

Student Supervisor Document – NSW Department of Education

Version 2 – 16 April 2021

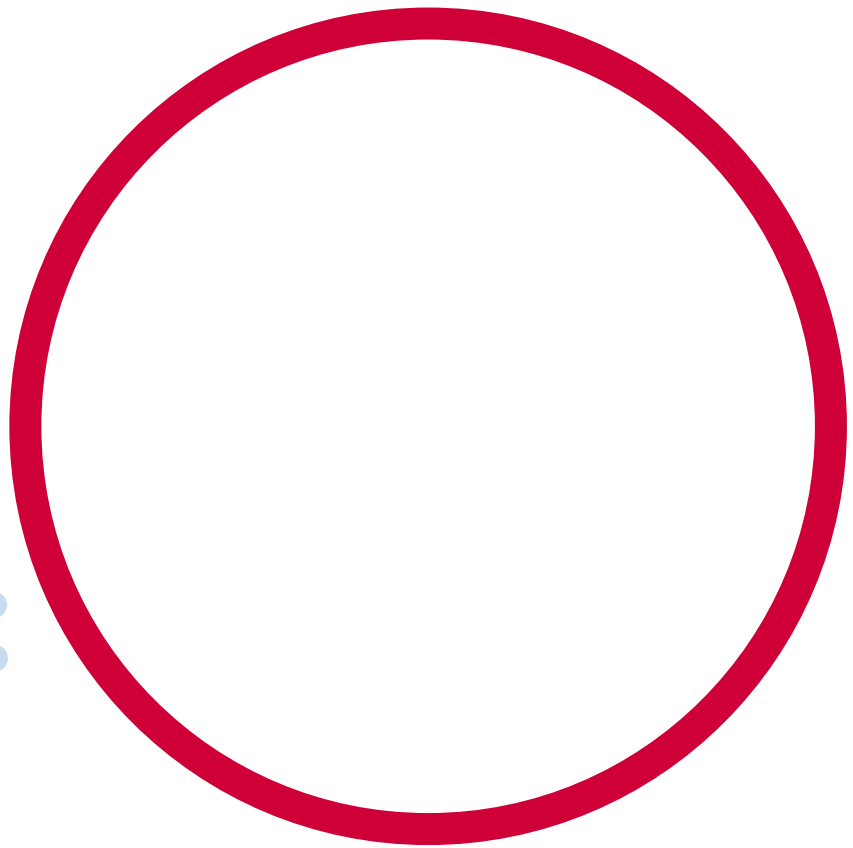
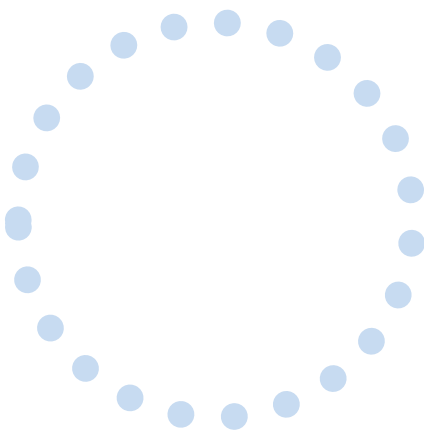
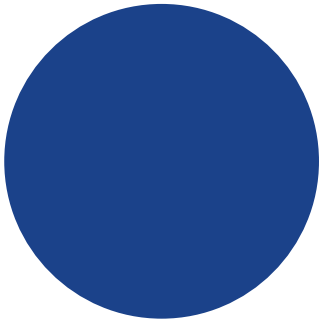


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Resource introduction

This resource includes information to assist supervisors of students undertaking distance education.

The document has been designed in consultation with distance education teachers across NSW Department of Education schools. The contents of the document provides support to supervisors of students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure information in this document is accurate, it is advised that supervisors and students in distance education make regular contact with their enrolled school for information regarding specific learning programs and local policies.

1. Being a supervisor

1.1 Supervision requirements

A distance education supervisor is usually the person who has day to day contact with the student who is undertaking distance education.

Supervisors are usually the parents of children studying subjects through distance education. Supervisors are required to work with teachers to support students undertaking their learning programs. If a supervisor wishes to modify or create their own learning program they must contact the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for more information.

As students undertake their distance education studies, it is important that supervisors support the students in order to achieve success. It is essential that students complete all allocated learning tasks in order to satisfy NESA requirements for the award of the Record of Student Achievement (RoSA) or Higher School Certificate (HSC).

The guidelines listed below provide a checklist of important information that supervisors should consider in their support of students in distance education.

What can I do?

- Provide a suitable location for students to study and complete tasks. Consider things such as lighting, furniture and access to technology such as computers and the internet.
- Be in regular contact with the student and the distance education school. How you contact the school may vary according to which distance education school the student is enrolled at, but typically will involve telephone, email or other electronic means.
- Develop a timetable of work that involves set times to complete learning tasks assigned by the teacher.
- Ensure you provide active supervision to the student whilst they are studying. This includes answering possible questions that may arise or connecting students to someone else that can help.
- Support and encourage students to complete their work according to their timetable.
- Monitor the regular submission of work. Ensure this work is returned to the relevant teacher according to their requirements.
- Explain instructions provided by the distance education teacher regarding lessons and learning materials.
- Ensure students are participating in online lessons and practical tasks provided by the distance education school.

- ❑ Keep the distance education school informed of absences, illnesses or changes to the student's situation that are likely to impact on their ability to complete learning tasks.
- ❑ Provide appropriate space for examinations and to complete assessment tasks.
- ❑ Help students connect to their Student Portal (provided by the NSW Department of Education) to access emails and other e-learning support materials.

What if I need a translator or interpreter?

The NSW Department of Education provides a translation service.

Using an interpreter can ensure that students (and parents/ carers) can understand the learning programs and activities that are taking place in their child's school. An interpreter:

- can help the parent/ student express sensitive matters confidently using their native language
- help explain technical terms related to the child's education that may not be understood by cultures outside of Australia
- explain legal and carer obligations that are written into Australian law.

What types of interpreting services are available by the Department of Education?

Interpreting services are used by the NSW Department of Education for a number of different purposes. The services include:

- telephone interpreters - typically used to organise meetings and can be accessed in a short period of time
- on-site interpreters - can be used for extended meetings and complex issues that are known well ahead of time. Personnel are able to provide assistance to families with a background other than English as well as parents who may either be deaf or hearing impaired.

