MARKING IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM:

Creating Internal Assessments, their Marking Rubrics and the links to the National Professional Standards for Teachers

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AIM AND SCOPE OF THIS PRESENTATION

1. Why standards-referencing?

2. A teacher’s ‘image’ of a student and what this means for marks.

3. Define curriculum standards, performance standards and a standards-referenced system.

4. Outline a theoretical model of creating assessments and marking rubrics within this standards-referenced system.

5. Link the requirements of teachers operating in a standards-referenced system to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
WHY STANDARDS-REFERENCING?

Standards-referencing was implemented in New South Wales in 2001 as a new way to report on student achievement.

Theoretically, all students could achieve the highest performance band.

Standards-referencing is being adopted worldwide.
Marks only have meaning when they are referenced to a description about what a student knows and can do.

A description has the advantage in being able to be explicit about a student's current skills and knowledge and what s/he can do to improve in the descriptions further along the developmental continuum.

When we reference marks to *pre-determined* levels of performance this is known as **standards-referencing**. When you compare students' work this is **norm-referencing** and was the system in place prior to 2001.
THE ‘IMAGE’ OF A STUDENT

Teachers constantly assess their students.

They form ideas about what their students know and can do.

This idea or ‘image’ of a student changes based on new information.

It is not subjective because it is based on evidence.
Marks are generally used to capture the ‘image’ of a student. Marks do not mean anything on their own.

For example:

15

15/100?  15/20?  15/15?

Each of these scores indicate something different about how a student has performed.
INTERPRETATION OF MARKS

For marks to be meaningful, they need to be referenced to something.

We need to be able to understand in words what it means for a student to make progress and improve in an area of learning. This is a developmental continuum.
## DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

### Example for kindergarten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recognises a few letters of the alphabet</th>
<th>Can recite the alphabet with some errors</th>
<th>Matches capitals with their little letters</th>
<th>Recognises basic sight words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognises all the letters of the alphabet</td>
<td>Can recite the alphabet correctly</td>
<td>Knows most of the sounds letters make</td>
<td>Sounds out basic CVC words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standards are pre-determined courtesy of each subject’s syllabus.

**Curriculum standards** are the knowledge and skills students are expected to have learned after studying a course.

Curriculum standards are the **outcomes in each course’s syllabus**.

*What do students know?*
Performance standards are how well students have learnt the knowledge and skills for a particular course.

Performance standards are the levels of achievement.

How well do students know what they’ve learnt?

How well can students perform particular skills?
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In relation to the New South Wales Higher School Certificate, Band 1 (lowest level of achievement) Band 6 (highest level of achievement).

Each band tells us what students know and can do and each higher band becomes progressively more difficult in the skills and knowledge students have and are expected to demonstrate.

This is the developmental continuum in practice.
Band 6
(0.41%)

Demonstrates extensive, detailed knowledge, insightful understanding and sophisticated evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped and changed by context, medium of production and the influences that produce different responses to texts. Displays a highly developed ability to describe and analyse a broad range of language forms, features and structures of texts and explain the ways these shape meaning and influence responses in a variety of texts and contexts. Presents a critical, refined personal response showing highly developed skills in interpretation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of texts and textual detail. Composes imaginatively, interpretively and critically with sustained precision, flair, originality and sophistication for a variety of audiences, purposes and contexts in order to explore and communicate ideas, information and values.
Band 4
(27.13%)

Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the way meanings are shaped and changed by context, medium of production and the influences that produce different responses to texts. Displays ability to describe and analyse a range of language forms, features and structures of texts and explain the ways these shape meaning and influence responses in a variety of texts and contexts. Presents a sound critical personal response showing developed skills in interpretation and analysis of texts. Composes imaginatively, interpretively and critically with confidence and control for a variety of audiences, purposes and contexts in order to explore and communicate ideas, information and values.
Band 1
(4.47%) A mark in this band indicates that the student has achieved below the minimum standard expected.
Performance standards are rubrics.

