



Procedure

Making changes to school hours procedure

Version: 1.0 | **Version effective:** 22/01/2024

Audience

All state schools.

Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities and processes for making changes to school hours in Queensland state schools.

Overview

In Queensland, school hours are not set in legislation or policy. Generally, state schools hold approximately five hours of classes between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm from Monday to Friday on school days during school term, and this is considered as standard school hours. Schools proposing to make changes to school hours that are within these parameters and not greater than 30 minutes from the current agreed school hours (for example, changing the school day starting time from 8:45am to 8:30 am) are able to follow guidance provided on [OnePortal](#) (DoE employees only).

While changes to school hours may be proposed at any time of the year, the timing of implementation may be dependent on factors such as school transport services (schools should contact Translink at schoolservicechange@tmr.qld.gov.au as soon as possible to understand the impact on school transport services).

Schools must follow this procedure to make changes to their current school hours if one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- the school day is to commence before 8.30am or after 9.30am, or finish before 2.00pm or after 3.30pm
- the current school hours are to be altered by more than 30 minutes (for example, change starting time from 9.15am to 8.30am or finishing time from 3.00pm to 2.00pm)
- the number of school days per week/fortnight are to be changed.

Reasons for making changes to school hours could include:

- the availability of resources and facilities (for example, specialist staff, science laboratories, library, playground/oval)
- school community need
- student and staff wellbeing and engagement.

Changes to school hours may be applied to every school day or to some school days to:

- all students, or
- students in specific year levels, and/or
- students in certain subject areas or undertaking certain programs.

Any changes to school hours must occur in consultation with the school community, continue to allow schools to meet Prep - Year 12 (P-12) curriculum delivery requirements, the needs of all students and staff at their school, and not disadvantage any group of students.

This procedure does not apply where school hours for individual students (for example, those on [part-time education programs](#) (DoE employees only)), with an [altered education program](#), or specific timetable requirements) are different to the published general school hours.

Schools are to ensure their school hours are published and promoted to the school community.

Responsibilities

Principals

- Propose changes to school hours.
- Seek relevant approvals from Regional Director or their nominated approver.
- Ensure consultation occurs with relevant stakeholders when proposing changes and trialling school hours.
- Decide whether to establish a representative taskforce to implement and monitor trial (if trial is approved).
- In all circumstances, ensure the implementation and outcome of the trial and any ongoing changes to school hours are well communicated to the school and local community.
- Ensure full implementation of changed school hours is reviewed (at intervals agreed to with stakeholders during consultation).
- Ensure appropriate supervision is provided for students who are at school within a reasonable period before the scheduled day starts or after the scheduled day finishes (for example, due to transport constraints, family need).
- Oversee the management and recordkeeping of the processes and documentation related to making changes to school hours.

Principal or Representative taskforce (if established)

- Implement, monitor, and evaluate the trial of changed school hours.
- Identify and collect relevant data, and community feedback, during the trial.
- Identify, record, and manage issues that arise during the trial.
- Determine findings from the trial and report on future recommendations.

Regional directors or their nominated approver (for example, School Supervisor)

- Consider the proposals submitted by the Principal for consultation, trial, and full implementation of changed school hours.

- Ensure human rights and any possible discrimination implications are considered when making decisions.
- Ensure relevant documentation provided by the Principal (for example, proposals, plans) is saved appropriately in Content Manager.
- Ensure approved proposals for trial and full implementation are provided to Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch for inclusion in a statewide school hours register.

Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch

- Maintain a statewide school hours register.