Who pays for the interpreter service?

For the majority of cases, the NSW Department of Education will meet the costs associated with a translation service. Examples where the costs may be met include:

- matters related to a student's enrolment or reporting on student progress (including welfare and behaviour)
- interviews with staff at a school (such as the principal, year advisor or school counsellor)
- meetings (including parent-teacher evenings)
- subject and course information evenings.

Accessing any interpreting service should be discussed between the supervisor and the school.

1.2 Issues facing supervisors

As a supervisor, issues may arise in regard to the student and their work, accessing resources or their wellbeing.

The following issues may be of concern. With each issue are some guidelines to assist in resolving the problem. In all cases, issues that arise with the student should be discussed with the students' teacher or the distance education school.

Learning issues

My student is not completing the required work?

Each distance education school will require students to maintain regular contact with their teachers to complete lessons and access learning materials. If a student does not submit required tasks, the relevant teacher will make contact with the supervisor to ensure they are informed about these matters. The supervisor should also be aware that each school will have an assessment task policy which will be implemented in times where a student does not undertake compulsory learning tasks. Ensuring that students complete all necessary work is a requirement of NESAs, where schools must certify that each enrolled student completes course requirements.

How do I locate information about different subjects?

Each subject has a syllabus which explains the details of what is to be studied in each course. It is important that all students, particularly those undertaking Year 11 and 12 subjects, are aware of how to access their syllabuses to aid their own revision. The NESAs website includes information related to learning requirements and outcomes that are addressed throughout each course. Included on the [NESAs website](#) is a relevant student and parent guide that features information on relevant topics such as subject selection, school transitioning and how to access information in the syllabuses.

How do I log in and see online learning materials?

Each distance education school will have different methods for delivering and returning student learning tasks. Information regarding how to access learning materials will be provided by the school upon the student's enrolment. Supervisors should attempt to email or call the relevant teacher if there are ongoing issues with accessing learning materials. It

is important that contact is made early to avoid any issues with non-completion of learning tasks.

How do I find information on assessments and school policies?

Each distance education school will have different assessment task procedures that are used by teachers and students. Supervisors should contact the school that their student is enrolled in to find out about the correct procedures. Assessment procedures may also be different depending upon whether the student is enrolled in primary or secondary school.

What should I do when my student says the work is too difficult?

If a student is regularly experiencing difficulties with their learning they should always contact the relevant teacher. Supervisors need to ensure the student maintains a record of any questions or concerns they experience to help their teacher understand the nature of the concern. These questions will also guide the teacher's approach to explaining the learning tasks whilst also connecting students to resources to support them with their study.

What is the difference between distance education and home schooling?

In distance education, the school and teacher are responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating student learning programs. The parent or supervisor is available to meet child care and protection requirements and support the child to complete the learning programs developed by the distance education school. In home schooling, parents/ carers develop their own teaching and learning programs and become registered with NESA for home schooling.

Resourcing issues

How do I get help with technology?

In the first instance, it is recommended that the supervisor contacts the distance education school directly if they are having trouble accessing resources or using technology. Schools use a variety of internet based programs such as Google Apps, Microsoft Office 365, Moodle and Canvas. It is advised that supervisors contact the school before the student commences their study to seek any support manuals or guidelines they have available for the learning technology they are using.

How do I develop a work and study timetable for my student?

It is important to remember that the role of the supervisor is to ensure that the student maintains a regular routine of undertaking and completing learning tasks issued by their teachers. To do this, the supervisor should work with the student to develop a timetable that includes set times to complete the learning tasks issued for the week. Find below examples of a primary or secondary timetable.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:45 - 9:00am	PDHPE	PDHPE	PDHPE	PDHPE	PDHPE
9:00 - 11:00am	English	English	English	English	English
11:00 - 11:30am	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
11:30 - 12:30pm	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
12:30 - 1:00pm	Extra Activities	Extra Activities	Extra Activities	Extra Activities	Extra Activities
1:00 - 2:00pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2:00 - 3:00pm	HSIE	Sci/Tech	Art/Music	PDHPE	PDHPE

Primary school timetable

Primary school timetable considerations:

- English (handwriting, spelling, reading and specific programs) = two (2) hours per day (approximately)
- Mathematics = one (1) hour per day (approximately)

- Human Society and its Environment (HSIE); Science and Technology (Sci/Tech); Creative Arts (CA); Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) = five to seven (5 to 7) hours per week.

Secondary school timetable

Time	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	Mode	Course	Mode	Course	Mode	Course	Mode	Course	Mode	Course
8:00am						PDHPE		English		Technology
8:30am						PDHPE		English		Technology
9:00am		English		Science		Technology		History		Language
9:30am		English		Science		Technology		History		Language
10:00am		Mathematics				BREAK				BREAK
10:30am		Mathematics		Mathematics		Creative Arts				English
11:00am		BREAK		Mathematics		Creative Arts		Creative Arts		English
11:30am		Science		BREAK		Science		Creative Arts		Commerce
12:00pm		Science		History				BREAK		BREAK
12:30pm		History		History		BREAK		Mathematics		BREAK
1:00pm		History		BREAK		BREAK		Mathematics		Commerce
1:30pm		BREAK		BREAK		Mathematics		Language		
2:00pm		BREAK		PDHPE		Mathematics		Language		Science
2:30pm		Commerce		PDHPE				Science		Science
3:00pm		Commerce		English						
3:30pm				English						

Secondary school timetable considerations:

Secondary school students will be required to participate in a number of subjects that are delivered by different teachers during their enrolment in distance education.

These subjects may be delivered using various modes and formats. These might include:

- Satellite
- Phone lesson
- Teleconference
- Adobe Connect
- Moodle
- Skype
- Canvas.

A secondary student normally receives a course breakdown of subjects/topics they will cover for each subject. This is particularly important in Year 11 and 12 to help students understand when a formal assessment task will take place and why they will receive a task notification.

Below is an example of a course overview for a Year 12 student for one (1) school term.

Year 12 HSC Advanced English - Course Structure Overview

Dates	Term Week	Year Week	Topic
Term 4 (2020)			
9/10/2020	1	1	Introduction to Advanced English
16/10/2020	2	2	Common Module: Reading to Write
23/10/2020	3	3	Common Module: Reading to Write
30/10/2020	4	4	Common Module: Reading to Write
6/11/2020	5	5	Common Module: Reading to Write
13/11/2020	6	6	Common Module: Reading to Write
20/11/2020	7	7	Common Module: Reading to Write
27/11/2020	8	8	Assessment Task 1
4/12/2020	9	9	Common Module: Reading to Write
11/12/2020	10	10	Common Module: Reading to Write

What textbooks do I need and how can I get these?

