



Drama Queensland
PO Box 251,
Paddington, Qld, 4064

Wednesday July 8, 2026

Mr. Chris Veraa
Chief Executive Officer
Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre
PO Box 1331, Milton,
QLD, 4064, Australia

Dear Mr Veraa and the ATAR Technical Working Group,

As the working party project timeline draws towards completion, Drama Queensland understands the ATAR Technical Working Group are now seeking to collate key findings to share with stakeholders based upon this review.

Whilst Drama Queensland and the Arts community more broadly welcome the timely reflection of the ATAR system implementation, we re-iterate our concerns shared with you of the impact experienced in schools and in our subject discipline and hope that these can be identified and communicated through your findings for possible action and concrete plans for improvement going forwards. We seek to work with you to ensure a transparent, fair and fit for purpose system.

Our key concerns are outlined below.

1. **Inter-subject scaling** for General Drama and the Arts subjects is fundamentally unfair and whilst unintended, is negatively biased and inequitable for students studying these subjects across Queensland.

Our members are reporting to us that Drama is in significant decline due to QTAC's intersubject scaling. Students who study Drama and the Arts are being detrimentally impacted by the parameters and methodology of the algorithm and other practices. We reiterate our concerns at the methodology around scaling, the inclusion of non-ATAR students, the non-consideration towards mastery and the practises of using "comparable" data.

The longitudinal data of scaling in Drama (refer to Table 1) demonstrates that the impact over the course of implementation has severely and negatively impacted student results.

The severity of the scaling is significant both within the Queensland context and in comparison, to other jurisdictions. If the purpose of scaling is to find ways to

compare the achievements of individual cohorts, who are seeking an ATAR, we cannot comprehend nor accept that the gap between their raw score and scaled score is so severe. The severity is punishing Drama and Arts students and is actively deterring students taking these valuable and critical subjects.

Table 1: General Drama Intersubject Scaling Results 2020-2025

Year	Score						Movement in top percentile	Average movement
2020	Raw	60.00	72.00	83.00	91.00	99.00		
	Scaled	44.22	63.09	77.58	85.23	90.59	- 8.41	-8.862
2021	Raw	63.00	74.00	84.00	92.00	98.00		
	Scaled	46.08	63.51	76.86	84.78	89.14	-8.86	- 10.126
2022	Raw	64.00	75.00	86.00	93.00	99.00		
	Scaled	47.09	64.13	78.23	84.85	89.13	-9.87	-10.714
2023	Raw	66.00	78.88	88.00	93.00	99.00		
	Scaled	47.02	65017	77.69	83.49	88.01	-11.99	-12.924
2024	Raw	66	78	89	95	100		
	Scaled	44.94	63.24	77.32	83.19	87.10	-12.9	-14.442
2025	Raw	68	80	89	96	100		
	Scaled	45.56	63.83	75.54	82.68	85.96	-14.04	-15.886

- Our members are reporting that the practice of **“ATAR maxing”** is prevalent in schools and with students being counselled to chasing subjects that “scale better” to play the system to maximise a result. The consequence to this has been the heinous decline of enrolments in General Arts Subjects (see Table 3 and 4), a narrowing of curriculum where students study 5, rather than 6 subjects and where the Queensland Secondary Education is increasingly homogenised, where the well-being and future opportunities of young people is severely compromised, sitting in subjects and classes they do not want to be in. Additionally, we have had members provide feedback to us of schools being forced to make extremely difficult decisions around staffing and resourcing of Drama and Arts programs in desperate attempts to keep subjects from being

erased from curriculum offerings in schools; teachers run composite classes, and multiple syllabi in the same classroom (e.g. General Drama and Drama in Practice). This collapse of Drama and Arts programs in the Senior space, is having real and debilitating effects to courses offered in lower secondary as electives in Years 9 and 10 and time allocations in Years 7 and 8 contract.

The recent launch of the QTAC ATAR Navigator prediction tool feeds this ideology. Whilst the intent of this tool is to inform students to make decisions about QTAC preferences, this tool compounds the underlying problems with the current approach to intersubject scaling. We understand that the current system methodology will only see a finite number of students reach the highest range of results. However, there are concerns that to chase a number to gain access to a “high ATAR” course, a student’s secondary education becomes narrower. The shared example of a student wanting to study Medicine, cannot study Biology and gain the top mark signals a significant problem here.

The correlation of the devastating impact of scaling of student results and the decline of enrolments in Drama and Arts subjects cannot be understated (refer to Table 2, 3, 4 that illustrate the downward trend of enrolments in General Arts subjects). The flow-on effect of Drama and Arts subjects being removed from schools has had a seismic impact on school communities, teacher’s professional livelihoods and resourcing as well as significant impact upon the Tertiary sector where programs here in Queensland as nationally are being cut or down-sized.

