

ATOM QLD QLD's response to Draft 1 revised General Film, Television and New Media syllabus

01/06/2023

The process in which ATOM QLD has collated our response is a result of a sub-committee of ATOM QLD Management and Executive committee members. The sub-committee has also included longstanding members who have contributed extensively to curriculum development and consultation. The sub-committee included reflections made by members through our facebook group, website forum, previous surveys and anecdotal conversation at professional learning events to ensure we are capturing member insights.

This response will be sent to financial members of ATOM QLD for endorsement which will be tallied and reported to QCAA.

Questions

Question 1

Select the syllabus you are providing feedback for (Select from the drop-down list).

- Film, Television and New Media (2019)

Question 2

Have you read the following for this syllabus? (Select Y/N for each).

1. Review report
2. Draft 1 syllabus

1. Y
2. Y

Question 3

Select the group/s that best describe you (Select from the drop-down list).

- Other
 - Note – ATOM QLD selected “Other” in the previous review and in the Review report is represented as “Other”. Following advice from QCAA ATOM QLD selects “Other” as it represents a membership of a professional association rather than being an individual “member”

Draft 1 revised General, Applied (Essential) and Short Course syllabuses

Feedback

The following questions relate to the purpose of a syllabus revision. Revisions should:

- improve the clarity in the document for teachers and students
- ease implementation challenges identified by stakeholders
- ensure assessment processes continue to be clearly understood, appropriate and effective
- make expectations more transparent
- update and refine subject matter where necessary.

4. Do the draft revisions improve the clarity in the document?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 5.

5. Do the draft revisions ease the implementation challenges identified in the review report?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 6.

6. Do the draft revisions ensure assessment processes are clearly understood?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 7.

7. Do the draft revisions ensure assessment processes are appropriate?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 7.

8. Do the draft revisions ensure assessment processes are effective?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 7.

9. Do the draft revisions make expectations clear?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 7.

10. How effectively do the draft revisions update and refine subject matter?

1 - Very much 7 - Not at all

- Slider at Position 6.

Draft 1 revised General, Applied (Essential) and Short Course syllabuses

Feedback

The following questions provide opportunity for written feedback on the draft revisions. Responses that clearly identify what the feedback relates to and are actionable will assist QCAA in developing draft 2.

Note: this is a generic survey; the questions might not apply to the syllabus you are responding for (respond with N/A if this is the case).

11. Provide feedback on the revisions to the syllabus objectives.

Q11: Feedback on the revisions to the syllabus objectives

- ATOM QLD welcomes changes to the syllabus objective cognitions as well as their reduction in number. Our feedback, however, is that further reduction and

amendment to the syllabus objectives will both improve clarity of the document as well as address some of the subject's challenges of implementation.

- The objective **design** is an improvement on the current objective of **construct**. Further unpacking of the cognitive processes of design would be welcomed in the objective description. A focus on design and the communication of meaning using codes and conventions would be beneficial as the focus of the descriptor.
- The objective **create** is an improvement on the current objective of **structure**. The objective description should further be refined to reflect all key concepts, including the specific mention of technical and symbolic codes and conventions (ie: film languages.) The term “adapt” is not clear and could be replaced with “manipulate.”
- We recommend the removal of the objective **synthesise**. This objective creates asymmetry in the syllabus ISMGs and is unclear and ambiguous. The components of synthesis could be incorporated into the **design** and **create** objectives. This change would need to be reflected throughout the syllabus across all four units and subject matter.
- The objective description for **apply literacy skills** could be further refined to specify that students must use film, television, and new media terminology in written tasks.
- We strongly recommend the removal of the objective **describe** as it is not rigorous enough and should be integrated into the **analysis** objective. Description follows identification in the process of analysis therefore objectives five and six could be combined. This change would need to be reflected throughout the syllabus across all four units and subject matter. Increasing the rigor of cognitive processes throughout the syllabus will assist in addressing concerns about the subject scaling low. **Describe** is a junior secondary cognition.
- The description of the objective **analyse** could be further refined to include direct mention of film languages. This would ensure all key concepts are explicitly stated.
- The change of objective **appraise** to **evaluate** is welcomed – this aligns better with ACARA standards and provides continuity and clarity for students and teachers. We recommend replacing the word “and” for “and/or” in the sentence “...by researching and examining...” to reflect the syllabus assessment tasks that do not require research to evaluate moving-image media products such as the External Assessment.

