



Steiner Education Australia

AUSTRALIAN STEINER CURRICULUM

FRAMEWORK 2011

Educational Foundations

Attachment 1:

STEINER GRADUATE OUTCOMES

STEINER GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Contents

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1. Comparative Table Of International Research Studies
Of Steiner Graduate Outcomes | p.5 |
| 2. Research Evidence Of Steiner Education's Attainment
Of Melbourne Goals | p.6 |
| 3. Steiner Education Equips Students To Meet The Future | p.9 |
| 4. Reference List | p.10 |

1. COMPARATIVE TABLE OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH STUDIES OF STEINER GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Gerwin & Mitchell Germany & Switzerland Feb 2007	Gerwin & Mitchell North America & Canada 2007	Bo Dahlin Sweden 2007	Hansen Denmark May 2003	Ribeiro & Pereira São Paulo, Brazil Oct 2007	Bill Woods Mt Barker, South Australia
% of Steiner educated students who undertake tertiary or vocational study:					
61 - 67%	94%	58% - 60% Compared with 47% national average	62% Plus 29% general youth education & 9% vocational education	97% 100% pass rate for admission examination.	49% Compared with 14 to 16% average in mainstream students who take up university study.
Gerwin & Mitchell, North America & Canada, 2007		Bo Dahlin, Sweden, 2007		Bill Woods, Mt Barker, South Australia	
Achievements of Steiner graduates:					
1991 - 2002 Declared majors: Arts/humanities 39.8% Social/Behavioural Sciences 29.9% Physical Sciences/Mathematics 2.8% Professors' comments note: holistic & integrative thinking; creative & imaginative capacities & confidence; social awareness & caring.		Less instrumental - a deeper approach to study evident; more personal interest & less labour market driven; less rote learning & concern about examinations They all felt good about their studies and achieved well. 33% report they manage better than fellow students.		48% distinction and above; 83% credit level or better.	
National equivalent of level of results:					
1991 - 2002 Declared majors: Arts/humanities 14.6% Social/Behavioural Sciences 10.9% Physical Sciences/Mathematics 2%		Educational levels of parents of Steiner students seem less important for continuity to university compared with municipal school students.		In science degree: 19.4% distinction and above; 46.8% credit level or better; In humanities: 28.7% distinction and above; 60.1% credit level or better.	
Gerwin & Mitchell Germany & Switzerland Feb 2007	Gerwin & Mitchell North America & Canada 2007	Bo Dahlin Sweden 2007	Hansen Denmark May 2003	Ribeiro & Pereira São Paulo, Brazil Oct 2007	
Chosen profession or field of study:					
Higher number of teachers, engineers, doctors & artists. Fewer business & office administration careers	Up to twice as many Steiner students go on to study science as average. Most popular choices are education, arts, administration, health and medicine.	Wide range of professions: doctors, engineers, economists, artists, teachers, lawyers.	Study areas: Humanities/arts 49%; natural sciences 11%; social sciences & economics 5%; communication 4%; technology 10%; health 13%; other 7% Employment: 20% health & welfare 15% teaching	Study areas: Engineering 12% Biomedical 31% Human sciences 57% Only 12% chose artistic careers.	
Level of satisfaction with chosen profession or career pathway:					
High level of satisfaction; Less interest in money & career ambition	89% highly satisfied with choice of career.	High level of satisfaction with tertiary pathways for study.	82% report large degree of satisfaction with education.		
Attitude towards Steiner philosophy (anthroposophy); choice of a 'Steiner' related career pathway:					
Only 2.4% (e.g. Steiner teacher or eurhythmist)	Neutral to Steiner philosophy; 25% did not know the meaning of 'anthroposophy'.	Only 1 – 2 % applied to anthroposophical vocational training courses).			Vision of many religions 6%; 49% no religion classes or no memory of them; 38% remember Bible stories and biographies.

