



Inclusive Education Policy

Every Student with Disability Succeeding

Frequently asked questions

The Inclusive Education Policy (the policy) commits the Department of Education to continuing a journey towards inclusive education. The policy seeks to ensure that children and young people from all social, cultural, community and family backgrounds, and of all identities and all abilities, are able to:

- attend their local state school or education centre and be welcomed
- access and participate in a high-quality education and fully engage in the curriculum along-side their similar-aged peers
- learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from bullying, discrimination or harassment
- achieve academically and socially with reasonable adjustments and supports tailored to meet their learning needs.

State schools across Queensland are taking positive steps towards implementing the policy for all students at their school.

This factsheet provides information about some of the important issues schools are considering in relation to students with disability, while on their inclusive education journey.

Questions and answers

Are state schools required to enrol students with disability?

Students with disability are entitled to enrol in their local state school, and state schools are required to enrol them. This requirement includes students who may be eligible for enrolment in a state special school, or another school in the area that operates a special education program specialising in the prospective student's disability.

All schools are required to provide reasonable adjustments to enable students with disability to access and participate in education.

Not providing reasonable adjustments or refusing to enrol a student because they have a disability may be unlawful discrimination under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwth). Suggesting to a parent that their child should enrol in another school because of their disability, or the perceived expertise at that school, may also be considered discrimination.



Does inclusion mean that students with disability have to be in the same classroom as their peers for the whole day?

No, however separate classrooms or classes for students with disability that involve them learning separately all day, every day is not inclusion.

Inclusive education is about supporting students with disability based on their individual needs to both:

- engage in learning alongside their similar aged peers who do not have a disability; and
- be provided with reasonable adjustments to enable them to access and participate in education and the curriculum.

Most students with disability can access and participate in education and the curriculum in the same classroom as their similar-aged peers without disability when reasonable adjustments are made.

However, some students with disability may need more intensive teaching in small groups to access parts of the curriculum. This may need to occur as a reasonable adjustment for some of the school day. Making this reasonable adjustment when necessary, in order to enable the student to learn, is an important part of inclusive education.

What is the role of Special Education Programs (SEPs) in inclusive education?

SEPs take many forms across state schools. All SEPs are groups of experienced and/or qualified specialist teachers and support staff who support classroom teachers to enable students with disability to access and engage with the curriculum and be part of the school community.

SEPs can play a very significant role in supporting classroom teachers to make reasonable adjustments for students with disability and supporting inclusion. They can provide advice about how to make adjustments, and co-teach or work with the school team to develop strategies to enable students with disability to participate in school activities.

Depending on how the SEP operates at the school, there may be a need to consider how best to draw on staff expertise to support inclusion.

Are staff employed in SEPs or allocated to support students with disability responsible for teaching or supporting students who do not have disability?

Staff are allocated to schools rather than to individual students. All resources allocated under the Student with Disability funding model such as additional teachers and teacher aides should be engaged by the school to support students with disability and who are identified through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data Schools on Students with Disability.

Should implementing the policy result in additional workload for classroom and other teachers?

To ensure that students with disability are included and to comply with discrimination laws, schools need to make reasonable adjustments. This may mean that teaching methods need to be adapted to meet student needs and enable them to engage with the curriculum.

Teachers are able to access support and advice about making the adjustments needed from a range of support staff.

When allocating resources in schools, principals are required to consider workloads of teachers and other staff as well as the needs of students.

What process should a school follow to effectively implement inclusion for students with disability?

Schools are guided by the *Signposts for inclusive education*, which is based on the National School Improvement Tool to map their journey, and identify strengths and areas for change.

Consultation is an important part of the process to ensure that all school staff and the broader school community understand and are able to play a role in inclusion.

All school staff including teaching and non-teaching staff should be consulted at every stage of the process with regular updates and opportunities to share their concerns and scale up their successes.

Principals must consult with staff about the change management processes including the journey towards inclusive education with their Local Consultative Committee, and in schools without an LCC (less than 20 teachers), through their usual formal consultation processes.

It is also important that parent groups are consulted during the process towards inclusive education.

Does inclusive education mean that job titles need to change?

No. The policy does not require job titles or position descriptions to change.

Having a position renamed to reflect the policy does not mean that inclusion is being achieved. Job titles are evolving to respectfully reflect the diverse range of roles in education and the diversity of students who are supported in schools.

The policy requires a whole of school approach. As all school staff and teachers are responsible for inclusion and for supporting students with disability, renaming positions for example inclusion teachers, may suggest that the position is the only one responsible for supporting students with disability and may suggest segregation.

There may be a need in some schools to assign responsibilities for leading or coordinating the move towards inclusion, however this should be done in consultation with the LCC. Duties should then be aligned to the position's classification and not result in that position having sole responsibility for supporting students with disability.

What resources are provided for inclusion?

Resources are currently provided for students with disability as a pool to enable principals to use resources effectively. A factsheet on targeted funding resources is available on OnePortal at <https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Students/LearningandDisabilitySupport/Pages/Disabilityresourcesandsupportmaterial.aspx>.

