universities offering a primary specialisation in music, and there has been a significant decline in the number of hours primary education generalist programs spend studying music. This has a significant impact on the capacity for workforce needs to be met.

- ASME Qld calls on the Queensland government to commit to a music education roundtable, with key professional associations and Queensland Deans of Education, to discuss short- and long-term solutions to establishing a sustainable supply of music specialist teachers for Queensland primary schools.



Issue #4: Support for families

Cost of living relief to support families to ensure they can still afford to engage with and participate in extracurricular music activities.

- ASME Qld calls on the Queensland government to expand the eligibility of the current community sporting vouchers to include private music lessons, community choir & instrumental ensemble registration fees and all other forms of performing arts training provided beyond the classroom curriculum.

Issue #5: Support for the live music industry in Queensland

ASME Qld would also join with any call made on the Queensland government to improve and support the live music industry in Queensland in the face of the numerous venue closures and festival/event cancellations. Live music in our communities needs significant support now and into the future for both the ongoing presence of the performing arts in our communities and also to address the significant wellbeing and mental health issues facing Queenslanders at large.

- ASME Qld calls on the Queensland government to support youth arts and arts education initiatives, that increase audience engagement in the arts, now and into the future.

Further to the issues outlined above, ASME Qld would like to recognise the positive and productive relationship it has with the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) when it comes to matters of syllabus development and the Music curriculum implemented in Queensland schools. ASME Qld appreciates that the QCAA has always been open and receptive to the feedback provided and concerns raised by ASME Qld and its members over many years. ASME Qld believes that our QCE General Music and Music Extension syllabi are some of the best Year 11 and 12 curricula available across Australia's education system, balancing the pursuit of excellence in music and a broadly inclusive music education. ASME Qld looks forward to continuing this productive relationship into the future to achieve the best outcomes for all students involved in music education across Queensland.

