

Participant guidelines: Beyond the Line Program

The NSW Department of Education's Beyond the Line Program supports second and third-year Bachelor of Education and Master of Teaching students to travel with the department to experience teaching at selected regional, rural and remote NSW public schools. Students participating in the week-long trip engage with the local community as well as gain valuable insights from teachers in regional, rural and remote NSW schools.

Successful applicants will be encouraged and supported to complete a future rural practicum through the [Rural Professional Experience Program](#), or to commence employment in a rural setting following graduation.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible for the Beyond the Line Program, participants must be:

- an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- a domestic student currently completing your second or third year of a Bachelor of Education degree or your Master of Teaching degree at a recognised university or tertiary institution in New South Wales. Your studies will need to meet the department's and NESA's [academic requirements](#) for employment as a teacher
- hold a valid Working With Children Check
- complete and return to Beyondtheline@det.nsw.edu.au a [Declaration for Child related work](#)
- complete Practicum application – see link (<https://online.education.nsw.gov.au/jecpc/crc/wwcc.jsf>)
- willing to complete a [rural practicum](#) during their final year of study
- willing to explore the [benefits and incentives](#) of teaching in [rural and remote](#) locations upon completion of initial teacher education studies, including

opportunities in inland southern, inland northern and western NSW public schools

- Not have pre-arranged employment in a non-government school after the completion of your final professional experience placement.
- hold English language proficiency that is of a standard which would enable them to teach and interact effectively and confidently in a NSW public school.

2. Selection

Participating teacher education students are selected on the basis of subject area, year of completion of study, interest/willingness to teach in non-coastal rural staffing areas and commitment to a career in public education. The selection process will consider staffing priorities (e.g. prioritise applicants studying in subject areas of high-demand). If selected, participants will be required to have their University endorse their participation in the program by confirming academic suitability.

3. Visit arrangements

The visit will be conducted in accordance with the WH&S Act, which notes that everyone has a duty of care, a responsibility, to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that they and other people are safe in the workplace. Instruction and supervision will be provided as required.

Costs. Costs for transport, accommodation and school visits will be covered by the NSW Department of Education.

Meals. Participants will be provided with breakfast, lunch and dinner for each day they are on the tour, with the exception of day 5. On day 5, dinner will not be provided as the coach will return to Parramatta state office by 7:00pm (AEDT). Any additional expenditure will need to be covered by the participant.

Transport. Any coaches used will be required to have a suitable risk management plan. Incidents associated with the transport will be referred back to the transport

provider.

Accommodation. Accommodation will be selected with reasonable amenities. Room allocations will be organised on a shared basis of minimum two participants per room. Participants are responsible for bringing their own personal items as required (eg, toiletries, medication). Incidents associated with accommodation will be referred back to the accommodation provider.

Health. Participant's health incidents will be managed through local healthcare providers.

School visits. School inductions will occur as appropriate. The role of participants will be to observe and provide general classroom assistance, consequently participants do not need to bring teaching resources. Any incidents that occur during a school visit as a result of the department's negligence will be covered by its general liability insurance. The department does not provide general accident or medical insurance. Participants should consider whether to take out their own general medical insurance for any unforeseeable accidents.

4. Participant responsibilities

General. Participants accept these responsibilities:

- notify in writing the Beyond the Line team (and their University's Professional Experience Coordinator as required) of changes to their availability by supplying a reason and supporting evidence such as a medical certificate – being mindful that cancellations create a costly inconvenience for all stakeholders involved.
- engage in conduct throughout the experience that is consistent with a professional approach and the NSW Department of Education's [Code of Conduct](#).
- act ethically and responsibly at all times.
- be responsible for their own health and safety, particularly outside of school visit hours. emergency services should be contacted first. If a medical event will affect participant's participating in the program, then they should let NSW Department of Education staff know

- follow reasonable instructions given by any NSW Department of Education staff members.
- be courteous and responsive in dealings with co-participants, NSW Department of Education staff members and members of the public.
- work collaboratively and harmoniously with participants on the program.
- be mindful of the safety of themselves and others, including school students.
- not undertake any illegal or unsafe actions, including illegal and/or unsafe use of drugs.
- not consume alcohol on NSW Department of Education premises at any time, nor during working or travelling hours, nor in excess at any other time while on the Beyond the Line program.
- not smoke in any NSW Department of Education buildings, enclosed areas or on department grounds. This includes all buildings, gardens, sports fields, car parks and transport.
- activities outside of working and travelling hours will be at the participant's discretion and at their own risk.
- be mindful that participants should dress neatly and professionally, with the expected dress to be in line with [Code of Conduct](#).