AUSTRALIAN STEINER CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Gerwin & Mitchell Germany & Switzerland Feb 2007	Gerwin & Mitchell North America & Canada 2007	Bo Dahlin Sweden 2007	Hansen Denmark May 2003	Ribeiro & Pereira São Paulo, Brazil Oct 2007
What graduates think of Steiner education:				
87% value sense of belonging; majority would choose to go to a Steiner school again; instruction considered interesting & diversified; quality of human encounter valued.	Value warmth, safety, nurturing, tolerance, beauty, rich sensory experiences in early years (smell of beeswax, feel of carded wool, texture of wood, taste of warm soup), close friends & relationships, rhythm & ritual, well-rounded education, wide range of subjects, arts, music and learning by doing.	Value nurturing of self-confidence and independent study skills, and fruitful relations to learning and knowledge. Critical of resistance to computers and text books; also critical of teacher 'looping' and of teachers when lacking sufficient subject expertise.	Value creativity – musicality; way of viewing and understanding human beings; empathy; social competence; independence, self assurance and authenticity. Critical of lack of marks, text books and exams; need focus on proficiency; dare to be contemporary	Value individual rhythm & maturity of each student; role of arts in learning; development of personal abilities and sensitivity.
What Steiner graduates value as adults:				
Cultivating personal wellbeing within context of friends and family. Culture & creativity more valued than average; electronic devices less so. They show more social engagement and higher rate of volunteers.	91% practice and value lifelong learning; 94% are self-reliant & value self confidence. 93% value verbal expression & critical thinking; 96% value interpersonal relationships at home & work; 82% care about ethical principles at work; 82% value helping others.	Many students considered that Steiner education made a positive contribution to their ability to manage higher education.	Broad view of human being; many-sidedness; social coherence. Creativity, arts & crafts valued	Global view of life; flexibility; Steiner education teaches many capacities; creative autonomy, self-confidence, and knowledge of self.

2. RESEARCH EVIDENCE OF STEINER EDUCATION'S ATTAINMENT OF MELBOURNE GOALS

Gerwin and Mitchell (2007)¹ sum up the attributes of Steiner graduates by recognising three key characteristics:

- Waldorf school graduates value the opportunity to think for themselves and to translate their new ideas into practice. They both appreciate and practice life-long learning and have a highly developed sense for aesthetics.
- Waldorf school graduates value lasting human relationships—and they seek out opportunities to be of help to other people.
- Waldorf school graduates sense that they are guided by an inner moral compass that helps them navigate the trials and challenges of their professional and private lives. They carry high ethical principles into their chosen professions.

There is a high level of alignment between these predominant characteristics and the three main categories of the *Melbourne Declaration of Goals for Young Australians* (November, 2008).

¹ Research Bulletin, Spring 2007, vol 12, no 2.

2.1 SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS

One recent graduate (2006) recalls of her years at a Waldorf/Steiner high school:

In high school, I gained a foundation in real knowledge that is already evident in college. This is true in math and science, not just in art and history. In chemistry at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), I can explain to my classmates what happens when a particular acid and a particular base mix because we mixed those chemicals in our chem lab ... in 10th grade. Other students learned about acids and bases from textbooks, or their lab experience wasn't meaningful, and so they can't picture what happens. Classmates and dorm friends constantly ask me how I know what I know— it's not that I know more facts than they do, but that I have remembered what I learned and I know how to connect facts to relate them to what I'm doing. . . . I know how to seek out my professors to get their help (which many of my classmates don't even think to do) because my high school teachers were always present and helpful. . . . I was able to find my place at a large school— RIT has 15,500 students—because I had made my place at this small school (cited by Gerwin & Mitchell, *Research bulletin*, Spring 2007, vol 12, 2, p.9).

Professors who taught Steiner students as college undergraduates were invited to share their impressions of these students. Gerwin and Mitchell (2007) report that 'three characteristic observations recurred across the academic disciplines and across a wide range of campuses':

The primary characteristic reported about Waldorf graduates is the holistic and integrative quality of their thinking. Waldorf alumni/ae are perceived as thinking flexibly, often 'outside the box,' and integrating seemingly unrelated subjects with clarity and courage. One professor commented on his Waldorf undergraduate's ability 'to think creatively, to assimilate information as opposed to memorizing isolated facts, [as well as] his love for integrating physical movement with intellectual content areas.' Another, reflecting on several Waldorf students he had taught over the years, reported that 'all have the same broad approach to education. They are flexible, creative, and willing to take intellectual risks' (p. 9).

