Frequently Asked Questions – IESP School Funding Reforms

Updated 15/10/2020

1. How often are state-wide centralised panels & when are the due dates for applications?

Twice per term. **Applications close 5pm on the Thursday of week 3 and 7**.

Outcomes are emailed back to the site as soon as the assessment has been completed by the panel.

2. Do I have to submit an application online?

Yes. All applications are to be via the online form. Where difficulty is experienced in this process, please contact education.iesp@sa.gov.au. IT have advised that Google Chrome is the preferred browser for submitting applications.

3. Where do I find the online application portal?

Go to the Eduportal then Forms and look for IESP Application. Google Chrome is the preferred browser for submitting applications.

4. Do I apply for additional resourcing when a disability diagnosis is made for a child/student?

No. A diagnosis such as Autism or Developmental Language disorder does not mean that additional resourcing will automatically be required. As a functional needs funding allocation model, the allocation of any additional resourcing is based on evidence of the required adjustments identified as part of the personalised learning process being above what would be expected as part of a quality differentiated teaching program (QDTP).

5. When might a student's personalised learning plan indicate the need to consider additional resourcing?

Additional resourcing may be considered when the adjustments included in the student's personalised learning plan reflect a level of adjustment over and above QDTP (refer to the National Consistent Collection of Data).

The **IESP site grant** is provided directly to sites (as part of the overall IESP funding) for their autonomous professional management. The parameters for use of this grant is to implement the adjustments documented for students with communication and learning difficulties. This grant also provides the capacity for support when exploring the needs of newly enrolled students with immediate curriculum access support needs. Schools are provided with a range of resources in addition to IESP that support both whole school development of QDTP and supplementary approaches (i.e. wellbeing support, EALD).

Schools can submit an **online application for a category 1-9 level of resourcing** when the documented personalised learning plan for a student indicates eligibility for inclusion against one of the category areas and a need for resourcing above what can be provided through QDTP.

Preschools can submit an online application for extensive adjustment resourcing when the documented personalised learning plan for a child indicates extensive adjustments being provided 8 or more hours per week. The site's IESP grant is provided to support under 8hpw.

6. What are the key elements of a personalised learning plan?

The adjustments in a child/student's personalised learning plan should be directly linked to their identified functional needs (i.e. the specific skill development to support the student's overall wellbeing and engagement in learning) and the documentation should include a description of the actions of the adult (what they're doing, the frequency and intensity) and the anticipated growth/impact/improvement. Please refer to the NCCD portal for information about the expected *personalised learning process*.

A **REVIEW** application should show evidence of REVIEW, including goals achieved, progress notes, changes to program, updated data/assessments/observations/specialist notes that inform understanding of current needs.

7. **What needs to happen when there is a change in Eligibility Status (i.e. no longer eligible or a change in criteria) for students currently included in the IESP?**

Where updated information about a student's functional needs and/or diagnosis of a disability becomes known and where there are queries as to whether they continue to meet one of the components for eligibility (i.e. the diagnostic component or functional needs) or meets components for a different eligibility criteria (e.g. Autism assessment), the site contacts the IESP team via Education.IESP@sa.gov.au to enable a determination to be made in relation to the student's eligibility status and/or their category of funding review date.

With the introduction of the new eligibility review date as part of the IESP, sites will need to provide the most current supporting evidence in support of how the student continues to meet the eligibility criteria. If you are unclear about the eligibility review date for a student please contact Education.IESP@sa.gov.au.

Note: When a student is entering/exiting a special options setting as a result of a change in their impairment category (e.g. newly diagnosed intellectual disability or where a diagnosis of intellectual disability is no longer current), this process MUST be completed as this has specific resourcing implications.

In the case of a parent/caregiver request for withdrawal of eligibility status for a student, the school needs to email the request to Education.IESP@sa.gov.au.