Rubrics describe how well students have performed on a particular assessment task and what they must do to improve and achieve a higher level.

The more marks given to a student means the more knowledge and skills the student has displayed; this means the higher the performance standard.
COMPONENTS OF AN ASSESSMENT

Curriculum Standards

Assessment Task

Performance Standards
CREATING ASSESSMENTS IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM

Step 1: Clearly state the purpose of the assessment task.

Step 2: Determine the learning outcomes to be assessed. Decide what the student needs to demonstrate to achieve a particular outcome.
CREATING ASSESSMENTS IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM

Step 3: Develop the assessment task by stating what students are to do and how they are to do it. Verify if the outcomes that are intended to be assessed are what **will** be assessed. Instructions must be clear and concise with sequential steps to complete the task.

Step 4: Decide on an holistic or analytic marking rubric. The type of rubric used needs to relate to the purpose of the assessment task.
CREATING ASSESSMENTS IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM

Step 5: For an analytic marking rubric decide on the separate criteria that the assessment task will be marked on. Criteria must be as unambiguous as possible and their number will depend on the skill being measured.

For an holistic marking rubric write the descriptions for each level of performance. Each performance level needs to refer back to the learning outcomes and to use language that is clear in what distinguishes performance at one level compared to performance at another level.
CREATING ASSESSMENTS IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM

Step 6: Assessment task and marking rubric to undergo a quality control process. Another person to critique task and modify any issues.

Step 7: Administer the assessment task.
Step 8: 3-4 teachers to discuss qualities they will look for in the assessments. If there are issues with ambiguity in the marking rubric then teachers must clarify vague language and exactly what they are looking for in responses. Student samples of various performance bands need to be examined and discussed.

Step 9: Marking of the assessment task. Can be marked by any teacher.
CREATING ASSESSMENTS IN A STANDARDS-REFERENCED SYSTEM

Step 10: Final discussion with examples of the various performance bands to ensure same standard has been maintained for each performance and if there are any discrepancies between teachers these can be reviewed.
THE MARKING RUBRIC

The marking rubric needs to be written at the same time as the assessment task.

It states what students must do and how they must do it to achieve a particular score.

The type of rubric used depends on the purpose of the assessment task.
The following question was asked of both English Standard and English Advanced students in the HSC examination in paper 1 section III in 2012.

**Question 3 (15 marks)**

An individual’s perceptions of belonging evolve in response to the passage of time and interaction with their world.

In what ways is this view of belonging represented in your prescribed text and at least ONE other related text of your own choosing?
### HSC ENGLISH EXAM HOLISTIC MARKING RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Explores <strong>skilfully</strong> the ways the prescribed text and at least one other related text represent the view that an individual’s perceptions of belonging evolve in response to the passage of time and interaction with their world</td>
<td>13–15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presents a <strong>skilful</strong> response with <strong>well-chosen detailed</strong> textual references from the prescribed text and at least one other related text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Composes a <strong>well-integrated</strong> response using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Explores <strong>effectively</strong> the ways the prescribed text and at least one other related text represent the view that an individual’s perceptions of belonging evolve in response to the passage of time and interaction with their world</td>
<td>10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presents an <strong>effective</strong> response with <strong>aptly chosen</strong> textual references from the prescribed text and at least one other related text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Composes an <strong>effective</strong> response using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The language of the marking rubric is vague and needs to be deciphered before marking can occur.

For example:
Explore
Skilfully/effectively
Well-chosen detailed textual references/aptly chosen

What is the question asking?
THE MARKING KIT

A marking rubric without the marking kit results in ineffective marking rubrics that hold little relevant meaning.

A marking kit has two components:
1. It deciphers the vague language of the marking rubric.
2. It contains examples of student work for each performance band.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CLASSROOM?

Marking rubrics need to be explicit in describing what constitutes performance at a particular level.