3. Regarding the **recent survey**, Drama Queensland members have shared their concern that not all schools and teachers have been given the opportunity to participate in the survey. This process was not open and transparent and when teachers, parents and student looked for information on the QTAC website about the survey, there was no publicly available information.
4. **Relationship between QTAC and QCAA.** Our members are concerned that there is a disconnect between the syllabus design, along with QCAA processes which generate student achievement data and the way QTAC use this data to calculate scaling and ATAR scores. We are concerned at the use of language labelling subjects as “hard” or “easy” and its connotations as this is inconsistent with QCAA syllabus design and the underlying philosophy of senior secondary curriculum, where all subjects share the same taxonomy of cognitions. Now that we have longitude data of scaling it is has become clear to our members and the broader community that there is a disconnect between the rigour of learning and achievement of students in Drama and the Arts and the value placed on these for

ATAR calculations. It appears that there is nonalignment between the two organisations and the equitable outcomes for students who study the Arts. With the decision in the system's implementation to take the responsibility away from QCAA in the generation of a tertiary entrance score (from OP to ATAR) to QTAC, there has been a shift that sees disconnection between the education purpose and philosophy, and the intent of needing to generate an ATAR. We fear that the unintended implications of this shift of responsibility sees the two organisations working in silos. We seek greater transparency in the communication between the organisations that will drive greater alignment between student results and achievements and that of the scaled data.

We appreciate the time taken to review this letter and to consider our concerns.

Drama Queensland advocates for an open, comprehensive and transparent review of QTAC's scaling practices. The current scaling processes have resulted in extreme disparity between student raw scores and that of the scaled result to inform the ATAR calculations. The impact of these practices has resulted in the devastating effects as outlined. Without timely intervention and remediation, we will see Drama and the Arts scaled out of existence in Queensland.

We sincerely value a collaborative working relationship with QTAC as a stakeholder in the educational landscape of Queensland. We look forward to learning of the findings QTAC, and the ATAR Technical Working Group presents and welcome opportunities for further consultation and conversation doing forwards.