Process



Making changes to school hours process

Proposal

1. Conduct internal assessment

- Principal identifies the desired type of changes to school hours ensuring that (at a minimum) the following are considered:
 - the best interests of the students, staff, parents and school community
 - impacts on school-related services and infrastructure (for example, local transport providers, Translink, outside school hours care services, school zones).
 - student extra-curricular activities, needs and wellbeing (for example, part-time work, school-life balance)
 - impacts on local businesses
 - known risk management activities (for example, supervision of students, transport availability).
- Principal determines:
 - that [P-12 Curriculum, assessment and reporting framework](#) requirements can still be met
 - alignment with all legislative requirements, including [human rights](#) and [anti-discrimination](#)
 - compatibility with industrial awards and certified agreements (in consultation with the Regional HR Business Partner)
 - sufficient school staff (teaching and non-teaching) capacity exists
 - appropriate facilities and resources to accommodate the changed school hours are available
 - parent and community expectations can be sought and met
 - kindergarten delivery requirements can be met (selected schools only)

- whether school transport services can accommodate the change to school hours, and any other transport impacts/costs. Note: Where relevant, schools should contact Translink for advice.
- Principal considers school resources to ensure appropriate supervision of students for a reasonable period before and after proposed school hours.

Consultation

2. Seek approval from Regional Director or their nominated approver for commencing stakeholder consultation

- Principal prepares a stakeholder consultation plan using the [Stakeholder consultation plan template](#).
- Principal provides the stakeholder consultation plan to the Regional Director or their nominated approver.
- Regional Director or their nominated approver reviews the stakeholder consultation plan, considers compatibility with human rights using the [Human rights impact assessment: decision-making exemplar](#) and anti-discrimination legislation, and decides if consultation can commence.
- Regional Director or their nominated approver advises the Principal of the decision using the [Stakeholder consultation plan](#).

3. Consult stakeholders

- Principal ensures that consultation occurs with key stakeholders identified in the stakeholder consultation plan about the proposed school hours in order to determine support.
- Principal ensures that the consultation process, including feedback and outcomes, is recorded using the [Stakeholder consultation record](#).

Trial

4. Decision making about trial

- Principal submits proposal for a limited duration trial (minimum duration is one term) to the Regional Director or their nominated approver for approval using the [Trial proposal template](#).
- Regional Director or their nominated approver considers the trial proposal, its compatibility with human rights using the [Human rights impact assessment: decision-making exemplar](#) and anti-discrimination legislation, and decides whether or not to approve a trial of the proposed school hours.
- Regional Director or their nominated approver advises the Principal of the decision using the [Trial proposal](#).
- Regional Director or their nominated approver provides trial proposal, if approved, to Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch by email at SchoolPolicyandProjects@qed.qld.gov.au.
- Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch records details of the trial in a statewide school hours register.

5. Communicate with stakeholders about trial

- Principal communicates the Regional Director's or their nominated approver's decision about the trial to all key stakeholders.

- If the trial is approved, the Principal determines the trial commencement date taking into consideration factors such as any adjustments to school transport services and outside school hours care services.
- The trial commences and the Principal provides further details about the trial implementation to stakeholders.

6. Supervise and support

- Principal may establish, and work with, a representative taskforce to implement and monitor the proposed trial.
- Principal and/or the representative taskforce identify and collect relevant data (such as attendance rates, compliments and complaints) and suggest amendments where applicable.
- Principal and/or the representative taskforce develop a process to identify, report and manage any issues during the trial.
- Where the changed school hours mean that the scheduled school day starts later than 9:00am or finishes earlier than 3:00pm, the principal ensures appropriate supervision is provided for students who are at school before the scheduled day starts (from at least 9:00am) or after the scheduled day finishes (until at least 3:00pm or in line with school transport services).

Evaluation

7. Analyse, recommend and report

- Principal and/or representative taskforce collect and analyse findings of the trial (including impact on students, families and other stakeholders) and collate this information into a report using the [Trial report template](#).
- Principal determines recommendation from the trial (for example, extend trial, adapt trial, proceed to full implementation, revert to previous hours).
- Principal shares findings and recommendations from the trial with key stakeholders.
- If the recommendation is to revert to previous school hours, this is done as soon as possible considering student, staff and community needs, and any adjustments required for school transport services, and the Principal notifies the Regional Director or their nominated approver.
- If the recommendation is to extend the trial (with or without adaptations), the proposal is documented in [Trial proposal](#), the Principal notifies the Regional Director or their nominated approver, and the limited trial continues.

