**Alternative Learning Program model**

This outline of the proposed Alternative Learning Program model is to be completed in conjunction with reviewing the Department of Education procedure [Establishment of an Alternative Learning Program](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/establishment-of-an-alternative-learning-program-procedure). Additional attachments may be submitted with this model to the Regional Director for review prior to establishment of the proposed program.

The ‘Initial evidence’ column is to be completed when developing the proposed Alternative Learning Program. The ‘Review evidence’ column is to be completed for the review of an established Alternative Learning Program, to be undertaken every two years.

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| **Specification/required for consideration** | **Initial evidence** | **Review evidence (every two years)** |
| **Stage 1: Identify and demonstrate the need for an Alternative Learning Program** | | |
| Schools collect and provide evidence that supports the need for an Alternative Learning Program. To provide this evidence, schools will:   * Identify, collect and analyse relevant school data * Consult with staff, Local Consultative Committee, P&Cs, School Council * Consult with students and families.  During this analysis of data and consultation with stakeholders, schools will need to build a concrete understanding of the following:  * What is the size of the disengagement issue? How many students are disengaged or at risk of becoming disengaged? * What are the characteristics of these disengaged students (e.g. age, educational level, challenges/barriers experienced)?   At this stage, schools must also consider whether existing education options and in-school approaches could meet the needs of disengaged students in the school. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * Explanation of how the school’s data on relevant indicators supports the need for an Alternative Learning Program. Relevant indicators include:   + attendance   + A to E behaviour   + real retention   + school collected measures of student wellbeing (where relevant)   + school opinion survey data   + early leavers data   + school disciplinary absences. * Outcome of consultation with staff, Local Consultative Committee, School Council, P&C regarding proposed Alternative Learning Program * Demonstrated consultation with students and families * A rationale for why the current school models are not sufficient to meet the needs of the whole student cohort. |  |  |
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| **Stage 2: Planning the structure of the Alternative Learning Program** | | |
| **Quality built physical environment for the program**  Provide evidence to demonstrate that the physical space in which the students will be placed when participating in the Alternative Learning Program is not “second class”. The quality and aesthetics of the Alternative Learning Program space should send a message to the students and the rest of the school that the students accessing the space are valued. Through its design, the environment should promote inclusion and engagement of students, and enable flexible approaches to learning. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * Map of school footprint identifying the location of the program in a space central to mainstream schooling spaces and activities * Floor plan identifying how flexible approaches to learning are incorporated in the space * Consideration of high quality aesthetic e.g. furniture selection, light * Clear plan of how student voice will be incorporated in the planning of the space. |  |  |

| **Specification/required for consideration** | **Initial evidence** | **Review evidence** |
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| Processes to establish and maintain authentic and effective parent engagement and support Schools are to have in place processes to establish authentic and effective parent engagement, which is particularly important where students are disengaged or at risk of disengagement. In many cases, parents/carers of vulnerable students feel anxious and ill-equipped to support their child. In other cases, there may be issues of trust and alienation of parents/carers. These situations require school staff to have the highest levels of skill, resilience and respect when engaging with parents. The development of trusting relationships provides an important opportunity to form a powerful partnership with parents. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * Outline of approach to engage parents in their child’s learning, including ongoing communication * Documented plan to provide accessible reports to parents on a regular basis in regards to their child’s progress while in the Alternative Learning Program * How parents consent to their child’s participation in the Alternative Learning Program will be obtained. |  |  |
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| **Links and partnerships with government and community agencies and/or businesses**  In many cases, multiple agencies will be supporting vulnerable young people who access the Alternative Learning Program (e.g. Health, Child Safety, Youth Justice). Referral to other Government or non-government agencies may be required to ensure students receive the support they need to address their social, emotional and wellbeing needs. Schools will require solid connections with other Government and relevant support agencies to facilitate student access to supports. | | |
| **Requirements:**   * Documentation of existing established networks with relevant Government departments, community organisations and non-government agencies to ensure student needs are met * If networks are not currently in place, identification of key agencies to be approached and a documented plan to engage these agencies to respond to student needs. |  |  |
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| **Funding arrangements**  Principals are to address the sustainability of the program. Evidence is required that the systems for funding the program are sustainable, and agreed to by all members of the school community including school staff, parents and relevant committees. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * Outline of funding source and evidence that this has been agreed by the school community * Documentation indicating that staffing structures and funding sources will allow sustainability of the Alternative Learning Program, e.g. existing staff timetabled into program * Evidence of availability of one-off funding for refurbishment/ fit-out costs to provide highest quality built environment (where relevant). |  |  |
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| **Student group**  Selection of students is to be based on principles of inclusion and maximising outcomes for every student. Evidence of an appropriate process to select students is required. Schools are to consider the number of students that will attend the Alternative Learning Program. Numbers will vary according to the size of the school, and the student demographics. Evidence is required of the planning undertaken in determining the cohort size, giving consideration to dynamics of the group and the teaching capacity to support this number of students.  The program should not be focused on streaming students for one issue (e.g. programs focused only on students with behavioural issues; a program focused only on students with mental health issues). Critical to the delivery of any Alternative Learning Program are the principles of inclusion and meeting the objectives of the department’s [Inclusive education policy](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/inclusive-education-policy). | | |