It needs to be made clear exactly what teachers are looking for when they mark.

It can also provide feedback to students about how they can improve to the next performance level.

The performance description is a case of best fit.
The performance standard for the 13-15 mark range could be rewritten as follows.

**Discusses and evaluates** how a person’s perception of belonging and sense of self changes over time due to personal growth and reflection, (or) time, (or) age or relationships. **Must demonstrate original thought and supports this view** with textual evidence and analysis from both texts although one text may be analysed stronger than the other. **Writing style must be logical and coherent** with appropriate use of language which is relatively free from errors of expression.
The performance standard for the 10-12 mark range could be rewritten as follows.

**Discusses** how a person’s perception of belonging and sense of self changes over time due to personal growth and reflection, (or) time, (or) age or relationships. **No original thought but articulates a viewpoint and supports this view** with textual evidence and analysis from both texts although one text may be analysed stronger than the other. **Writing style is generally logical and coherent** with appropriate use of language which is relatively free from errors of expression.
HOW DOES THIS LINK TO THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS?

Teachers need to know:
1. How to mark within a standards-referenced system.
2. What skills and knowledge they currently have about assessment.
3. How to improve to become better assessors.
There are four levels: graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead.

Each level has a description about performance at that level.

Standard 5 – Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning.
5.1 Assess student learning
5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning
5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements
5.4 Interpret student data
5.5 Report on student achievement
CONTINUUM OF TEACHER ASSESSMENT SKILLS (COTAS)

A developmental continuum providing the **elaborations** of the descriptions for Element 5 of the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

The elaborations demonstrate what performance looks like **in practice**.

Allows teachers to see where they currently are on a developmental continuum and what they have to do in order to improve to the next level of performance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Accomplished</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Assess student learning</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.</td>
<td>Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.</td>
<td>Develop and apply a comprehensive range of assessment strategies to diagnose learning needs, comply with curriculum requirements and support colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of their approaches to assessment.</td>
<td>Evaluate school assessment policies and strategies to support colleagues with: using assessment data to diagnose learning needs, complying with curriculum, system and/or school assessment requirements and using a range of assessment strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus area</td>
<td>Graduate (COTAS)</td>
<td>Proficient (COTAS)</td>
<td>Highly Accomplished (COTAS)</td>
<td>Lead (COTAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Assess student learning</td>
<td>In practice this is:</td>
<td>In practice this is:</td>
<td>In practice this is:</td>
<td>In practice this is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge of the different purposes and types of assessment</td>
<td>• Write assessment tasks &amp; marking rubrics according to the theoretical model</td>
<td>• Thorough understanding of assessment practices via professional development</td>
<td>• Lead professional development for staff on all aspects of assessment at the school level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing assessment tasks &amp; marking rubrics with assistance</td>
<td>• Write tasks that assess what they intend to and are clearly linked to syllabus outcomes</td>
<td>• Provide guidance and support to teachers to teachers at the graduate stage especially with writing tasks, rubrics &amp; assigning marks/grades</td>
<td>• Revise school assessment policies on a consistent and regular basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assigning marks/grades with assistance</td>
<td>• Write a variety of assessment tasks</td>
<td>• Evaluate assessment tasks to ensure that assessment tasks assess what they are supposed to, are linked to the appropriate outcomes for that stage and subject and rubrics and go over information for identified students that learning needs are being met.</td>
<td>• Interpret data to identify strengths, weaknesses and how to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge of curriculum standards and performance standards</td>
<td>• Write both holistic and analytic marking rubrics which are explicit and relevant</td>
<td>• Evaluate assessments &amp; marking rubrics to comply with BOSTES requirements</td>
<td>• Evaluate assessments &amp; marking rubrics to comply with BOSTES requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge of standards-referencing</td>
<td>• Accept feedback from colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knowledge of reliability &amp; validity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thankyou

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