8. **How do panels determine what category of funding is allocated to each student?**

The state-wide centralised panel moderates each application, reviewing the level of adjustments described in the personalised learning plan(s) which are congruent with the identified functional needs. When determining the level of adjustments, the panel utilises the Level of Adjustment Matrix (which is based on the NCCD Levels of Adjustment Descriptors) to assess and moderate applications.

9. **Is there specific language or approaches schools need to use in their documentation?**

No. There is no secret language or preferred approaches.

The panel utilise the Level of Adjustment Matrix and the Eligibility Criteria to assist in determining eligibility and allocation of resourcing. The panel will be looking for evidence of how the site are demonstrating the personalisation of learning for the child/student. This includes understanding of the functional needs of the child/student (informed by quality information/data/processes/specialists) and about how the adjustments will meet those functional needs (what the adults will do).

Approaches and adjustments implemented to meet functional needs should be evidence-based/research-informed, and maintain efficacy of the original program/strategy (be delivered in a manner recommended by the research/evidence) and be designed to promote development of skills/abilities to increase independent engagement and be inclusive in design. This includes consideration of the frequency and duration of intervention activities.

10. **Do personalised plans need to have SMARTAR goals?**

There should be clarity about how teachers will know that the adjustments are meeting the student's functional needs and indication of how this will be tracked or measured. Quality goals assist in reviewing and adjusting personalised plans to ensure best outcomes for students.

11. **Can I appeal decisions made by the state-wide centralised panel?**

Yes.

Appeal re: eligibility – where an application has been declined as it has not met eligibility criteria (i.e. key diagnostic documentation has not been included), email a copy of the documentation to Education.IESPapply@sa.gov.au for further advice.

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Appeal re: category – given that each application is assessed by a minimum of 3 independent panellists, it is unlikely that an appeal would be upheld in regard to the resourcing allocation. Schools are encouraged to utilise the feedback provided in the outcome email. The school may also choose to connect with SSS staff to review functional needs and adjustments, and/or the IESP team Education.IESP@sa.gov.au to seek further feedback about the application. The school may then update their documentation accordingly and reapply through the online portal to be considered at a future panel.

12. What if a site considers a student's needs are high level and immediate and a resource allocation needs to occur before the next centralised panel?

Immediate support can be provided via *site funds* or *the site IESP Grant* while a funding application is generated and submitted to the IESP state-wide centralised panel.

Alternatively, contact can be made with the IESP Implementation team via Education.IESPapply@sa.gov.au where an assessment of the extenuating circumstances can be made. Where required, an 'out of process' approval can be actioned. In all instances, an online application will need to be completed, including information detailing how the resourcing will support the student's functional needs and the adjustments required to be implemented which are above QDTP.

13. Will retrospective requests for additional resourcing be considered by the state-wide centralised panel?

No. Centralised panels are held twice termly and as such resourcing allocation will be calculated to start the week following each panel.

Where an extenuating circumstance exists, sites should contact the IESP Implementation team via Education.IESPapply@sa.gov.au so that an *urgent out-of-process application* may be considered.

14. Can my local Student Support Services (SSS) provider (i.e. speech pathologist, social worker, special educator, etc) allocate funding directly to a student at my site?

Other than those local education offices that manage a Country in Lieu budget, no other funding can be allocated by SSS staff.

SSS play a vital role in understanding functional need & planning to meet identified functional needs.

15. What will be the process for students to be considered for a special options placement?

Existing special options placement processes will remain until advised otherwise. This includes the completion of an SEO1/B/T form by SSS staff need to clearly identify which impairment type has been identified by the educational psychologist for determining eligibility for inclusion in the special options setting. No EDO40 forms need to be completed as part of the special options process.

16. What does the review date for a student mean?

Every child or student allocated a funded resource is assigned a review date, which indicates the date on which the resourcing *ends*. In order to ensure resourcing continues where this may be required, the site will need to submit their review application **before** the review date, in accordance with the panel submission due date. The site submit an application for a review of the resource allocation any time prior to the review date.

