



QTU Position Statement

Differentiation and planning for individual students (*including ICPs*)

Individual student plan is the term often used to describe a range of different plans developed for individual students, which include Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) formerly known as Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

Planning and preparation

A fundamental prerequisite for the delivery of a high quality program to students is high level planning around curriculum delivery. This planning may include teachers differentiating the instruction to accommodate for the various learning needs of students in their classroom.

The QTU is of the view that the delivery of high quality programs is dependent on quality preparation, however the following qualifications apply.

- Perusal of longer-term teacher planning documents (e.g. semester overviews and unit plans) should be for planning purposes. These will sometimes be developed individually and sometimes collaboratively. They may sometimes be the subject of professional discussion of planning and/or co-operative planning.
- A common approach to the format of these long-term planning documents may be agreed at the school level (this should be done through the LCC).
- Other shorter term preparation (e.g. lesson plans, teaching notes) is personal preparation and need not be made available to others.

A prescriptive approach imposed on teachers regarding such personal planning is not acceptable.

It is the QTU's belief that schools will develop appropriate planning to meet the needs of their individual school communities. This could include a combination of whole school planning, team/year level planning and individual planning.


The QTU believes that it is fair and reasonable for school leaders to ask a teacher to provide a planning overview. This could be a yearly plan or a term plan, depending on the needs of the school.

It is not fair and reasonable to expect a teacher to provide their direct supervisor with a lesson plan for every lesson. Nor is it fair and reasonable for a teacher to be expected to develop individual student plans for every student in their class.

Differentiation, planning for individual students

The concept of differentiation is based on the need for teachers to adjust instruction to meet the needs of the range of learners in their classroom. In Queensland state schools this may include students with special learning needs. For differentiation to be successful, teachers need to understand the learning styles and learning preferences of their students. Differentiation occurs when a teacher tailors instruction to meet the needs of the students in their classroom.

Differentiation requires a professional understanding by the teacher of the response of students to various modes of instruction and the levels of learning within their classroom. Most students' educational needs will be met through differentiation processes. Teachers are not expected to outline differentiation strategies highlighted in their unit overviews in their daily or weekly plans.



An ICP is required when students are provided a lower or higher year-level curriculum than their age cohort – for a whole learning area or for all learning areas.

Schools undertake individual student planning and document support provisions and adjustments where students:

- display behaviours that are deemed complex and challenging (Statement of expectations for a disciplined school environment)
- are in out-of-home care (Education Support Plans are developed for students who meet the criteria specified in the Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care Implementation Guidelines)
- are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and require learning plans focusing on high attendance and achievement (see Individual Curriculum Plan)
- have identified health requirements including those requiring specialised health procedures (an Individual Health Plan and/or Emergency Health Plan)

Education Adjustment Program (EAPs)

In Queensland state schools, the Education Adjustment Program (EAPs) is a process for identifying and responding to the needs of students with a disability who require significant educational adjustments. These students also meet the six EAP categories. (Intellectual disability; visual impairment; hearing impairment; physical impairment; speech language impairment; autistic spectrum disorder).

Through the EAP process a number of "plans" may be generated which could include a communication plan, a behaviour plan and possibly an ICP for the Australian Curriculum learning areas. These plans should be developed in conjunction with specialist teachers and the classroom teacher. Students who have an EAP may also require an Individual Curriculum Plan (see next section).

Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs)

Individual curriculum plans (ICPs) previously known in departmental policy as individual learning plans (ILPs) are those plans that are developed by teachers to cater for the diverse learning needs of students who perform well below the year level expectations in the whole of a learning area or across the whole curriculum. ICPs are also developed for those students who are performing well above the expectations for their year level or who are undertaking an accelerated program. In both cases, the ICP must be approved by the parents. The student is then taught at the year level identified in the ICP and assessed and reported against the achievement standard for that year level. Students who obtain a 'D' or 'E' achievement level are **not** deemed to automatically require an ICP. Similarly, an 'A' level of achievement does not automatically lead to a student being placed on an ICP.

ICPs are to be developed in collaboration with the relevant school officers (e.g. principal, ST(LaN), guidance officer, HOC, HOD, HOSES or deputy principal) and be approved by the student's parents.


Planning Expectations

It is unreasonable to require teachers to develop an individual student plan for each student. It is the QTU's position that professional teachers will plan learning experiences cognisant of the needs of the students within their classroom. Onerous documentation identifying which classroom experience applies to which learner, erodes the professional judgement of teachers and does not reflect an understanding of the continually evolving learning journey of students.

It is reasonable for Principals to work with teachers to develop a teaching and learning or pedagogical framework that reflects the needs of the community within which they teach. In accordance with department policy, a school's pedagogical framework should be developed collaboratively with the school community. The Local Consultative Committee (LCC) should be consulted with regard to the type of pedagogical framework that the school chooses and the subsequent impact on teacher workload.

It is important to note that:

- The department, in the P-12 Curriculum Framework policy, does not require detailed planning and individual student plans to be developed (with the exception of ICPs)
- the QTU will act to defend the right of teachers to use their professional judgment about planning and the form that it will take

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- the QTU does not accept that the development of individual student plans is required as evidence of differentiation within a classroom
 - the QTU believes that teachers are best placed to determine the needs of the learners within their classroom and should be given sufficient professional autonomy to adjust their instruction to accommodate for these needs – prescriptive processes only seek to erode this autonomy and exacerbate the workload of teachers.

Relevant Resources

P-12 Curriculum Framework policy

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/index.html>

A Whole School Approach to support student learning policy

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/docs/whole-school-approach.doc>

Curriculum provision to students with disability policy

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/docs/policy-disability.doc>

Pedagogical Framework policy

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/docs/pedagogical-framework.doc>

Curriculum provision to gifted and talented students

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/docs/policy-gifted-talented.doc>

Education Adjustment Program

<http://education.qld.gov.au/students/disabilities/adjustment/>