12. Provide feedback on the revisions to the syllabus subject matter.

Q12: Feedback on the revisions to the syllabus subject matter:

General feedback across all units:

- Given the suggested feedback on further reduction and revision of the syllabus objectives, subject matter should be refined across the syllabus to remove reference to subject matter that relates to the objectives **describe** or **synthesise**. This subject matter could be reframed to better align with the remaining objectives.
- Clarity of the subject matter that is expected to be taught could be improved by providing clear definitions of what technical, symbolic, and narrative codes and conventions are in the syllabus subject matter. This would include explicit reference to the concepts that underpin these terms. This information could be provided in a similar manner to the explanation of the phrase “contexts of productions and use” on P17 or in a similar manner to the General English syllabus definitions of the term “aesthetic features and stylistic devices” on pages 11-12 of the 2019 General English syllabus. This clarity of content would support teachers in the implementation of the syllabus, particularly teachers without a background in the study of film, television, and new media. The current glossary entry is not sufficient in breadth or depth.
- It would be beneficial to include more recent examples of moving-image texts in the suggested subject matter, including texts by First Nations producers. This is a welcome inclusion in the subject matter for Unit 1 and could be expanded throughout the syllabus.
- P16: Rewrite the definition of “representations” to clarify that constructions are not pre-existing but are actively created to convey meaning.
- P17: Include the following under “contexts of production and use”:
 - How audiences make meaning out of products.
 - The contexts in which audiences receive products.
- Further feedback on the subject matter of individual units is provided below.

Unit 1 subject matter recommendations:

- Update the description for Unit 1 Objective 1 to reflect design and pre-production processes. For example: “design moving-image media products for particular purposes using pre-production formats.”
- Ensure that whenever “analyse” is mentioned in the subject matter of “languages,” there is a reference to the analysis of technical and symbolic codes. This is essential for developing foundational knowledge.
- Remove the verb “experiment” in the Technologies area of study subject matter. At this point in the course, students may need to master appropriate use of equipment before exploring experimentation.

Unit 2 subject matter recommendations:

- To improve clarity of the subject matter of the unit, we recommend clarifying whether the change from “story forms” to “stories” in the subject matter implies a focus strictly on narrative media forms, despite the inclusion of the term “non-narrative media forms.” It would be beneficial to specify what types of media are considered as “stories” and “non-narrative media forms.” Providing a list of suggested stories or story forms to study under the Unit Requirements sub-heading (in a similar manner to Unit 3) would improve clarity. Additionally, the inclusion of further suggested project types would support teachers in syllabus implementation, as the current suggestion is limited to genre sequence.
- Adjust the word “function” in the **evaluate** objective 3.2 to be “impact” or “effectiveness” to improve the clarity of the cognition.
- Enhance the glossary by including explicit definitions for terms referenced in the subject matter, such as story, forms, plot, genre, narrative, etc.

Unit 3 subject matter recommendations:

- With the addition of the cognitive verb **create**, we recommend reviewing the subject matter within the key concepts for this cognition, specifically focusing on Section 4.4 – the Audiences area of study. It is important to provide clear guidance regarding the expected level of audience participation when creating productions to ensure that the subject matter does not unintentionally mislead schools into increasing the scope and scale of the unit beyond their resources or capabilities. For instance, clarification is needed regarding whether students are expected to develop fully interactive productions (such as websites, social media accounts, games, apps, etc.), or if the “pilot” episode can be a standalone moving-image production that conceptually allows audience participation when integrated into a larger design. Please provide additional clarity on these expectations.

Unit 4 subject matter recommendations:

- Rephrase the term “develop a unique style and voice” in Section 5.4 and 5.5 in the **design** cognition to remove the term “unique.” We recommend replacing with the term “distinct” as this is more realistic to be achieved by students.

Additional feedback on Section 1 - Course Overview:

- ATOM QLD suggests the following revisions to Section 1: Course Overview, in addition to the previously mentioned advice regarding Units 1-4.
- P4: In Unit 2 of the flowchart, consider rewording the second bullet point as follows: “how does the relationship between narrative and meaning change in different contexts of *reception*?”
- P4: In Unit 3 of the flowchart, replace the word ‘*purposes*’ with ‘*intentions*’ in the second dot point. Intentions is a more encompassing term.
- P8: It is recommended to include “Media literacy” as a category of literacy. It is contradictory and ironic to omit media literacy in a syllabus focused on media literacy.
- ATOM QLD suggests removing Section 1.2.3: Reverse chronology for historical understanding (page 14). There is no valid reason to prioritise reverse chronology over conventional chronology. This concept is not widely accepted or applied in the implementation of the syllabus.