Each student, upon enrolling in a distance education school, will be told what learning materials they will need for each of their subjects. If a supervisor or student is unsure of what materials they need it is important that they contact the distance education school as soon as possible.

Wellbeing issues

What do I do when it is time for my student to leave distance education and return to the local school?

In most cases, a transition management plan will have been developed by both the distance education school, the local school and the Delivery Support team before the student was able to enrol in distance education. It is important that the student, school and supervisor review this plan to understand what support will be required to aid the transition back to the local school.

What do I do if my student is falling behind in their learning due to illness?

The supervisor should keep a record of when their student undertakes work to assess their learning engagement. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to monitor student participation and to advise the school if a student is ill. Evidence such as a doctor's certificate may be required if a student experiences ill health over a long period of time.

For students completing Years 11 or 12, an 'Illness/Misadventure Form' may be required in the case that a student is not able to complete an assessment task, exam or has not completed substantial tasks as part of their learning in a subject. In this case, the student may need to discuss with the school an application to receive special consideration and to prevent risking an N-award for their course.

What support is available for my student who is unhappy?

The changing environment and circumstances in a student's life may lead them to experience some unhappiness during their schooling years. However, there are many options available to support students and to provide the supervisor with strategies to monitor health and wellbeing. These strategies can be sought through making contact with the Head Teacher Wellbeing at the distance education school where your student is enrolled. Alternatively, you may need to contact the principal in more extreme circumstances where you believe a student's wellbeing is at an immediate or significant risk. In any case, maintaining regular contact with the school will enable the student to receive appropriate support.

What should I do if my student's address has changed?

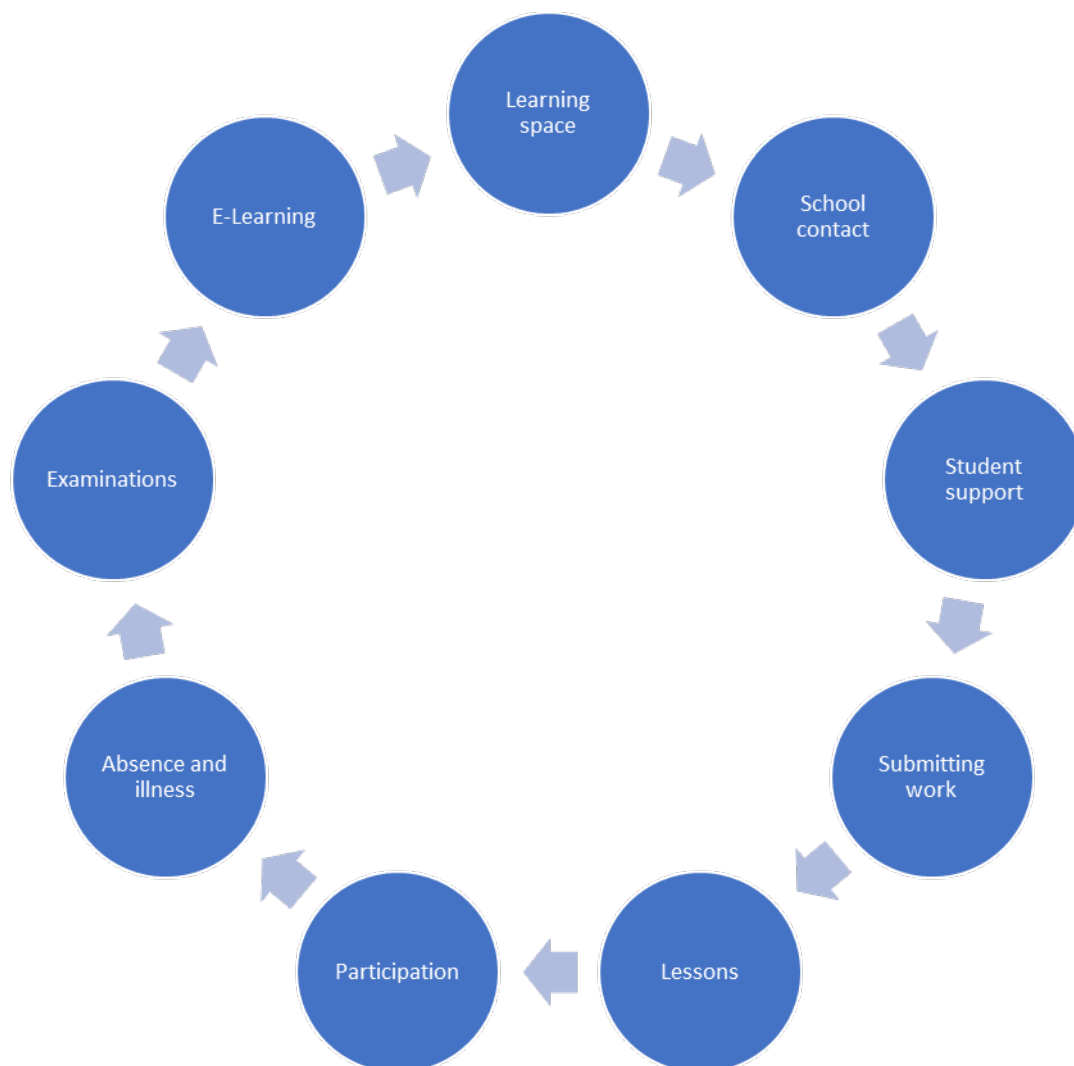
A student's enrolment in a distance education school is subject to periodic review. Therefore, in the case where a student moves to a new location (either outside the state, to a major urban centre or another isolated area), the school must be notified in order to work out whether distance education is still needed. This requirement is outlined in the *Education Act (1990)*.

1.3 Supervisor preparation

To supervise a student there are tasks and questions that need to be addressed for learning programs to be effective.

The information below present questions that will guide supervisor preparation. They outline what a teacher is likely to check when a student starts distance education.

Key topics include:



Learning space

Provide a suitable location for students to study and complete tasks. Consider things such as lighting, furniture and access to technology such as computers and the internet.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Is the learning space for your student free from distractions?
- Have you and the student been able to connect all technologies?
- Are there any other students sharing the same learning space?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- Could you please provide me with some advice on how to set-up the study environment for my child/student?
- What are some useful ideas to help students organise their learning?
- Who is the best point of contact if we are experiencing issues with the online technology?

