



## Media Release

### ASTA responds to the Australian Certificate of Education.

The Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) made the following statements on 4 August 2006 to the Department of Science, Education and Training with regard to the Australian Certificate of Education.

- It is essential for all students in Australian Schools to have equal access to a meaningful and recognisable certificate at the completion of year 12 that is an accurate representation of what the students have achieved and where their strengths and abilities lie.
- It is important to ensure that the certificate is not a rigid university entrance qualification that ignores other aspirations and abilities held by students in our schools. Whilst it is important to ensure there is no unfair discrimination, the system must have a legitimate discriminatory function in the sense of being able to separate students on valid objective grounds.
- ASTA sees considerable merit in identifying common essentials for study across Australia and the inclusion of the relevant professional subject associations in the national subject panels is essential.
- There is a need for the provision of professional development to support all teachers working with these standards. A critical factor for increasing the standard of student performance is the quality of teaching practice.
- A National Key Capabilities Assessment placed in Year 11 could play an important diagnostic role in ensuring that students are on track towards meeting Year 12 Certification goals. This could give students the opportunity to improve on weaknesses identified through the KCA.
- It should be ensured that the funding model for a national standards body does not disadvantage the smaller states with less infrastructure to support national initiatives.

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