13. Provide feedback on the revisions to the syllabus assessment information.

Q13: Feedback on the revisions to the syllabus objectives

General assessment information recommendations across all units:

- Given the suggested feedback on further revision to the syllabus objectives, subject assessment matter should be refined across the syllabus to remove reference to the objectives **describe** or **synthesise**. Question 14 provides further feedback on this with regards to the syllabus ISMGs.

- Consider updating the Authentication Strategies on Page 20 to make explicit mention of AI technologies. The syllabus review is an opportunity to acknowledge AI technologies and provide guidance to teachers on their acceptable use.
- Further feedback on the syllabus assessment information of individual units is provided below.

IA1 assessment information recommendations (p32):

- To increase the clarity of the response requirements, please define “digital elements” in the glossary and provide examples.

IA2 assessment information recommendations (p35):

- ATOM QLD supports the reduction of pre-production formats required in IA2. Removing the requirement of a storyboard will alleviate syllabus workload concerns, however providing further clarity in the assessment information would greatly assist with implementation.
- Further clarity of the term “pilot moving-image media product” is required. Please provide a clear definition of the term “pilot” to ensure a common understanding of task expectations. See also prior feedback regarding the need to clarify levels of audience participation required for the task.
- The change to phrasing that requires students to limit their design to two platforms may be seen as restrictive. We recommend revising the wording to “across at least two” platforms to allow for more flexibility.
- To enhance clarity in the treatment Task Specifications:
 - Adjust the wording in the first dot point from “technical or creative purpose” to “technical and/or creative purpose.”
 - In the third dot point, include direct reference to technical and symbolic codes to establish a clearer connection to the ISMG.
- It is recommended to explicitly state which production formats are appropriate for different response lengths. Providing further guidance and examples, both at the minimum and maximum response lengths specified under Production Response Requirements, would ensure clarity of interpretation and consistency of implementation. For example, what forms of production are appropriate at 45 seconds versus what forms are appropriate at 5 minutes? Traditional hand-drawn animation versus live action productions? Further guidance and clarity are needed.

IA3 assessment information recommendations (p42):

- ATOM QLD welcomes some of the changes to IA3, particularly the inclusion of the pre-production format of script and the option for students and teachers to choose a pre-production format. However, we recommend further refinement of the assessment information to improve the clarity of the task, especially in the pre-production requirements.
- Firstly, ATOM QLD recommends maintaining a treatment as a pre-production option. This format may be the best format for communicating certain production formats, such as experimental films.
- While ATOM QLD welcomes the inclusion of a script as a pre-production format, we recommend clarifying the type of script required for the task. To clarify, we suggest specifying whether "script" refers to a three-column script or a screenplay, or whether teachers and/or students can choose the script format. We recommend providing guidance on the task conditions, particularly how a script can "be up to 24 shots."
- We suggest allowing school-based decision-making for student choice of pre-production format – in some contexts, it may be preferable for a teacher to choose a specific pre-production format. We further recommend clearly stating *how* justification of technical and symbolic codes and other production practices should be incorporated in pre-production formats, particularly in scripts and storyboards. This is not currently clear. Exemplars to support implementation would be helpful.
- In order to address syllabus workload concerns, we **strongly** recommend the **removal** of the **reflection** criterion. The current workload for assessments is already substantial, and the existing scope of the **reflection** criterion does not allow students to effectively demonstrate the requirements of the ISMG. The workload of the syllabus appears disproportionately high compared to other syllabuses, as the 2019 FTVNM syllabus did not effectively reduce the number of assessments to four pieces. Instead, it combined the previous Design and Production tasks into large, time-consuming projects. By eliminating this criterion, we can alleviate some of the workload concerns attributed to inadequate timelines. Considering the inclusion of the term "mastery" in the ISMG in this syllabus draft (which ATOM QLD supports), we believe it would be more beneficial for students to dedicate their time to the production task, rather than rushing through a reflection that often duplicates content already covered in their design work.
- To maintain an arts-focused assessment structure, we recommend removing the **apply literacy objective** and reallocating marks to the **design** and/or **create** objectives. This objective is already assessed twice across Units 3 and 4.
- To ensure consistency across the syllabus document, we suggest providing a minimum range for all assessment components (e.g., 12-24 shots for a storyboard,

45 seconds-5 minutes for a moving-image media product, etc.). This would be supported by specifying what types of productions are suitable for different ranges, as previously recommended with IA2.