School contact

Regular contact between the student, supervisor and the distance education school is important. How a supervisor contacts the distance education school may vary according to which school the student is enrolled at, but typically will involve telephone, email or other electronic means.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Are there any issues (such as phone coverage or internet connection) I should know about?
- Have you (and the student) had any experience with the software we use to undertake learning?
- Should I be aware of any problems or other concerns that may prevent us from being in regular contact?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- What is the best way of communicating with you if I have any problems?
- How often should we be either talking or making contact?
- If you are unavailable who would be another person to contact?
- How would you prefer the student to make contact?
- Is there any other software or resources I might need to get for my student? Who is the best person to contact to get more information on how to purchase software?

Student support

Supervisors need to ensure they actively supervise students whilst they are studying. This includes answering possible questions that may arise or connecting students to someone else that can help.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- What kinds of assistance or questions has the student asked when completing their learning?
- Have you reminded the student that they need to contact the teacher if they are finding the work difficult?
- When the student is studying what do you normally do during this time?

- What resources do you have in the study environment that could help your student work by themselves?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- I'm unsure how to connect my student to with resources to and people who can assist their learning. Can you provide some ideas or what would be a good resource?
- What types of strategies could I try to use to stop my student from relying on my help too much?
- I have tried to make sure my student contact their teacher when they have a problem with a task but they end up getting really frustrated. What do you think might help in this situation?

Submitting work

Supervisors must monitor the regular submission of work. Ensure this work is returned to the relevant teacher according to their requirements.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Before submitting their work, what help are you giving the student to complete the task?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- Can you please tell me where I might find information around assessment tasks and how students should return their work?
- If my student is unsure of how to return their work what advice should I give them?

Lessons

Explain instructions provided by the distance education teacher regarding lessons and learning materials.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Have you found any difficulties understanding the instructions included with each task?
- How have you tried to explain tasks in the past? Do you just speak through the instructions or do you try other ways?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- I am having to repeat instructions many times with my student. What can I do to avoid giving them too much help?
- Can you suggest a few ways I could help explain the instructions my student receives for their learning tasks?

- I am having trouble making sense of the instructions my student is receiving. What support could I access in my role as a supervisor?

Participation

Ensure that the students are participating in online lessons and practical tasks provided by the distance education school.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- What are you doing to make sure the student meets their learning requirements in distance education?
- What advice do you provide to your student before they complete their e-learning?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- What if the teacher wants to visit my student at home? What does this usually involve?
- What should I do if my student refuses to participate in lessons even when I have tried to help them?
- Should I try to access extra help if I cannot get my student to complete their learning tasks?

Absence and Illness

Supervisors need to keep the distance education school informed of absences, illnesses or changes to their student's situation that are likely to impact on their ability to complete learning tasks.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Are you able to identify any issues that may impact on your student's learning?
- How will you contact the school if the student is going to be absent for a lesson or unable to submit a task?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- My student has been ill and absent from lessons for a long period of time. What can I do to make sure they complete any missed work?
- I have realised that my student will not be able to complete a task for one of their classes. What steps should I take?

Examinations

Provide appropriate space for examinations and the completion of assessment tasks.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- When the student has an exam, what do you do to provide an appropriate location for them to complete it at home?
- Are you aware of the assessment schedule and tasks that a student should follow when they are in Year 11 and 12?
- Have you read the school's assessment policy?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- I am finding it difficult to understand the assessment task requirements for my student. Can you give me some assistance on what I should be reading or researching to help them?
- Do you have any diagrams or a checklist I could look at to help me understand how to support my student complete their assessment task?
- Can you provide me with advice on how to get appropriate furniture for my student's study space?

E-Learning

Supervisors should help students to connect to their Student Portal (provided by the NSW Department of Education) to access emails and other e-learning support materials.

Potential questions asked by the teacher

- Do you understand all the functions and assistance offered to students on the Student Portal?
- Have you seen your student access the Student Portal regularly? How are you reminding them to check the site?
- Are you able to access all parts of the Student Portal?

Potential questions for the supervisor

- Is there a handout or website where I could get some more information about what is included in the Student Portal?
- My student cannot access the Student Portal. What should I do?
- How often should my student be accessing the Student Portal? Should they be accessing any other e-learning platform during their study time?

2. Learning support

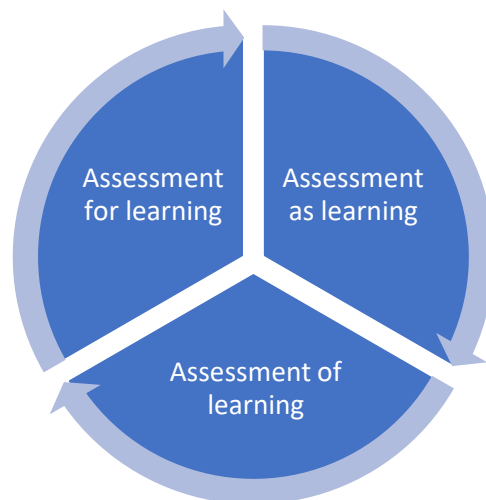
2.1 Assessment

Assessment is an essential component of understanding a student's understanding of skills and knowledge.

"Assessment for, assessment as and assessment of learning are approaches that allow teachers to gather evidence and make judgements about student achievement. These forms of assessment can be undertaken either on their own or together." NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) - [Assessment For, As and Of Learning](#).

Forms of assessment

It is important to be aware that each distance education school will have different school assessment procedures. It is important that supervisors and students understand these procedures as soon as possible upon enrolling at a distance education school.



Assessment for learning

This form of assessment involves the teacher setting a task which allows them to gather evidence about what a student understands and the skills they have developed. Students will receive these tasks as everyday learning activities. Teachers use these tasks to give students feedback on their strengths and where they need to improve before a formal assessment task such as an assignment or exam.

Assessment as learning

This form of assessment encourages students to ask questions about what they are learning and how they are developing skills on their own. Students may be given a checklist when completing a task which asks them to identify different learning steps and to describe the skills they have learnt as part of the process.