2.2 CREATIVE and CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS

In Gerwin and Mitchell's 2007 study, the second characteristic observation Professors noted about Steiner students they had taught was their creative and imaginative capacity not only in the practice of the arts but also in the study of science:

A professor of biological sciences commended a Waldorf student in his classes for her skill in drawing and painting, not merely because she could illustrate what she had seen but because 'it allowed her to see more than others did.' Another professor noted of a Waldorf undergraduate that his 'imagination, his nuanced verbal skills, and his leadership qualities had been richly nourished in him by his prior schooling.' A different Waldorf student earned this comment: 'She had more confidence in her imagination than did most students' (pp.9-10).

The close relationship between creativity and the development of self-worth is evident in the following observation:

The Steiner school is seen to exert a favourable influence on the development of the personality (e.g. personal sense of worth, self-assurance, creativity, flexibility) and of social competency (e.g. empathic faculties, consideration, ability to cooperate) as well as the development of the ability to form one's own opinion and become self reliant (Mitchell & Gerwin, Feb 2007, p.3).

Interviewed graduates (Ribeiro & Pereira, 2007) expressed how much they valued the respect shown for the 'individual rhythm and maturity of each student.' Their observations included the following comments:

- *'Waldorf's aim is considering the necessities of each human being according to his age';*
- *'There I could be myself. It is a question of trust.'*
- *'Human development of the whole of life, not just preparing for college.'*

AUSTRALIAN STEINER CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

- *'Respect for each student's learning process and individual assessment of each one's progress.'*
- *'The range of different kinds of learning experiences led to deeper and wider development of the self.'*
- *'Respect for individuality.'*
- *'Creative autonomy.'*

2.3 ACTIVE and INFORMED CITIZENS

The third characteristic often noted by the professors about their Steiner undergraduates in the study by Gerwin and Mitchell (2007) is:

... their moral ballast and social caring for others. In a time of rising plagiarism on college campuses (fueled by all manner of internet services and ghost writers, for instance), it was reaffirming to hear a professor say of a Waldorf undergraduate: 'Her social awareness is incredibly high, leadership excellent, ethical and moral standards stellar. I interact with many students. Her demeanor, skills, and social standards are the best I've encountered.' Another described a Waldorf student she had taught as 'a Renaissance man who has been able to find a balance between his intellectual gifts, his athletic interests, and his high ethical and moral standards' (p.10).

The second comparative study (2003)² of the research report by Bo Dahlin (2007) in Sweden focused on the achievement of the educational goal of 'democracy and active citizenship':

- *The Waldorf teachers were felt to attach greater importance to human dignity, equality and the environment in their teaching*
- *Fewer Waldorf pupils felt that they are bullied*
- *The Waldorf pupils had more tolerant attitudes to deviant groups in society.* The Waldorf pupils in general had more open and tolerant attitudes towards homosexual pupils and pupils with learning difficulties, compared with the municipal school pupils. They also had more open and tolerant attitudes to both immigrants and religious and political extremist groups. Only with regard to their attitudes to criminals and Nazis/racists/skinheads was the relationship between the two response groups the opposite, i.e., the Waldorf pupils showed a less tolerant attitude than the municipal school pupils.
- *Less difference between the attitudes of boys and girls in the Waldorf schools*

The third report (2004) of the research studies undertaken and published by Bo Dahlin (2007) in Sweden explored the educational goal of 'civic moral competency' in particular. The following observations were recorded:

- *More Waldorf pupils thought their social studies teaching was interesting and good ... more Waldorf pupils ... thought they were good at social studies, compared with the municipal pupils.*
- *More Waldorf pupils felt responsibility for social and moral issues ... More Waldorf pupils thought they had a responsibility for the moral development of society in the future and felt that as adults they would have a responsibility to do something about the situations referred to in the evaluation questions.*
- *More Waldorf pupils felt that the evaluation questions were important, interesting and easy to understand*
- *The Waldorf pupils' involvement in social and moral issues seems to increase with age. ... The attitude to social studies also became considerably more positive amongst the Waldorf pupils, while it became if anything more negative amongst the municipal school pupils. Furthermore, involvement in moral issues seemed to increase with age with the Waldorf pupils, while it was fairly constant amongst the municipal school pupils.*
- *The Waldorf pupils tended to refer somewhat more to love and moral courage. ... They also seem to be characterized by greater thoughtfulness, greater confidence in man's innate*

² *Summary of Swedish Waldorf School Evaluation Project.* Bo Dahlin, Professor, Department of Educational Science, Karlstad University, Sweden.