- Finally, we recommend increasing the time allocation for the project, as 15 hours of class time may not be adequate in all contexts (geographic, socio-economic, etc.) Not all students have access to technologies and equipment to complete production tasks in their own time.

External Assessment information recommendations (p48):

- ATOM QLD strongly advocates for the inclusion of an ISMG for the External Assessment in the revised syllabus. Each year of implementation has had a different marking guide, causing unnecessary confusion. A consistent marking guide would increase the clarity of the syllabus and support teachers and students in exam preparation.
- ATOM QLD recommends explicitly stating that the stimulus provided for the External Assessment will be in video form. This clarification would eliminate any ambiguity regarding the format of the stimulus.
- Additionally, ATOM QLD suggests reflecting on the statement that “summative external assessment draws from learning from both Units 3 and 4.” It is apparent that the external exam draws heavily on the content of Units 1 and 2 as well as Unit 4. This observation should be considered and addressed in the syllabus. Perhaps it is worth refining the focus to Unit 4: the way film languages and technologies (technical and symbolic codes) can be used to create representations and meaning.

14. Provide feedback on the revisions to the syllabus Instrument-Specific Marking Guides.

General feedback on the ISMGs:

- While ATOM QLD supports some changes made to the ISMGs, we believe that further significant refinement is necessary to enhance the clarity of the syllabus. Presently, the draft ISMGs lack clarity and are challenging to interpret, even for experienced FTVNM teachers. This situation results in teachers having to engage in a detective-like process to understand the terminology and the descriptors accurately. Ambiguity in the descriptors and a general lack of alignment between the ISMGs, task requirements, and the syllabus key concepts contribute to this issue. As we previously recommended the removal of the **describe**, **synthesise** and **reflecting**

criteria, are an opportunity to rewrite the ISMGs to provide clear and concise expectations. We suggest carefully examining each assessment task and precisely defining what is expected of students, and reflecting this in the ISMGs, while prioritising the incorporation of key concept language (TRAIL).

- ATOM QLD suggests removing ISMG bands with multiple mark options. Instead, it would be beneficial to have distinct descriptors for each mark, ensuring clear differentiation between bands. If needed, the gradations between bands can be further refined to provide greater clarity in assessing student performance.
- The Criterion for **Objective 4: Applying written literacy skills** is clear, concise, and explicit in its construction across the syllabus.
- Further feedback on the subject matter of individual units is provided below.

IA1 ISMG:

- As mentioned earlier, ATOM QLD strongly recommends the removal of **Criterion 5: describing characteristics**. The concepts and marks from this criterion can be reallocated to Criteria 6 and 7, allowing for further gradations within the full range of the cognitions of analyse and evaluate.
- We recommend rewriting **Objective 6: Analysing features** to incorporate the cognitions from Criterion 5. Additionally, it would improve clarity in the ISMG to provide explicit reference to the unit's key concepts. For example, it would be helpful to clarify whether "the features that provide opportunities for audience interactions" to be analysed are related to **technologies**. If so, this key concept could be explicitly stated from the two-mark band. It is also currently unclear what is required to be analysed for four marks: what does "analysis of the impact of contexts of production and contexts of use" mean? It is necessary to specify exactly what students are expected to analyse in relation to these contexts. Providing further clarity with reference to the key concepts covered in the unit is essential in this objective.
- **Objective 7: Evaluating Audience Participation** is relatively clearer than Objective 6. We support the removal of the phrase "may have" from the top band in the 2019 syllabus, and we find that the draft's top band is more explicit in its expectations for evaluating; however, there is room for refinement. At its core, this task is asking students to evaluate whether the **institution** producing the moving-image product successfully sustains **audience** participation through the deliberate use of interactive/participatory **technologies**. This should be clearly articulated and indicated throughout the ISMG. Consider further articulating what benefits and limitations are in this context, and whether students need to analyse both. We support the inclusion of the word "or" in the phrase "...the making of content or generate loyalty or community."