| **Specification/required for consideration** | **Initial evidence** | **Review evidence** |
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| **Requirements include:**   * Detail of the student identification method, outlining the clear and transparent process for the identification of students who would benefit from access to the Alternative Learning Program. Refer to [Everybody’s Business](https://advancingeducation.qld.gov.au/youthEngagement/Documents/everybodys-business.pdf)for example student identification processes. The selection of students must be individualised and in response to the needs of the individual student * Proposed group size and rationale, e.g. student needs and dynamics, teacher capability. |  |  |
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| **Referral process**  Schools base their decisions about referring a student to the Alternative Learning Program on professional analysis of a wide range of variables and should follow a clear and transparent identification and referral process. Prior to referring a student to the Alternative Learning Program, the school:   * Identifies factors that may be contributing to a student displaying behaviours that interfere with their ability to learn, and the rights of others to learn. This may involve undertaking a [functional behaviour assessment](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Students/mental-health-wellbeing/mentalhealthresourcehub/Mentalhealthdifficulties/Pages/Behaviourissues.aspx) that aligns with the school Behaviour Management Plan; * Undertakes holistic reflection, including the school’s capacity to respond to a student identified as being at-risk of disengaging or who is disengaged, and consider the available in-school responses; and * Explores further action the school may take to support, including in-school adjustments, to support the student’s ability to learn.   Only once relevant approaches and interventions have been exhausted should the Principal consider including the student in the Alternative Learning Program. The Alternative Learning Program is not be considered as a solution that is solely confined to students with behavioural issues. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * Outline of clear and transparent student referral process, including:   + Reflection on whether mainstream responses have been exhausted, and why they are not effective;   + Key considerations and procedures for consulting parents throughout the process and in advance of considering referral to the alternative education setting. |  |  |
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| Staff selection to support the engagement and attainment of every studentPrincipals ensure staff have the necessary capability to respond to the specific requirements of working in the Alternative Learning Program, for example, working with students who have experienced trauma, delivering high quality and targeted instruction, and implementing targeted approaches to behavioural issues. This may include providing coaching and mentoring to school staff, accessing additional professional development or adopting co-teaching models. | | |
| Requirements include:  * Outline of the required staff capability to respond to student need ensuring high quality teaching and learning delivery in the proposed alternative education program. * Overview of staffing profile, including FTE implications * Initial and ongoing professional development, mentoring arrangements etc. to equip staff to deliver the proposed program. |  |  |
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| Monitoring individual student learning progress and tracking outcomes for students Schools ensure that collection and analysis of data from the Alternative Learning Program is incorporated in whole-of-school data review practices to track student progress and streamline transitions back to mainstream classes.  To capture data, a specific “class” must be created in OneSchool (see OneSchool guides – [1.7 How to Enrol a Student in Additional Programs](https://oneschoolhelp.eq.edu.au/Student/student-profile/Pages/1.7-How-to-Enrol-a-Student-in-Additional-Programs.aspx) and [10 How to Link to Additional Programs](https://oneschoolhelp.eq.edu.au/school-management/Class%20Dashboard/Pages/10--How-to-Link-to-Additional-Programs---Solid-Pathways.aspx)) (DoE employees only) to enable all students in the Alternative Learning Program to be easily identified, and their outcomes, transitions and progress tracked.  Examples of data that should be collected include, but are not limited to:   * Attendance * A to E Behaviour * A to E Achievement in English, Maths, Science and one other learning area nominated by the student * School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs) | | |
| **Specification/required for consideration** | **Initial evidence** | **Review evidence** |
| **Requirements include:**   * Mechanisms and plan in place to facilitate monitoring of individual student learning progress through a mix of qualitative and quantitative data measures. |  |  |
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| **Inclusion**  Schools are to ensure that the Alternative Learning Program is implemented as a tool for inclusive schooling, not as a segregation, streaming or behaviour management approach. In line with this, the implementation of the Alternative Learning Program should include approaches to allow individual students to engage with the full diversity of curriculum offerings in the school, through careful management and integration with mainstream classes.  Students who access the Alternative Learning Program should be a part of the whole school community and participating in the same school rituals and routines (e.g. whole school assemblies, school camps, free dress days, break times, start and finish times) as other students. In most cases, students attending the Alternative Learning Program will be required to adhere to the whole-of-school expectations (e.g. uniform and school community events).  Mainstream teachers should maintain connection to students while they are in the Alternative Learning Program. This can be achieved through teachers continuing to make contact with students and monitor their academic progress and engagement outcomes, including marking drafts and assessments, and co-teaching within the alternative learning environment.  Students who are part of the Alternative Learning Program should access subjects in the mainstream school with the rest of their peer group where it is appropriate. For example, where students are achieving in a subject and have a positive relationship with the teacher, they should attend this class in the mainstream school. | | |
| **Requirements include:** Demonstration of how the Department’s inclusion objectives will be achieved in the Alternative Learning Program including:How students will continue to be a part of the whole school community through, for example, continuing to access the same school routine and school assemblies and whole-school eventsDocumented process for identifying subjects in which students are succeeding and will continue to access while attending the Alternative Learning Program. |  |  |
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| Ensuring broad curriculum offerings, providing breadth of opportunities Schools ensure that the expectations or standards for the quality of curriculum and learning opportunities provided to students in the Alternative Learning Program are not altered or lowered. High quality curriculum options delivered in the Alternative Learning Program must reflect, but not be limited to, those offered in the 'mainstream' classroom setting, with students remaining entitled to a full and diverse curriculum, including the [Australian Curriculum](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/). For more information, see the [P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework](https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/school-curriculum/p-12) | | |
| Requirements include:Indication of how broad curriculum offerings will be delivered, providing every young person a breadth of opportunities including the Australian Curriculum (e.g. proposed timetable)Outline of how this approach does not alter or lower expectations or standards for the quality of curriculum and learning opportunities provided to students. |  |  |
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| **Pedagogical strategies to facilitate engagement**  Schools demonstrate that they differentiate the curriculum and teaching strategies to meet the individual learning needs of the students in the Alternative Learning Program. Ideally, students should attend classes in both the alternative setting and 'mainstream' classrooms, depending on their curriculum and wellbeing needs.  All students in the Alternative Learning Program should have an individualised plan that identifies their learning and wellbeing needs. The plan will address learning strengths and weaknesses, set goals and aspirations and (where appropriate) document strategies to build behaviour and strengthen students' levels of learning stamina and motivation. It will also include a plan for transitioning the student back to full-time mainstream classes. The individualised plan will complement, but not replace any other plans that are established for individual students (e.g. Individual Curriculum Plans, Behaviour Plans). An example individualised plan is included in the [FlexiSpace Guidelines](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/Stateschooling/Pages/youth-engagement.aspx) (DoE employees only). | | |