AUSTRALIAN STEINER CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

goodness and less confidence that more police or more severe laws can solve moral problems on a societal level. Instead the Waldorf pupils stress individual responsibility.

- *More Waldorf pupils had a positive self-image.*

The combined reports of the investigation suggest that Steiner schools educate for 'moral competency' and to a great extent produce 'active and responsible citizens with democratic values' (Dahlin, 2007).

3. STEINER EDUCATION EQUIPS STUDENTS TO MEET THE FUTURE

Educational Futures Research: Guidelines for teaching & preparing young people for the 21st century	
* 1. Appropriate Imagery	Choosing metaphors with care and imagination
* 2. Teach for wholeness and balance	Holistic paradigm
* 3. Teach identification, connectedness, integration	Epistemological interconnectedness
* 4. Develop individual values	Value the individual
* 5. Teach visualization	Development of the picturing imagination
6. Cultivate visions of the future	Cultivate images and visions of futures
* 7. Empowerment through active hope	Distinguish between faith and hope
* 8. Tell stories	Use story telling and mythology as powerful teaching tool
* 9. Teach and learn how to celebrate	Celebrate festivals
10. Teach futures tools	Encourage and use futures tools and methods
* The asterisked points all refer to important features of Steiner Education as identified by Gidley (1997).	
Source: Beare and Slaughter, [1993 #1, p. 129-134]	

REFERENCE LIST

- Beare, H. and Slaughter, R. (1993). *Education for the Twenty First Century*. London: Routledge
- Dahlin, B. (2007). *The Waldorf School: Cultivating Humanity? A report from an evaluation of Waldorf schools in Sweden*. Karlstad: Karlstad University Studies.
- Dahlin, B. (2004). *Summary of Swedish Waldorf School Evaluation Project*. Karlstad: Karlstad University Studies.
- Gerwin, D. and Mitchell, D. (Feb, 2007).
- Gerwin, D. and Mitchell, D. (Feb, 2007).
- Gidley, J. Bateman, D. & Smith, C. (2004). *Futures in Education: Principles, practice and potential*. Australian Foresight Institute Monograph Series # 5. Melbourne: Swinburne University.
- Gidley, J. (1997). *Imagination and Will in Youth Visions of their Futures: Prospectivity and Empowerment in Steiner Educated Adolescents*. Education, Work and Training. Lismore, Southern Cross University.
- Gidley, J. (1998). Prospective Youth Visions through Imaginative Education. *Futures: The journal of policy, planning and futures studies* 30(5): 395-408.
- Gidley, J. (2002). Holistic Education and Visions of Rehumanized Futures. *Youth Futures: Comparative Research and Transformative Visions*. J. Gidley and S. Inayatullah. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger: 155-168.
- Gidley, J. (2004). *Imagination and Integration: Empowering Teachers and Children*. Council of Government Schools Organisations (COGSO), 4th Annual Conference Darwin, NT, Australia.
- Gidley, J. and G. Hampson (2005). The Evolution of Futures in School Education. *Futures: The journal of policy, planning and futures studies* 37: 255-271.
- Hansen, T. (2003). *Where did they go? Analysis of former students who graduated from class 12 at Rudolf Steiner schools in Gentofte, Herlev, Odense, and Århus, Denmark*. Denmark: Credoconsult. www.credoconsult.dk
- Ribeiro, W. & de Jesus Pereira, J.P. (Oct 2007). *Seven myths about the social participation of Waldorf graduates*. São Paulo, Brazil.
- Woods, B. (2003). *Innovation, difference, performance*. Educational Research Conference: Designing the future 2003. School of Education, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.