Assessment of learning

This form of assessment typically occurs at the end of a unit of learning and is usually used to grade or rank a student according to their achievement. These assessment tasks can be undertaken using a variety of tasks that may require a student to write, speak or demonstrate a physical skill. The final result from these assessment tasks informs the student and teacher about what learning could be done in the future.

Advice for supervisors

Supporting students to undertake an assessment is essential. However, it is important that supervisors understand the limits of this support and what strategies are most helpful when assisting student learning. Sometimes students will need to complete a task independently so the teacher gets an accurate understanding of what they can achieve and where improvement is needed.

Examples of the types of support supervisors could provide include:

- ensure a record of the due dates for all assessment tasks is maintained to remind the student of their upcoming deadlines
- help the student break down components of their assessment task into different steps. Create a timeline to help students visualise what tasks should be completed and the time required
- read and review the task instructions before the student begins (for when the assessment task is not an exam or completed under timed conditions). Explain the meaning behind different words used and identify aspects of the task where the student might need to seek further clarification from the teacher
- refer the student to the teacher who set the assessment task if they are facing difficulties. Types of assessment vary between subjects and teachers. It is important that they clarify any concerns to avoid circumstances when the student might feel disadvantaged
- make sure the student saves multiple copies of their assessment task when it is being completed. It is important that the student has evidence of learning completed at various stages of their task
- help students keep an accurate record of information or research they may have undertaken to complete their assessment task. This will allow the student to acknowledge where they have sourced information from, in their response, without plagiarising

- review the assessment procedures and requirements that have been issued by the school. If you do not have a copy of these guidelines make contact with the supervising teacher as soon as possible
- ensure students understand the marking guidelines issued with an assessment of learning task. These guidelines will outline what students need to do when completing their response
- remind the student that they should feel comfortable to ask for help or assistance as needed. Whilst assessment tasks provide useful information to teachers on a student's understanding of different skills they are also used to clarify and provide feedback on learning.

Record of Student Achievement (RoSA)

The Record of Student Achievement (RoSA) is awarded to students in Years 10-12 who do not complete the Higher School Certificate (HSC). It provides an overview of a student's subject choices and overall results.

For more information on the RoSA, visit the [NESA website](#). Your distance education school is responsible for implementing assessment tasks which contribute towards the RoSA.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The Higher School Certificate (HSC) is awarded to a student at the end of Year 12. It is the highest level of attainment a student in NSW can reach at school.

For more information on how the credential is awarded to students, please visit the [NESA website](#). Your distance education school is responsible for implementing assessment tasks which contribute towards the HSC.

HSC Minimum Standards

The HSC minimum standard has been introduced by NESA to ensure all students completing the HSC from 2020 and onwards have a benchmark knowledge of literacy and numeracy skills to receive their final certificate.

Students completing their HSC in 2020 need to:

- pass the online reading test or have achieved Band 8 or above in reading in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017 and
- pass the online writing test or have achieved Band 8 or above in writing in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017 and
- pass the online numeracy test or have achieved Band 8 or above in numeracy in Year 9 NAPLAN in 2017.

Students completing the HSC in 2021 or later need to:

- pass the online reading test and
- pass the online writing test and
- pass the online numeracy test.

For more information about the HSC Minimum Standards please visit the [NESA website](#).

More information

For more information and resources related to assessments, please see the Department's [Parents and Carers website](#).

2.2 Primary standards of learning

Students in primary school as they progress from Kindergarten to Year 6 will develop their skills in many subject areas.

Below are examples of the kinds of work that students in Kindergarten to Year 6 may be undertaking. This information will give supervisors an idea of how students' progress when learning.

The examples below only cover the important areas of English and mathematics. There are also links to examples of student work on the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) site that help to give an idea of what students in each Stage (1-3) and Year (K-6) should be able to do. In all cases, work samples or examples given are an indication of what that student may be capable of at the end of that school year.

Early Stage 1

Kindergarten

English

This activity involved students writing a story to recount a previous excursion or event they have attended. Students were asked by the teacher to:

- show they could write using a basic recount structure
- use appropriate spelling, punctuation and sentence structure
- use verbs (words that name actions).

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This activity required students to identify objects of different lengths, showcasing what they looked like by drawing a visual diagram to compare sizes. Students were asked by the teacher to:

- show they could compare the lengths of each object accurately
- provide a written description that includes information on the differences in length and size of each object
- draw a picture to record their results.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Stage 1

Year 1

English

This activity required students to write an informative text that outlined the steps involved in an activity such as tying shoelaces or making a sandwich. Students were asked by the teacher to:

- write each of the steps in the correct order involving the activity (using numbers and writing in the order events occur)
- use verbs (action words) when writing their response to show the commands involved with the activity
- write using words and common phrases
- use accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation involved in writing the informative text.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This activity involved students developing a series of pictures related to everyday activities. For each picture, students needed to write down the time these activities would occur in digital and analogue time. Students were asked by the teacher to:

- create an ordered pattern on events that involves labelling time in the correct order
- use maths terms to describe the sequence of events and the time used.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Year 2

English

This activity required students to write a personal recount of a recent excursion. Students needed to recall events and descriptions of what they saw during the excursion, highlighting experiences that were significant to them. Students were required to:

- plan, student and construct a personal recount
- attempt to spell unfamiliar words correctly
- use basic grammatical and punctuation features.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

Stage 2

Year 3

English

This activity involved students writing an imaginative story using one (or more) images to help them write their response. Students were required to:

- show they could plan, edit and publish their response
- provide a clear sequence of events in their response, developing a narrative that was logical
- use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation to develop their response.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This exercise required students to solve the question 'The answer is 12. What could the question be?' Students needed to either write (using words or number equations) solutions to the problem. Students were required to:

- show they could construct mathematical problems using different operations (such as 'plus', 'minus', 'divide' and 'multiply') terms
- show understanding of decimals, fractions and whole numbers in their responses.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Year 4

English

This activity asked students to develop a dot point draft overview about how a torch operates. Following the plan, they were then required to write an explanation for how a torch works based on the Science and Technology lesson held addressing this topic. Students were required to:

- show they could write in a way that correctly ordered the process for developing a torch
- use language that was appropriate for explaining the process
- show they could develop a response with correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

The following equations were provided to students.

1. Students solve the following problem mentally and then record the strategy they used.
 - a) $34 + 17$
2. Students repeat the process for the following problems.
 - b) $73 - 25$
 - c) $63 + 29$
 - d) $162 - 69$

Students were required to:

- show they could use appropriate mental strategies to solve the equations in their head
- explain the responses they developed using mathematical terms (such as 'addition' and 'subtraction').