Accommodation. Participants accept the following responsibilities:

- No participants or facilitators are to enter another person's room without the expressed permission of the room occupants. The exceptions to this are emergency situations, inspection of rooms or complaints received by the NSW Department of Education program team which require immediate action.
- All in-room expenses including damage to property will be the responsibility of the occupants and expenses incurred in addition to the overnight stay will be paid for by the occupant/s before check-out. This is not negotiable. e.g. bar charges, breakfast (if explicitly advised by the NSW Department of Education program team that it is not included in the accommodation arrangements), chargeback facilities from local vendors, telephone charges, entertainment/television charges or Internet/ Wi-Fi charges.
- If, after check-out, the accommodation provider reports damage to their property suspected to be caused by the occupant/s, this will not be covered by the NSW Department of Education. **The occupant/s contact details will be provided to the accommodation provider for their further action.**

Feedback and social media. The program values participant observations and insights during the immersion in rural schools and lifestyles. Participants must use social media responsibly and must not post/upload messages that are in any way harassing, defamatory, threatening, abusive or obscene, or could otherwise cause upset to others involved in the program, or to any staff member or member of the community in line with the NSW Department of Education's [social media policy](#). Participants are to use social media in a positive way to outline positive experiences, which may then be used to assist in attracting future Beyond the Line participants. Participants will:

- ensure there are no images or videos of students, school staff or parents.
- choose self-shots and scenes that best represent their experience.
- remember they are valued guests in the school community, and as such, should be positive and highlight strengths.
- consider (before uploading) that photos, videos and comments will be public and will be shared, linked, retweeted and recorded for posterity.

Participants will help create a Beyond the Line digital community – which aims to connect participants, host schools and Teach NSW representatives through social media.

Participants are encouraged to thoughtfully and creatively share their experiences and learnings via public photos or videos (i.e. stories/reels) linked to Teach NSW's social media platforms. Participants can share their new experiences, learnings or insights by tagging or mentioning #teachNSW on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Other feedback requirements include completing the online program evaluation prior to departing Parramatta State Office on Day 5.

Participant emergency and incident reporting procedures. These are to be used by participants if an emergency, accident or incident occurs in connection with the Beyond the Line program.

- The NSW Department of Education has [Emergency Management Guidelines and an Incident Reporting Policy](#) to indicate what schools and their staff should do if a serious accident or illness or death should occur on site or on an excursion.

- When an emergency or serious incident occurs, contact local emergency services, such as police or ambulance on 000 (triple zero), as a matter of priority.
- Beyond the Line participants should report the incident as a matter of priority to the NSW Department of Education staff member, who is responsible for implementing the NSW Department of Education's Incident Reporting Policy.

COVID-19 advice. The NSW Department of Education's COVID-smart measures were developed to minimise in-school transmission and current COVID-19 advice recommends anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 or who is attending an overnight excursion undertake a rapid antigen test (RAT) prior to departure (test kits will be made available at 105 Phillip Street, Parramatta). Other COVID-smart measures include staying home if unwell, even if with mild symptoms, and maintaining good hygiene practices.

Due to the extended family connections in both rural and remote communities, it is essential that anyone travelling to these areas follow the department's COVID-smart measures. It is also expected that the University COVID-safe protocol be adhered to. NSW Department of Education staff will carry rapid antigen tests and face masks throughout the duration of the Beyond the Line community visit for any participants who are feeling unwell or displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

Should a participant return a positive result for COVID-19 on a rapid antigen test within 24-hours of departure they will be unable to attend the Beyond the Line study tour and will be responsible for organising their own travel arrangements home. Should a participant start showing symptoms of COVID-19 throughout the duration of the program and return a positive result on a rapid antigen test, participants will have arrangements made for them to be taken home.