| **Specification/required for consideration** | **Initial evidence** | **Review evidence** |
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| Requirements include:  * Outline of the quality and contemporary teaching practices to be delivered in the program * Articulation of how differentiated and individualised education programs will be delivered. |  |  |
| Process to transition students out of the alternative program Schools consider the process that will take place in consultation with the student and their parent/s, to guide decision-making for when and how students will transition out of the Alternative Learning Program back into the mainstream classes on a full-time basis. The process will include review of data informing the student’s progress towards achieving their goals, and collaborative planning with other team members. Strategies will be in place to support the successful and sustained transition of students back into full-time mainstream classes. | | |
| Requirements include:  * Proposed transition plan and overview of process for identifying the most appropriate time for a student to transition back to their ‘mainstream’ classes on a full-time basis. |  |  |
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| **Whole school culture with a focus on inclusion, positive relationships and relational pedagogy**  Schools ensure that the Alternative Learning Program is integrated as a part of the school, and is one of many approaches to students who may be at risk of being disengaged/ experiencing disengagement. The alternative learning setting should promote personal safety, security, and emotional and physical wellbeing of all students in the school.  Students and parents should be respectfully engaged to contribute to the design and ongoing delivery of the Alternative Learning Program. | | |
| **Requirements include:**   * The Principal’s approach to developing a whole school culture and vision for engaging and retaining every student * Evidence of a whole school commitment to do the right thing by every student, regardless of the challenges * Documented processes for ensuring that best practices identified in the alternative education setting feed back into the mainstream education setting * Evidence that the alternative education setting is fully included in School Improvement processes and participates in the School Opinion Survey. |  |  |

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| **Additional comments:** |  | **Regional Director – Approved/ Not Approved:** |
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