Teachers and teacher aides are provided to schools as follows:

- 75% based on the Education Adjustment Program; and
- 25% based on school enrolments with an Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage weighting.

The EAP component reflects the frequency and intensity of reasonable adjustments for individual students with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, physical impairment, hearing impairment, vision impairment and speech language impairment.

Schools are also provided with funding through Investing for Success with additional funding provided for some students with disability.

The same resources are provided to the school regardless of which class the student is in.

As well as these resources, teachers and other school staff can access high-quality support through regionally

based coaches, advisory visiting teachers, guidance officers, therapists and nurses who can help to develop and implement reasonable educational adjustments.

What training is available for school staff?

Training for inclusive education relating to students with disability focuses on making reasonable educational adjustments for specific disabilities or for specific ways a student may be assessed, learn and achieve.

All school staff, including teachers, can access professional development about making reasonable adjustments and can access the *Disability Standards for Education* Online eLearning modules, which are tailored for their specific contexts.

Training and supports related to specific disabilities or learning needs include:

Disability or learning need	Advice and support	Workshops and supports
Autism spectrum disorder	Autism Hub; Autism Coaches; Inclusion Coaches; Mental Health Coaches; Occupational therapists; Physiotherapists; Speech-language pathologists; Guidance officers	Autism Hub workshops and courses <i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – Autism spectrum disorder</i> online course
Intellectual disability	Support teachers literacy and numeracy; Inclusion Coaches; Occupational therapists; Physiotherapists; Speech-language pathologists; Guidance officers	<i>Supporting learners with intellectual disability</i> online course <i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – Intellectual disability</i> online course
Dyslexia and significant difficulties in reading	Support Teachers - Literacy and Numeracy; Reading Coaches; Inclusion Coaches; Speech-language pathologists; Guidance officers	Reading Centre courses and workshops
Physical impairment	Advisory Visiting Teachers - Physical Impairment; Occupational Therapists; Physiotherapists; Inclusion Coaches; Assistive Technology Services; Speech-language pathologists	<i>Manual tasks - Assisting students with physical impairments</i> <i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – physical impairment</i> online course
Vision impairment	Statewide Vision Impairment Services; Occupational therapists; Physiotherapists; Speech-language pathologists; Advisory Visiting Teachers - Vision Impairment	<i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – vision impairment</i> online course
Speech-language impairment	Speech-Language Pathologists; Inclusion Coaches; Assistive technology service	<i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability - Speech-language impairment</i> online course
Hearing impairment	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services; Advisory Visiting Teachers - Hearing Impairment; Inclusion Coaches; Occupational therapists; Physiotherapists; Speech-language pathologists	<i>Deadly Kids Can Listen and Learn</i> online course <i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – Hearing impairment</i> online course
Behaviour support	Positive Behaviour for Learning Coordinators; Behaviour support teachers; Inclusion Coaches; Mental Health Coaches; Speech-language pathologists; Guidance officers	<i>Essential Skills for Classroom Management</i> online course <i>Guide to Classroom Positive Behaviour for Learning</i> resource on the Learning Place <i>Supporting Learners with Intellectual Disability</i> online course <i>Teacher aides – Understanding challenging behaviour and disability</i> online course

Disability or learning need	Advice and support	Workshops and supports
Social and emotional wellbeing	Guidance officers; Mental Health Coaches	OnePortal <i>Mental Health Resource Hub</i>
Universal strategies to support the needs of diverse learners	Coaches; Regional work packages	<i>Whole school approach to support student learning</i> online training <i>Post-school transition for students with disability</i> online training <i>Teacher aides supporting students with disability – Introduction</i> online course

As well as training and advice and support, speech language-pathologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, guidance officers and nurses undertake assessments and support schools and teachers to develop and implement reasonable adjustments.

Each year the department supports 12 principals to undertake a Masters of Inclusive Education at the Queensland University of Technology.

Each region has developed a capability-building package for inclusive education which is designed to meet the specific needs and context of their schools. The department's website and OnePortal pages also provide a variety of vignettes showcasing good practice, factsheets and animations so that schools are supported to implement inclusion for students with disability.

The department also funds The Specialist Disability Support in Schools (SDSS) program (previously NSO), which supports the capability of school staff in specific areas of disability.

More professional development opportunities will become available as policies and procedures are developed. Schools are also able to engage experts from outside of schools to support the learning needs of their staff.

How will inclusion for students with disability be measured?

Inclusive education is about achieving better outcomes for all students. The department's *Every Student with Disability* plan sets out four measures for improving outcomes for students with disability:

- improving A to E performance
- increasing the proportion who receive a Queensland Certificate of Education
- increasing the proportion who are accessing a full-time program
- reducing the proportion who receive school disciplinary absences.

These measures, together with other information such as parent engagement data are provided to regions with Assistant Regional Directors working with schools to improve outcomes. They are also assessed as part of schools' internal reviews.

What if I have more questions or need more support?

Please email support.diversity@qed.qld.gov.au if you would like any further information.