Note: where the panel has made a "Split funding" allocation (e.g. resourcing allocation changes over the set period of time), there will be two review dates, one for each resourcing allocation. These are listed in the school report under "Additional and Future Funding".

Note: where the functional needs of the child/student significantly change before the review date, sites can submit an online application at any time and provide the updated personalised planning information to support this request.

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17. How is a 'review date' different from an 'eligibility review date'?

The *review date* refers to the period an approved additional resourcing has been allocated (see FAQ re: review date).

The **'eligibility review date'** is the date the centralised panel is seeking *current evidence of* eligibility for inclusion in the IESP for a funded level of resourcing against a minimum of one category area. Eligibility review dates vary according to the underlying diagnostic/functional needs of the student. Where the eligibility category is due to underlying functional need which is *highly unlikely to change* over time (i.e. intellectual disability) then the eligibility review date will reflect this.

18. If a review date lapses, do I submit a new or review application?

In this situation a new application will need to be submitted by the site.

19. If I'm submitting a review application do I need to include eligibility criteria documentation?

When submitting a review application you will not need to provide the eligibility evidence, only the *functional needs* and *adjustments* as per the personalised learning process.

When seeking further funded resourcing (review application), as per the monitor and review part of the personalised learning process, please include evidence of the response to the adjustments and interventions implemented with the previous resourcing.

20. What if a child's needs change during the allocated resourcing period and they need an adjustment to funded resourcing or no longer need the resourcing that has been allocated?

A continuation of existing, increase or decrease in resourcing is requested through a review application utilising the online application process any time prior to the review date.

If resourcing is no longer required, email details to Education.IESP@sa.gov.au so that this can be adjusted and updated with finance.

21. What has happened to students who received an A level of support in 2018?

All mainstream students who were grandfathered into the IESP with an 'A' level of support at the beginning of 2019 (and are listed in SWD report as Mainstream A) have a funding review date of 11/12/2020.

It is anticipated that many of these students' needs will be met through QDTP or the school's IESP grant. This will be guided by the school's regular review of all student's personalised learning plans.

If the updated personalised learning plan reflects a level of adjustment over and above QDTP and sit outside of the targeted use of the site IESP grant, the site may choose to submit an online application for a consideration by the panel for a category of funded support.

In 2021, any Mainstream A resourcing not translated into categories of support will be redistributed across the state into school IESP Grants. *Sites with more than 20 Mainstream A will be contacted during T2&3 2020.*

22. I have a high number of review dates set for the end of 2020, can these be extended?

There have been a range of review date extensions provided due to COVID19 – these should be reflected in your database. Planning for how to best manage your reviews relates to the personalised learning processes at your site. Consider where the current review points are in your site and how these can be utilised to support updating of plans (as covered by the IESP).

If you regularly review what you do and update your planning-documents accordingly, utilising the IESP online portal to request continuation of resourcing for students should not be arduous, and should be part of your already established quality review processes.

All plans submitted as part of a Review application, **should show evidence of review** – the goals achieved, progress notes, changes to program, updated data/assessments/observations/specialist notes that inform understanding of current functional need.

23. What do I do if a student is accessing category 1-9 resourcing and they transfer to another site?

The school that currently holds the resource emails Education.IESP@sa.gov.au detailing the student's name, EDID, the date they have left the school and the commencement date at the new school. Resourcing attached to the student will be transferred to the new site accordingly.

Where a student moves during a funding period, the enrolling site may need to invoice the previous site for costs incurred during the 2 or 3 weeks that the student is attending prior to the funding being available in the next funding period. There are 8 funding periods during the year and these currently align with the centralised panel dates.

24. Are there staff available to help sites with the implementation of the IESP within Personalised Learning (i.e. identification of needs, types of adjustment, completing an application, use of the matrix, etc)?

Yes. There are a range of services available to assist with elements of Personalised Learning, depending upon site need; including SSS, NCCD, One Plan and IESP teams. If you are unsure of which support option may be best suited to the site need, contact the IESP team Education.IESP@sa.gov.au to discuss.

