**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**Information about distance education for students with medical conditions**

The following information may assist parents to determine if a school of distance education is the most appropriate type of education program to meet the needs of their child. Parents are also encouraged to discuss how a particular distance education program operates with the relevant school principal.

**Supervision and support**

The physical separation of teacher and student in distance education can be challenging for students and their families, particularly for new enrolments. In order for this form of learning to be rewarding and successful for the student, it is important that a strong partnership exists between the school and the home.

It is essential that an appropriate level of support and supervision is available at home. This supervision is to be provided by the home tutor, usually a parent. The home tutor must be able to:

* participate in induction programs and ongoing home tutor support activities
* establish and maintain regular contact with the teacher(s) and the school, and advise of any changes to the student’s condition or other family circumstance which may impact on the student’s learning or ability to return school work on time
* provide active on-site support and supervision of the student, ensuring that the student attends scheduled telephone or online lessons (unless the condition precludes this) and that work is completed in the allocated time
* ensure the student has ready access to all necessary learning materials and resources, including an appropriate work area.

Distance education will be quite different to other forms of schooling in which the student may have participated. It is essential that the student is able to:

* establish and maintain contact with the teacher(s)
* return completed work to the teacher(s) regularly
* participate in field/extension services and extracurricular activities related to the student's course or year level, where these are conducted in or near where the student resides and are not precluded by the student’s condition.

**Services provided by the school of distance education**

The following services are provided by the school of distance education to students who cannot attend a mainstream school due to their medical condition/s:

* induction for the home tutor
* school communication through a variety of channels including face-to-face, prospectus, handbook, course outline, newsletters and web pages
* provision of print and digital course materials
* assessment and reporting on returned work
* scheduled telephone and, where appropriate and available, online lessons, plus as-required support by telephone, fax or email to meet educational needs
* access to library and resource centre services, providing resources in hard copy, on disk, or by internet
* guidance and special needs support
* access to a range of field services appropriate to the course of study, as determined by the school in consultation with the school community
* subsidies to assist families with the cost associated with providing computer technology for the home classroom.

Individual schools of distance education may also provide additional services based on resourcing capacity and in line with the needs of the school community.

**Information about fee exemptions for students with medical conditions**

Students who cannot attend a mainstream state school for more than 80 consecutive school days due to health reasons may [apply for an exemption](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/application-for-fee-exemption-waiver-payment-plan-for-distance-education-home-based-students.docx) from the annual distance education fee. A medical certificate must be supplied to support the application.

If granted, the exemption applies for the current school year only. If a further fee exemption is required, another application will need to be made by submitting an [Application for fee exemption](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/application-for-fee-exemption-waiver-payment-plan-for-distance-education-home-based-students.docx) and supporting evidence.

*Please take this information sheet with you when you visit your medical practitioner*.

**Information for medical/health practitioners about medical certificates for fee exemptions**

# A student or their parent/carer may request a medical certificate from a medical/health practitioner to support their application for an exemption from paying the annual distance education fee.

# For this purpose, the medical certificate must:

# be dated within the last 12 months

# state that the prospective student cannot attend a state school, other than a school of distance education, for more than 80 consecutive school days because of their state of health

# be signed by a medical practitioner or a person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to practice in the psychology profession, other than as a student.

***Notes:***

* The school may also request other information from medical/health practitioners to enable them to support an enrolled student to engage with their learning. This information may be in addition to a medical certificate.
* Schools are required to ensure the right of every student to access education, primary and secondary, appropriate to their needs. The [P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework](https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/p-12) sets out the requirements for schools in providing the curriculum to all students.
	+ In Prep to Year 10, all students are entitled to access and participate in all eight learning areas of the Australia Curriculum, without exception.
	+ In Years 11 and 12, schools support students on a pathway to achieve the goals of their Senior Education and Training Plan with a program of learning that enables them to attain a Senior Education Profile, which may include a Senior Statement, a Queensland Certificate of Education or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement.
* Schools will identify and employ tailored supports if students experience barriers to learning.
* Any reduction in the students’ full curriculum entitlement, at any point, may limit student opportunities and impact their future pathways.