

Myth 1: If I fail a subject or English or Maths, I won't graduate.

Misconceptions here possibly arise due to misunderstandings about what it means to "graduate". In the Queensland Secondary School context, "graduation" is simply the school based ceremony that celebrates the completion of Year 12.

The only circumstances in which Northside Christian College would not allow a student to be acknowledged as part of that ceremony would be if the student had failed to complete their subjects. Typically, that would mean that for no good reason, they haven't submitted all of the assessment for one or more of their subjects. This would be extremely rare at Northside.

So, what does completing or graduating High School mean?

In Queensland, high school can be "completed" without passing any subjects. In other words, a student could complete, but fail, all of their subjects and still graduate, plus receive all of the paperwork associated with Year 12 completion. Obviously, the outcome as far as work and further education prospects is concerned would be restricted.

At the completion of Year 12, students will receive a number of statements and certificates that record their completion and achievement. These will be mailed to your home address from the QCAA (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) and include:

- a **Senior Statement** which shows all studies and the results achieved in them that may contribute to the award of a QCE or Tertiary Entrance Statement (This includes the 5 or 6 subjects studied at school, Vocational Qualifications etc). If a student has a Senior Statement, they have satisfied the requirements for the completion of Year 12 in Queensland.
- a **Tertiary Entrance Statement**. This shows an eligible student's Overall Position (OP) and Field Positions (FPs). These rankings are used to determine eligibility for admission to tertiary courses.
- a **Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)**. It is Queensland's senior school qualification, which is awarded to eligible students, usually at the end of Year 12.
- In some cases "completing" high school may result in the issuing of the **Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA)**. This recognises the achievements of individual impairments or difficulties in learning that are not primarily due to socioeconomic, cultural or linguistic factors.

To see samples of what these statements and certificates look like, or for more information, go to:

<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/10092.html>

Myth 2: If I study certain subjects, I am guaranteed a higher OP score.

The calculation of each student's OP score is determined by their achievement in their top 5 OP subjects (more specifically the top 20 semesters of credit), as well as the results for the QCS Test. The OP score is a comparative score. If a student performs poorly in any subject, or below the average of their peers in any subject, this is likely to have a negative impact on their OP score. A student can achieve any OP with any combination of subjects. The best way to succeed is to choose subjects they are good at.

For more information regarding the calculation of OP scores, go to:

http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/te_op_basics.pdf

STUDENT SERVICES - Mythbusters

Myth 3: I can tell from my subject results which of my subjects will be used (count) as the top 5 to calculate my OP score.

Unfortunately, this is not true. It is even possible that a C in some subjects can contribute a higher score for the OP score than an A in other subjects. Some may think this contradicts information presented regarding Myth 2, however the relative weight of any subject can vary significantly from class to class, school to school and year to year, because of the students enrolled in that subject and because of the skill requirement or "academic rigour" of the subject. As this varies, the best chance for success is to choose subjects that the student is good at and do their best to achieve the highest result they can. The aim should be to achieve as far above average or the mean in every subject that they can.

This myth often leads students to think that it is okay, beneficial even, to aim to just pass a particular subject, particularly English or Maths (the compulsory subjects). In fact, because a larger number of students across the state study these subjects, it is potentially more beneficial for a student's OP score to achieve well above the mean (average) in these subjects. The core subjects typically rank highly in terms of contribution to OP scores.

Myth 4: If I am not eligible for an OP score, I do not need to sit the QCST (QLD Core Skills Test).

Students who do not receive an OP score will still receive a Rank (OP equivalent score). This score can be used to gain access to university or other training courses in the following years. At Northside, we have seen students achieve a high rank and be successful in a tertiary application for courses that require a high OP.

Achieving good QCST results can improve a student's rank. The good news is that if a student performs poorly on the QCST, the rank is not negatively impacted. That is why at NCC we encourage our non-OP students to sit the QCST. There are no disadvantages, but a possible significant advantage for each student's rank score.

If students achieve a rank, not an OP score, their QCST results only impacts their score. These students' individual results have no impact on the results for the rest of the students in their year level.

Myth 5: The QCE isn't useful for anything

While initially not many entry level positions required the QCE, there is now evidence to suggest the increasing need to gain a QCE to be eligible for some entry level positions, especially in the public service. Gaining a QCE may end up being very important to you in the future.

Myth 6: I can improve my OP by getting a high rank.

OP and Rank systems are parallel and independent. Neither interacts with the other, however they are equivalent as far as tertiary entrance is concerned.

Myth 7: If I have a QCE I can gain entry to a tertiary institution.

The requirements for a QCE are different to those for tertiary entrance. See the QCAA website for the final word, but as a general rule students must gain a sufficient OP (or Rank) and have completed the prerequisites required for the course to gain entrance.

In order to graduate with a QCE students must pass satisfy 3 main criteria:

1. At least one semester of studies in any senior level of English or Maths offered in Years 11 and 12 to meet literacy & numeracy requirements.
2. A minimum of 12 credits must come from completed Core courses of study (a full 2 years study in 3 subjects).
3. The remaining 8 credits can come from a combination of core, preparatory, enrichment or advanced courses.

For further information about the QCE, go to:

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/qce_brochure.pdf