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Stage 3

Year 5

English

For this activity, students were required to research details on an animal that lives in the rainforest. Once research has been located, students then needed to select important information related to the animal to write an information report. Students were required to:

- show they could write a published information report
- use appropriate sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to write their report
- spell words correctly that helped the reader better understand the animal they selected.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This activity required students to respond to the question 'The answer to a problem is one and a half. What might the question be?' Students needed to:

1. Record a variety of questions, including word problems and questions that involved more than one operation.
2. Include the four operations in their question.

Students were required to show:

- they could construct mathematical problems using words and numbers
- use fractions and decimals as part of their response.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Year 6

English

This activity required students to identify the persuasive elements of an advertisement they were provided before developing their own example. Students were required to:

- show they could analyse visual texts and identify aspects of the example that were persuasive
- develop a focus for their own advertisement
- show they could select and include different objects or words that would appeal to their target audience.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This activity required students to respond to the question 'The answer to a problem is one and a half. What might the question be?' Students needed to:

1. Record a variety of questions, including word problems and questions that involved more than one operation.
2. Include the four operations in their question.

Students were required to:

- construct mathematical problems using words and numbers
- use fractions and decimals as part of their response.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

2.3 Secondary standards of learning

Students in secondary school as they progress from Year 7 to Year 12 will develop their skills in many subject areas.

Below are examples of the kind of work that students in these years should be undertaking. This information gives supervisors an idea of how a student may progress over time.

The examples below cover the areas of English and a variety of other subjects. There are also links to examples of student work on the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) site that give an idea of what students in Year 7 to 10 are likely to experience as part of their learning program. In all cases, work samples or examples given are only an indication of student learning. Note, that there are no work samples given for Year 11 and 12 students.

Stage 4

Year 7 and 8

English

This activity asked students to develop a persuasive letter that encourages tourists to visit Australia. Students were required to show how they could:

- write using the different elements of a formal letter
- understand how the language selected could persuade the target audience
- use persuasive techniques in their writing (such as a rhetorical question, personal stories)
- include relevant information related to Australia.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

Students were given a number of diagrams that featured models of different patterns. After reviewing the patterns, students were then required to draw the next pattern in the

sequence. This was accompanied by a table of values featuring equations to explain how the pattern is generated. Student responses needed to:

- show how the student could draw a model according to their calculations
- develop and complete a table of values
- describe the process undertaken to create the table and diagram.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Science

This activity required students to plan and perform an experiment that investigated the growth pattern of plants. Once the experiment was completed, students needed to write the process and outcomes of the experiment into their own scientific report. Students were required to show:

- they could write a prediction about what was expected to happen as part of the experiment (hypothesis)
- recording of data gathered from the experiment using diagrams, tables and written responses
- being able to follow the structure of the scientific report, writing their response under the methods, results and conclusion categories of the report.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

History

Students were asked to complete a one page information report that highlighted their understanding of life along the Nile River. Responses needed to be completed using a report plan, including information on farming, wildlife, leisure activities. Students were required to:

- give a description of the main features of the Nile River and activities taking place in everyday life
- use appropriate historical terms
- respond to all sections of the historical report template.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Geography

This activity involved students using the internet to undertake research on organisations promoting environmental sustainability and ways to reduce inequalities between populations of people from around the world. Information discovered needed to be read and discussed by students through developing either a poster or computer-based response. Students were required to:

- show they could gather and present information about an organisation promoting sustainability and global equality

- look at how the practices of the organisation had an impact on the global community
- present information accurately using text and images appropriate to their chosen format.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Stage 5

Year 9 and 10

English

This activity required students to develop a persuasive essay response that related to a film studied by a student and one book they have read on their own. Students were required to:

- show they understood elements of the horror genre that was included in the film and the book
- show how elements of the book and the film are connected
- compose an essay that is formal and includes all the correct elements
- write using formal language, correct punctuation, paragraphing, grammar and spelling.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Mathematics

This exercise involved students completing a worksheet that included a series of questions related to trigonometry. Students were required to show:

- they had an understanding of trigonometry equations
- they could use the trigonometry equations to solve problems.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Science

This activity asked students to use knowledge they already had on the growth of strawberry plants when they are planted in soil with two different temperatures. They were required to complete the experiment before recording their results. Students were required to:

- show an understanding of the question used for the activity
- describe the different steps involved in undertaking the experiment in the correct order
- describe the method used for collecting and recording the data.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

History

This activity required students to write a 300-500 word letter on the computer for a newspaper editor that addresses Australia's Stolen Generation. The letter needed to include information on why children were removed from their families and the role of the government at the time. Students were required to:

- show an understanding of the different reasons and methods used to remove Aboriginal children from their families
- support their letter with research they located using the internet and other sources
- develop a well structured letter using appropriate language and demonstrating an understanding of how to publish work on a computer.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

Geography

This exercise was designed for students to research a community that investigates its identity (including information on different cultures) and influences for change (such as the natural environment and business operations). Students were required to:

- show their knowledge of the different people and groups that have an influence over a community's identity
- be able to explain community changes in writing and assess whether these were positive or negative
- use tables, maps and graphs as part of their response to highlight what the community changes look like.

Here is an example of a [student's response](#).

2.4 Writing strategies

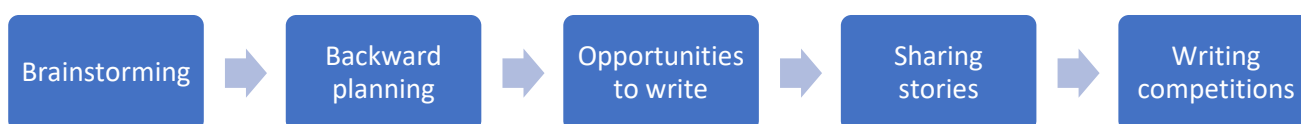
An overview of research and practical strategies to assist students develop their writing skills.

Types of writing

- **Modelled writing** - involves the supervisor ensuring the student can access texts (such as a set of instructions, creative story) that show what is expected of them for a specific task. It is important that the student identifies the structure, vocabulary and the intended audience before they successfully write their own response.
- **Think aloud writing** - involves the student saying aloud what they are going to write. This technique helps the student and the supervisor identify issues with the logic and structure of a student's writing.