Upcoming training opportunities specifically related to IESP will be advertised through PLINK, LinkEd and through the Inclusive Education Support Program PLC team's page on office 365. Search for Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP) PLC, request to join by emailing the Education.IESP@sa.gov.au to receive code.

25. Are there automatic categories provided for students moving between settings (e.g. special options and mainstream settings, preschool to school transition)?

Ideally transition between settings is planned in advance and where an adjustment to any additional resourcing is required, funding applications may be submitted by the receiving setting to support personalised plan establishment in the new context.

Where the transition is between two similar contexts (e.g. mainstream to mainstream), then any current allocation additional resourcing will transfer to the new setting.

Some transition processes have been managed by data collection and short term allocation of a category of support (i.e. preschool to school transition spreadsheet). Contact Education.IESP@sa.gov.au if you require advice about a student moving between these different settings.

26. What if a student is eligible for a special education option curriculum, can they get an automatic category of funding?

What if a student is eligible for a special education option curriculum, can they get an automatic category of funding?

There are currently IESP business rules that enable an automatic IESP funding allocation to be made for students who have been recommended for a special option curriculum and have had their needs and adjustments assessed via a regional special options placement panel. Automatic allocations can also be accessed by students who have been attending a special education option setting and have been unable to be placed in the most recent special education options placement panel or are exiting that option at the end of the school year as a result of no longer being eligible. Allocations are provided for two terms without the site having to apply for this funding, to enable sites to gather and analyse evidence, identify needs, adjustments and goals and document these in an updated personalised plan in the new setting. After two terms, sites need to submit a review application to the IESP centralised panel, requesting a longer term allocation.

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The business rules have been in place since the new model was introduced in January 2019 and are as follows:

Setting and recommendation type	Automatic Category of funding (2 terms from commencement in mainstream context)
Preschool to school with a disability unit or special school recommendation	8
Preschool to school with a special class recommendation	5
School age student unable to be placed with a special class recommendation	5
School age student unable to be placed with a disability unit or special school recommendation	8
Exiting a primary or secondary special option with a special class recommendation	5
Exiting a primary or secondary special option with a disability unit or special school recommendation	8
Exiting a specialised education option as no longer eligible	3 where previously special class recommended and 5 where previously special school/disability unit recommended
Exiting a Speech and Language Class, Speech and Language program or Arrowsmith Program into mainstream	1

The business rules above do not however apply to any student who is assessed and recommended for a special education option. They also do not apply to a student who is deemed ineligible for continuation in a special education option during the school year as schools will continue the student's placement in the option and then support a planned transition to the mainstream setting. Following collation and analysis of data and updating of the student's personalised plan, an IESP application may be considered where evidence, needs and adjustments are beyond what is expected to be provided via wave 1 and 2 interventions and the student meets IESP eligibility criteria.

27. What if our site wants to submit a group application via the online application?

Where adjustments are being provided in a group setting, individual student personalised plans will need to reflect this. That is, adjustments being provided in the group setting will need to be articulated in the plan stating the skill building to address functional needs and the adjustments being provided (including the frequency, duration and intensity of this support and how many students are in the group). An email should also be sent to Education.IESPappply@sa.gov.au to alert the panel to the names of students who are in the group application. This will enable the application to be assessed as a group once all applications are received.

28. Can we have exemplars of applications representing each category of support?

No, as any allocation of additional resourcing is based on the *personalised learning support* documented for individual children/students. A personalised learning mapping document has been developed to assist preschools/schools in exploring congruence between functional needs and adjustments as part of the overall

personalised learning process. There are also resources available to assist in understanding functional needs and adjustments on the intranet page and MS Teams page (will become available during late Term 2).

The intention is for current site-based processes that support personalised learning (including use of One Plan, safety and risk planning, health care plans) to inform your documentation. The Level of Adjustment Matrix provides additional information about the types of adjustments across a range of domains and levels, while the Eligibility Criteria provides guidance as to the types of documentation that may be provided.