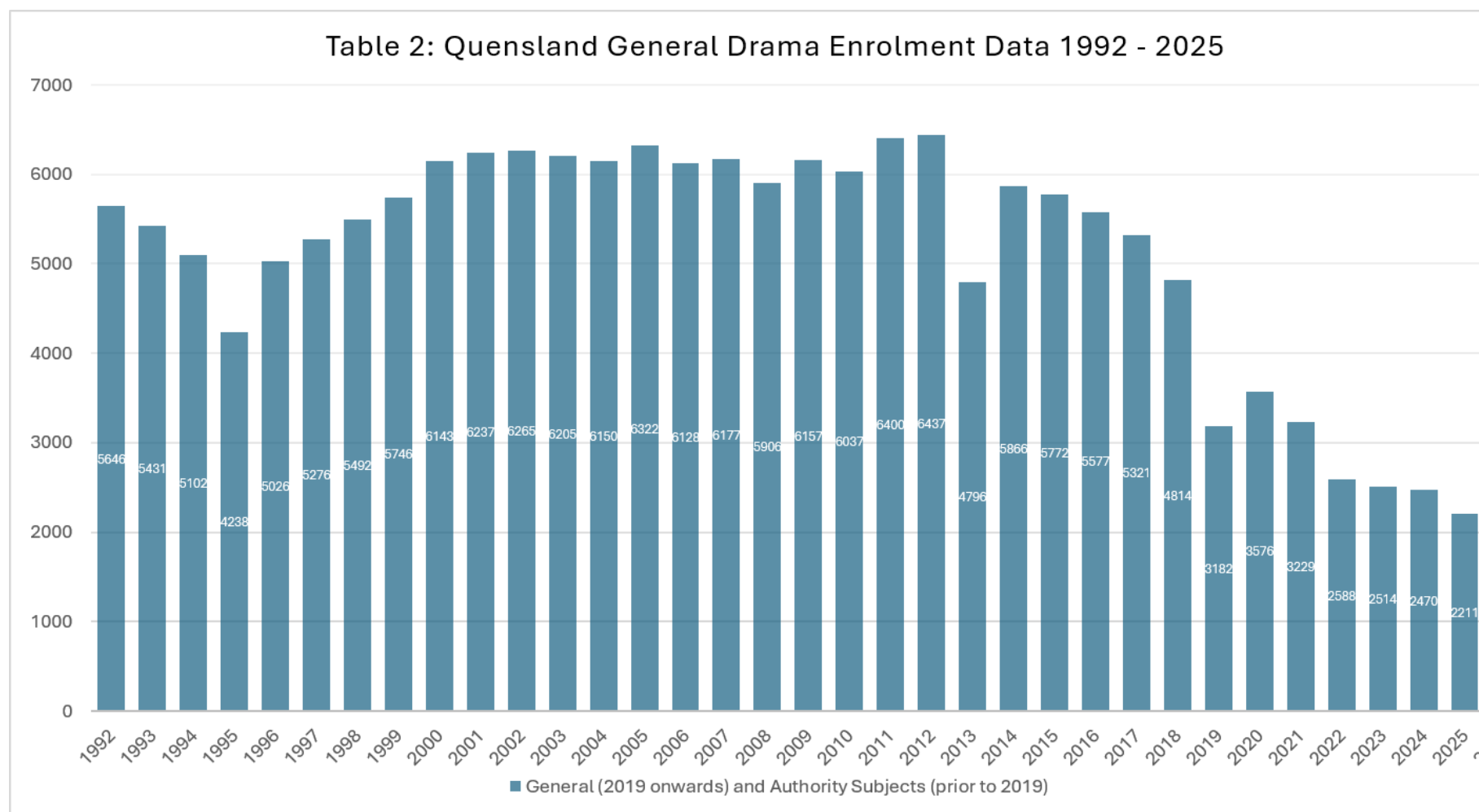
Yours sincerely,



Mrs. Belinda Gravel
Vice- President – Advocacy
Drama Queensland
Belindagravel123@gmail.com



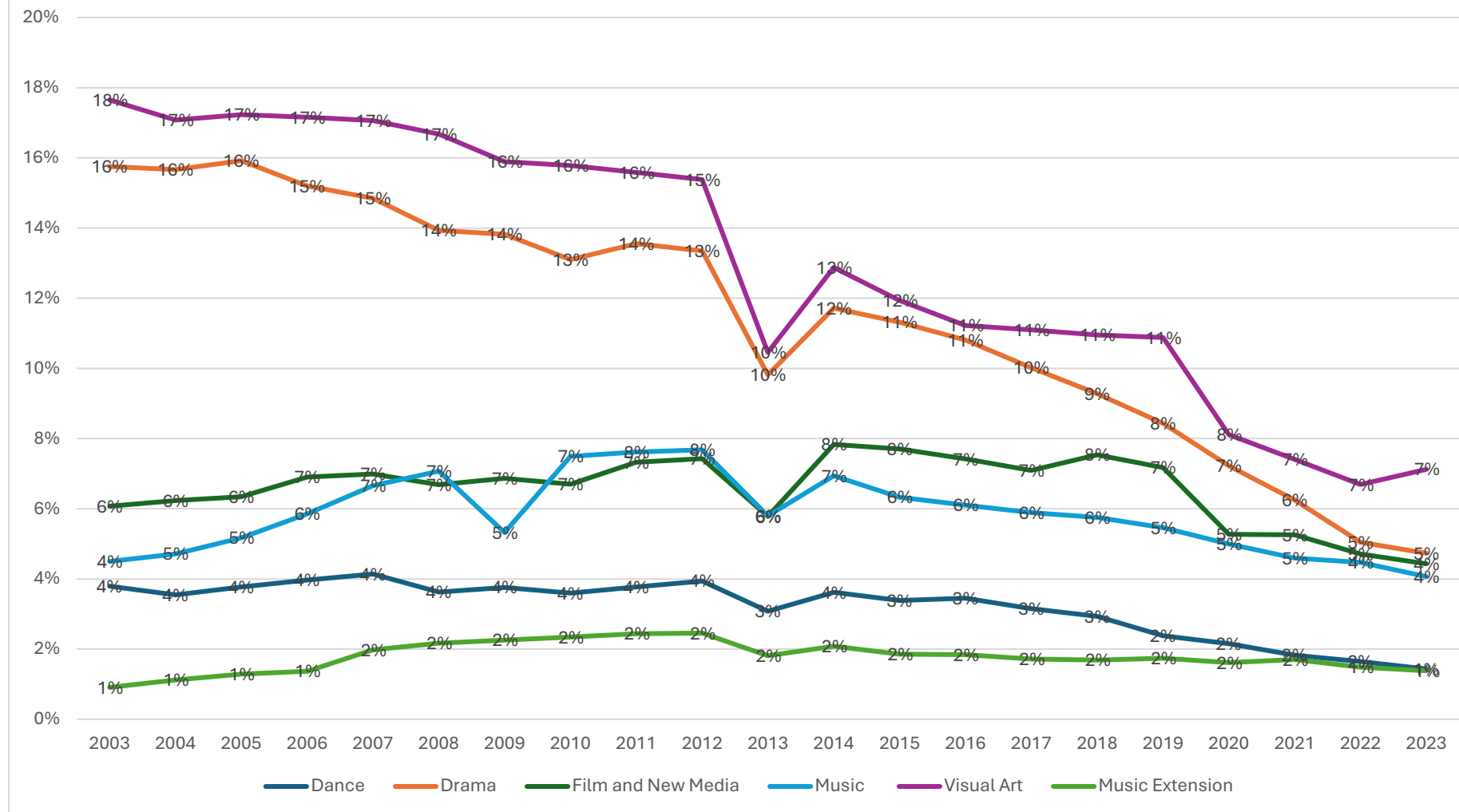
Mr. Scott Andrews
President
Drama Queensland
president@dramaqueensland.org.au