- **Guided writing** - involves the student writing the same text as the teacher/supervisor. Undertaking guided writing allows the student to have a conversation around the strengths and weaknesses of their response, leading them to develop new strategies to improve the quality of their writing in the future.
- **Feedback** - involves the student gaining feedback on how their writing meets the original task expectations. The supervisor should ensure that the student reflects on advice they have previously received before completing their task, particularly when the response is designed for a formal assessment task.
- **Conferencing** - involves the supervisor asking the student questions about their writing. This allows the supervisor to ask the student about the language they have used, the purpose of their writing, structure or punctuation included in their writing.

Useful strategies to assist with writing



Students in distance education will need to complete a range of tasks that help them to write independently. The following strategies provide useful tips supervisors could use to help encourage a student to write.

- **Brainstorming** - allows a student to assess what they know about a topic and what information might be needed in a written response. Brainstorming can take place by talking or using a visual diagram.
- **Backward planning** - requires a student to identify different parts of their writing structure. Supervisors should try to make sure the student accesses small texts to begin locating elements of the writing (such as a heading, sub heading, paragraph) to help them gain confidence to use these ideas in their own writing.
- **Opportunities to write** - ensure students regularly write using a number of different text types (such as shopping lists, reports, short stories). Students may also look for opportunities to develop their own journal, reflecting and describing daily activities and interactions. These reflections are a form of written brainstorming.
- **Sharing stories** - ask a student to share and read aloud their writing. Provide encouragement for positive achievements made by the student after they have read their story, followed by two comments on what they could improve on if they were to write the text again (or complete a final, published response). Suggested comments for improvement may include punctuation, the tone of language (whether they are using formal or informal words) and the structure of their response.
- **Writing competitions** - writing competitions can be an exciting way to encourage a student to write for a number of different audiences and purposes. In most cases, these competitions will have guidelines related to the length and audience for the written response, allowing them to learn new skills to evaluate issues of quality and word choice that are important to writing success.

Development opportunities

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) provides supervisors with resources at their [online shop](#) to assist students develop their writing skills.

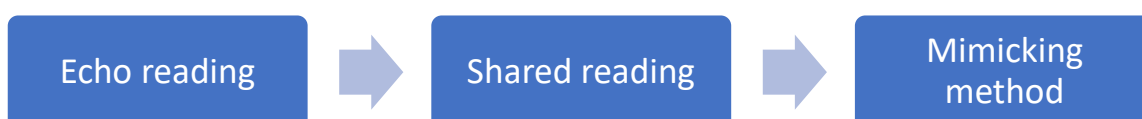
2.5 Reading strategies

An overview of research and strategies to help students develop their reading skills.

Terminology

- **Phonemic awareness** - where a student identifies the sounds of each letter in the alphabet. This can be taught through the supervisor by repeating sounds of each letter in a word that is read by the student.
- **Phonics** - this involves a student being able to identify the different sounds that form a word found in a text. This can best be taught through the supervisor breaking down an unfamiliar word into syllables. For example, organisation (org-an-i-sa-tion).
- **Fluency** - involves a student being able to read a text without having to pause to identify word or letter sounds. This can best be taught by the supervisor reading texts aloud to the student, modelling how fast it should be read and strategies to understand new words.
- **Vocabulary** - this involves a student developing their understanding of words that they can use in their writing and to then make sense of new words.
- **Comprehension** - this involves a student identifying important information in a text. Students use this information to then make meaning of a text.

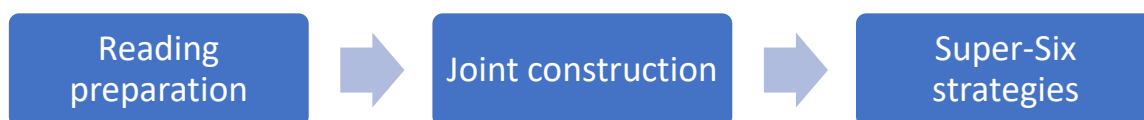
Useful strategies to assist with reading (primary)



- **Echo reading** - where the supervisor reads a short section of text (such as a paragraph or a page) to the student before they read the same text aloud back to the supervisor. The supervisor will repeat the process until they have completed the book or text they are reading. This task helps build student confidence to approach new texts whilst allowing them to become familiar with phonemic and phonic sounds.
- **Shared reading** - where the supervisor then the child read a sentence at a time. This process allows the supervisor to correct words mispronounced immediately when they arise. The benefits of shared reading include increasing a student's confidence in the reading process whilst providing an opportunity to value the learning process.
- **Mimicking method** - the student mimics the words being read by the supervisor when reviewing a section of text. When the student has to read the text by

themselves, they then say how different words should sound based on the supervisor's assistance.

Useful strategies to assist with reading (secondary)



- **Reading preparation techniques** - before a student begins reading a difficult text, ensure they are given background information which helps them to identify the key information when they review the text.
- **Joint construction** - this involves both the student and the supervisor using important information they find in a text to create new notes, in language more familiar to them.
- **Engaging with 'Super Six' strategies** - these strategies help students to organise and understand information in many different ways. They include:



- a) Making connections - when a student is able to understand parts of a text through the supervisor making a connection to an object, person or event that they already understand.
- b) Predicting - where the student identifies a specific term, image or object to then predict the next action that is likely to occur in the text.
- c) Questioning - this involves the supervisor helping the student to make up a question that allows them to draw out the correct information in the text.
- d) Monitoring - when a student monitors a text, it means they stop, reread and then explain their understanding of what they have read.
- e) Visualising - this involves the student picturing words and phrases in a text that they later turn into an image or diagram to show their understanding.
- f) Summarising - where the student indicates sections of a text that are used as the basis of their notes. The student is required to develop the notes into their own words.

2.6 Numeracy strategies

An overview of research and practical strategies to assist students develop their skills in numeracy.