29. Do students have to be referred to SSS in order to progress an application for resourcing via IESP?

No. Referral to SSS is not a prerequisite for submitting an application for a category of funded support.

However, SSS provide a valuable resource for assisting preschools and schools to understand the *functional needs* of the child/student and best practice advice for designing the *interventions and adjustments* as part of the student's personalised learning plan. Information from SSS (or other providers) may contribute to the diagnostic and/or functional needs evidence submitted as part of an online application.

30. Do I need Student Support Services endorsement to submit an application to the centralised panel?

No. Current referral or active case management by SSS is not a prerequisite for an online application to be submitted. For students where there is involvement from SSS staff (or other specialists), prior to an application being submitted, this information may be used to form part of the evidence to support the application.

31. Do I need parent/caregiver permission to submit an application for a category of support?

No. However, parents/caregivers should be involved in the development of the personalised plan and should be aware of when an application is being submitted. Note: parent/caregiver permission continues to be required for engaging SSS.

32. Which students are eligible for inclusion in the IESP?

The criteria for eligibility has been developed in line with the DDA and can be viewed in this document.

33. Do all students who meet eligibility criteria, require a category of funded support?

No. While a specific diagnosis may be made in relation to a child/student, additional resourcing may only be required when the adjustments included in the student's personalised learning plan reflect a level of adjustment over and above QDTP (refer to the National Consistent Collection of Data).

34. Which students should be accessing the IESP Grant and what can the grant be used for?

The **IESP site grant** is provided directly to sites (as part of the overall IESP funding) for their autonomous professional management. The parameters for use of this grant is to implement the adjustments documented for students with communication and learning difficulties. This grant also provides the capacity for support when exploring the needs of newly enrolled students with immediate curriculum access support needs. Schools are provided with a range of resources in addition to IESP that support both whole school development of QDTP and supplementary approaches (i.e. wellbeing support, EALD).

The IESP Grant (formerly known as the Learning Difficulties Grant) can be used in a range of ways to support student learning as well as ensuring teachers have a reasonable and fair workload. Information about access to and use of the IESP Grant can be found in the PAC handbook, RES notes and the eligibility criteria.

The IESP is one of many departmental provisions and programs that support the additional needs of students with disability and learning difficulties. As such, schools should consider which provision/program is most appropriate in relation to implementation of the required adjustments for the student concerned (i.e. EALD program and funding, Literacy and Numeracy First funding, Better Schools Funding, Flexible Learning Options funding, IESP funding).

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Eligibility criteria information does not need to be provided to the IESP team for students accessing the IESP grant – eligibility information is only required as part of an application through the central panel.

35. How do I code students in EDSAS if they are accessing IESP Grant funds?

There will be no enhancements made to EDSAS due to the development of EMS. Therefore, as an interim measure you will need to do the following for students who are accessing IESP Grant funds:

In the *'referred by' field*, select one of the service providers that are listed in the drop menu, (e.g. Special Educator, Behaviour Coach, Speech Pathologist, Psychologist). Please select one, regardless of whether they have or have not been referred to SSS.

In the *'disability' field*, enter the most relevant need for the student. Then enter 'P' to indicate that the student is accessing the IESP Grant.

The site should also record in the student's personalised plan the types of adjustment being provided to the student via IESP Grant funds (i.e. what an adult is doing with the student in addition to their everyday class program). Frequency and duration of supports should be articulated as well as outcomes achieved in order to measure the success or otherwise of the interventions being implemented.

For further information about coding of students with disability in EDSAS, please refer to page 26 of the 2020 Data Dictionary Guidelines.

36. Can I code students in EDSAS who meet a particular eligibility criteria, but have their needs met through quality differentiated teaching practice (QDTP)?

No. This information may be held locally in the student file, reported on through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD), or included in One Plans (personalised plans) if relevant.

These students do not appear on your SWD report as they are not accessing IESP categories or the site's IESP grant.

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