Source: Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority, Statistics <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/news-data/statistics>

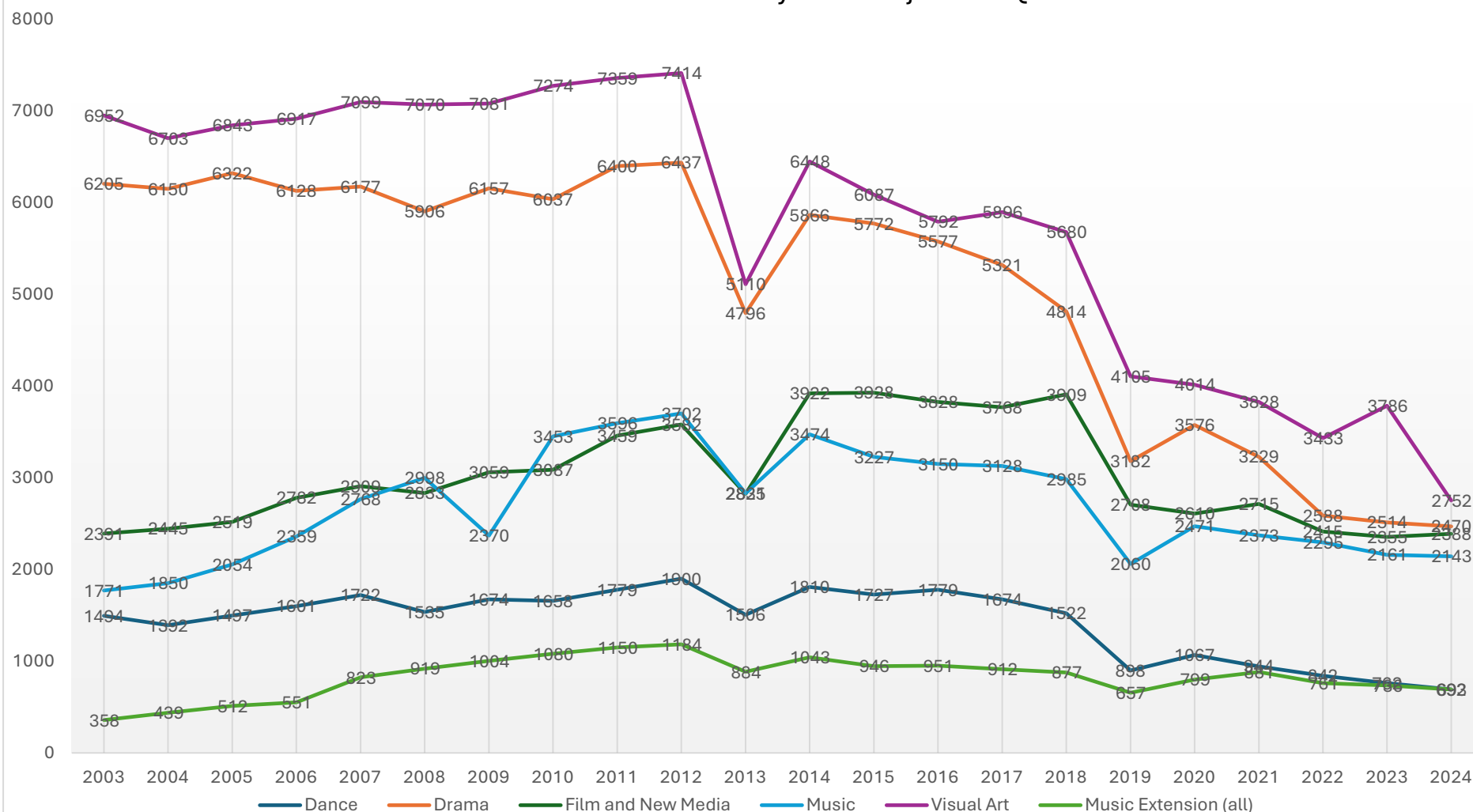
Please note: As data for 2026 is yet to be finalised at the capturing of this information, it has not been included in this table.

Table 3: Percentage of Year 12 Cohort Enroled in General Arts Subjects 2003 - 2023



Source: Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority, Statistics <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/news-data/statistics>

Table 4: Yr 12 Enrolments in General/Authority Arts Subjects in Queensland 2003-2023



Source: Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority, Statistics <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/news-data/statistics>