Full implementation

8. Decision making about full implementation

- If the recommendation is to proceed to full implementation, the Principal submits a proposal to fully implement changed school hours using the [Full implementation proposal template](#) to the Regional Director or their nominated approver for approval.
- Regional Director or their nominated approver considers the proposal to fully implement changed school hours, its compatibility with human rights using the [Human rights impact assessment: decision-making](#).

[exemplar](#) and anti-discrimination legislation, and decides whether or not to approve full implementation of the proposed change to school hours.

- Regional Director or their nominated approver advises the Principal of the decision using the [Full implementation proposal](#).
- Regional Director or their nominated approver provides full implementation proposal, if approved, to Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch by email at SchoolPolicyandProjects@qed.qld.gov.au.
- Disability, Inclusion and Student Services Branch records details of the trial in a statewide school hours register.

9. Communicate with stakeholders about full implementation

- Principal communicates the Regional Director's or their nominated approver's decision about full implementation to all key stakeholders as soon as practicable.
- If full implementation is approved, the Principal provides further details about the implementation to stakeholders (for example, frequency of review).

10. Publish information

- Principal publishes information about the new school hours using a wide range of channels such as [school website](#) (i.e. on the Mandatory Level 2 page "Class times / School hours / College Hours"), social media, newsletters, school signage, and local councils and community publications.

Review

11. Regular review

- Principal conducts regular reviews (at the intervals agreed to in stakeholder consultation and at least every two years) of the implementation of the changed school hours (including impact and issues).
- Principal makes and documents minor adjustments to implementation based on review findings.
- Principal discusses with the Regional Director or their nominated approver if significant adjustments to implementation are required.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Changed school hours	School hours that are different to the standard school hours or when there is a change by more than 30 minutes from the previously agreed hours. Change may be expressed with a different starting and/or finishing time of the school day, the length of the school day, or the number of school days in a week or fortnight, or a combination of these.
Full implementation	School is operating with changed school hours indefinitely but reviews occur at intervals agreed to with stakeholders during consultation.

Term	Definition
Representative taskforce	A selected group of individuals to monitor the trial of the changed school hours. The taskforce could have up to five members - ideally including some staff from the school (for example, teacher, a school leader and/or support staff member), a parent and a representative from the local community.
Stakeholder consultation	An interactive process between the school and its relevant stakeholders, where the issues and concerns of all parties are openly considered, responded to, and addressed.
Stakeholders	<p>Each school and their community are different, but relevant stakeholders could include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community • Chamber of Commerce • Childcare and Outside of School Hours Care providers • Community centres, sporting groups/organisations • Community groups and local businesses • Disability services providers • Government agencies (for example, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Child Safety Services, local council) • Health and medical centres • Isolated Children's Parent Association • Local consultative committee • Local Member of Parliament • Local schools • P&C Association • Parents/carers (of all students) • Queensland Teachers' Union and other relevant affected unions • School staff • School transport operators (e.g. Translink) • Students
Standard school hours	In Queensland, most state schools hold approximately five hours of classes between 8:30am to 3:30pm Monday to Friday, except for public and school holidays, and staff professional development days/student free days.

Term	Definition
Trial	School is testing the feasibility of adjusted school hours for a limited duration (minimum trial period is one term). Note that school transport service providers may have minimum time requirements for adjustments to transport services.

Legislation

- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cwlth\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this procedure

- [Flowchart - process for making changes to school hours](#)
- [Full implementation proposal](#)
- [Human rights impact assessment: decision making exemplar](#)
- [Process checklist for principals](#)
- [Stakeholder consultation plan](#)
- [Stakeholder consultation record](#)
- [Trial proposal](#)
- [Trial report](#)

Other resources

- [P-12 Curriculum, assessment and reporting framework](#)
- [Public Service Agreements](#)
- [Making changes to school hours - OnePortal](#) (DoE employees only)

Contact

For further information, please contact your [closest regional office](#).

Regional office staff can contact:

Disability, Inclusion, and Student Services Branch

Email: SchoolPolicyandProjects@qed.qld.gov.au

Review date

22/01/2027

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

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