IA2 ISMG:

- There is misalignment between syllabus key concepts, unit objectives, and assessment objectives in the ISMG for IA2. The clarity of the ISMG could be improved by revising and refining the key concepts assessed in the objectives **design** and **create**.
- As recommended earlier, ATOM QLD strongly advocates for the removal of **Objective 3: synthesising ideas, elements, and processes**. Assessing whether a final project encourages sustained audience engagement across two or more platforms is challenging as it lacks actual evidence: students only produce one “pilot” production. What is assessed in this criterion is a student’s *intentions* to use technology to sustain audience engagement across platforms, and this should be incorporated as the focus of the **design** criterion.
- Noting that IA2 assesses students’ *intentions* for how their use of technology as a media institution will sustain audience engagement across multiple platforms, the key concepts of technologies, institutions, and audiences – which are currently assessed in the **synthesising** criterion – are recommended to instead be the focus of the **design** criterion. Considering languages is not a key concept in the unit objectives, there should be a reflection on whether the design criterion needs to assess the justification of a student’s intended use of technical and symbolic codes or whether these are best assessed in the **production** criterion. Furthermore, the scope of “other production practices” should be further defined, and it is recommended to link the ISMG to the pre-production format.
- The **production** criterion can benefit from further refinement to incorporate the actual work of production. Currently, the ISMG explicitly assesses technologies and post-production processes, overlooking the production work involved in creating refined moving-image media products, such as the discerning use of mise-en-scène and other technical and symbolic codes (ie: film languages). We recommend including technical and symbolic codes within the ISMG for the **create** objective, rather than the **design** objective as it is useful as an Arts subject to assess their actual application rather than just their intended application. Although film languages are not a key concept of the unit, it is difficult to create a “refined” moving-image product without exploiting them.

IA3 ISMG:

- Like the IA2 ISMG, there is a misalignment between syllabus key concepts, unit objectives, and assessment objectives in the ISMG for IA3. To improve clarity, it is necessary to revise and refine the bands of the criteria to accurately reflect students’ application of key concepts in the assessment task. We strongly recommend giving priority to the inclusion of the language of the key concepts in the ISMG.

- As advised earlier in Question 13, ATOM QLD strongly recommends removing the **Reflecting** criterion. The objective of **evaluate** is not effectively assessed in the scope of the task and adds unnecessary workload to the syllabus. Please refer to our prior feedback on this objective. The ability for students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the interrelationships of media languages and stylistic influences can be more effectively assessed in the **design** criterion.
- The **design** assessment objective, while an improvement over the **symbolise** objective, can be further refined to reflect the unit's key concepts. To enhance clarity of the criterion, it is recommended to incorporate the language of the key concepts into the ISMG. Direct reference to *languages, technologies, and representations* would improve alignment between the unit subject matter and the assessment. The ISMG should clearly state that students are to design a moving-image media product that represents stylistic influence using film languages and production technologies in a pre-production format. Furthermore, it is recommended to specify *where* students should provide justifications within their chosen pre-production format, particularly for scripts and storyboards, and build this information into the ISMG. Please refer to prior advice regarding the need to define precisely where and how this justification should occur in each pre-production format in Question 13.
- As previously advised, ATOM QLD recommends removing the assessment objective **synthesise**. The content of this objective could be better assessed within the **create** objective. The description of the top band of **synthesise** directly relates to the production component of the task. Whether a student has clearly represented a stylistic influence in their production using film languages and technologies could be incorporated in the **create** objective ISMG from marks 6-7.
- The **create** assessment objective, although an improvement over the **structure** objective, can be further refined to reflect the unit's key concepts and the intentions of the task. As previously mentioned, the assessment of whether a student has demonstrated stylistic influence in their production is better placed within the **create** objective rather than the **synthesise** objective and this should be incorporated in the **create** ISMG. Additionally, further incorporation of the unit's key concepts of languages and representations should be reflected in the create ISMG from marks 6 - 7 onwards. To create a refined stylistic product, students must demonstrate the application of their knowledge of film languages to create representations, and this could be explicitly listed. The current ISMG acknowledges technologies and post-production processes but fails to recognise production practices such as the application of mise-en-scene. ATOM QLD supports the inclusion of the word "mastery" in the top band of the objective. It should be noted that the word "stylistic" appears to be missing from the description for marks 6 - 7.

15. Provide feedback on the revisions to the syllabus template.

- The syllabus template convention of using one sentence to describe different elements of subject matter under the key areas of studies could be revised. Subject matter descriptions could be enhanced if they were not limited to one sentence per dot point.
- Although outside the scope of this review, as noted in the syllabus review report, ATOM QLD encourages reflection on whether the nested approach of assessing via ISMGs is necessary for effective assessment of the Arts. The timelines set by QCAA are problematic to project-based learning and assessment.