Supervisor tips

- **Relate maths to everyday experiences** – supervisors should try and make a point of highlighting how everyday decisions in life involve a level of mathematical knowledge. Examples could include comparing the volumes of packages, calculating land areas, using weather data, calculating financial and budgetary items or looking at calculations used to develop Excel spreadsheet tables and graphs.
- **Promote confidence in using maths** – this can involve evaluating different ways to solve a mathematical problem (including tasks such as designing a budget), encouraging a student to be resilient when using different methods to complete a task. It is recommended that supervisors and parents do not use common phrases such as 'I used to be bad at maths too' when addressing mathematical challenges with students as this removes the emphasis on them learning independently.
- **Engage in solving math problems** – encourage the student to seek out different ways to present solutions to math problems (such as using graphs and tables). The supervisor should try to complete maths tasks with the student as a way to explore and share strategies used to resolve maths problems (this could include participating in online maths games as a way to explore various challenges).
- **Avoid an emphasis on trying to solve maths problems within a time limit** – encouraging the student to remain resilient and dedicated to solving maths problems is not dependent on the time taken. The emphasis should be on continuing to strive to solve the problem and not give in. Having the student focus on working out and explaining the steps they have undertaken to solve the problem will avoid ongoing anxiety related to this subject.
- **Give feedback and solutions** – giving information back to the student on answers to problems and alternative solutions will refocus their attention on how to go about solving maths challenges. Feedback can be provided either through verbal or written means.

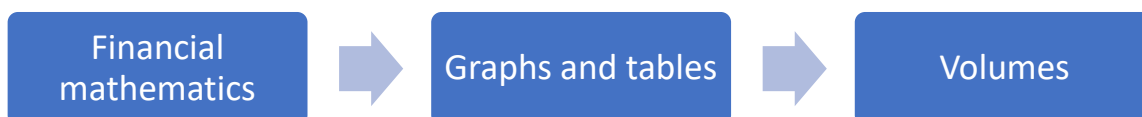
Useful strategies to assist with numeracy (primary)



- **Thinking about time** – this could involve having a student develop a chart of how long it takes to complete various activities or developing their own use-by dates for products that need to be stored for a certain period of time.
- **Measuring and calculating** – this could involve determining the height and weight of different family members which will allow the student to gain skills in different units of measurement. The student could also begin to read documents such as maps to determine road distances and directions to various places.
- **Creating with patterns** – this could involve a student reviewing patterns involved in designing objects such as a paper plane or discussing symmetrical patterns created by the organisation of flowers in a garden.

- **Understanding shapes** – this could involve a student identifying the names of shapes in the pictures contained in story books or documents such as house plans.

Useful strategies to assist with numeracy (secondary)



- **Financial mathematics** – have the student assess the average costs of purchasing items (such as the groceries) or expected bill payments required for electricity usage.
- **Developing graphs and tables** – ask the student to prepare a budget for their own expenses or to record values (such as rainfall). Provide the student with opportunities to display and discuss the outcomes of these visual diagrams.
- **Volumes** – the student could try to assess the percentages and volumes of various products that are combined to develop items (such as edible food items and recipes). A student could itemise each ingredient, leading them to also form judgments regarding nutritional or economic value of different purchases.

Resources

The following fact sheets from the NSW Department of Education include an overview of key aspects of the mathematics syllabuses in NSW schools for students in both primary and secondary years. Each fact sheet also contains a series of useful tools that parents or supervisors can use to assist student learning throughout everyday life interactions. Click on the relevant links below to access more information.

- [Parents Count Too \(Counting\)](#) - a primary based learning resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Arithmetic\)](#) - a primary based learning resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Shapes and Objects\)](#) - a primary based learning resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Measuring Length and Area\)](#) - a primary based learning resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Measuring Volume and Mass\)](#) - a primary based resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Measuring Temperature and Time\)](#) - a primary based resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Helping Your Child with Mental Calculations\)](#) - a primary/ secondary resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Patterns and Algebra\)](#) - a primary/ secondary resource.
- [Parents Count Too \(Representing and Interpreting Graphs and Tables\)](#) - a primary/secondary resource.

3. Helping the student

3.1 Building resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back after experiencing a difficult situation or being able to work through a problem.

Developing resilience is an essential skill in helping a student face challenges in their learning. New experiences will be handled differently from student to student.

Developing resilience can be supported through conditions outlined below.



Establishing a safe environment

A safe environment for students in distance education might be achieved by:

- talking with the student without passing judgement. If a student makes a learning mistake, the supervisor acknowledges their efforts before providing help
- asking the student questions about the decisions they have made to solve a learning task. This helps provide a learning environment where the student and supervisor can exchange ideas and learn together
- creating a calm atmosphere for the student that is free from danger or distractions. Ensure learning takes place where there is natural light, ventilation (either through a window or access to air-conditioning) and away from images or devices that can interfere with learning (such as a mobile phone).

Developing clear and consistent expectations

Clear and consistent expectations for a student in distance education might involve:

- developing a timetable that includes regular sessions for completing their learning and taking breaks. Collaboration between the supervisor and the student when developing this timetable should occur with the school to gain the right balance for the grade they are currently in
- providing consistent and fair consequences when a student does not meet the expectations shown in the timetable. A guide to developing expectations for students could involve:
 - a) provide a verbal warning. Provide time for the student to correct their behaviour on their own. If they do not choose to correct their behaviour then consequences need to be given
 - b) be consistent. When providing the first warning, make sure that the student understands that the consequence will now be implemented. Examples of a consequence might be the removal of some free time or time to reflect on how they could act differently in the future to avoid repeating the negative behaviour
 - c) avoid arguing with the student about the consequence. The supervisor should try to issue the consequence and then return to completing a different task. This provides the student with a second opportunity to correct their behaviour on their own
 - d) make sure you try and teach the expected behaviour. Once the consequence is given, it is important that the supervisor either verbally or through diagrams reminds the students about the correct behaviour they need to demonstrate.

Role model social and learning skills

Role modelling social and learning skills to your distance education student is how you demonstrate ways to solve problems. This might involve:

- the supervisor reminding the student to think on and identify their strengths when they face a new challenge. This may involve the supervisor reflecting on a past event where the student was successful to give them confidence to try something new
- breaking tasks down into small steps that the student can then achieve on their own. Demonstrating these skills will help the student understand how they could overcome bigger challenges in the future
- engage the student in a problem solving exercise that can help develop their resilience skills.

See the different options below to access an example exercise related to social and learning skills.

Emotional literacy

Emotional refers to a student's ability to recognise and understand how to appropriately express their emotions.

Strategy 1 – Positive and negative emotions

Materials required:

- 1 piece of A4 paper
- Pen/ pencil

Step 1 - Ask the student to draw an outline of a human body. Around the outside of the body, students develop a series of positive and negative emotions they may have experienced in the past or someone might experience in everyday life.

Step 2 - Once students have named these emotions, ask them to draw an arrow to where these examples might be felt. For example, the student might experience sweaty hands when they are asked to complete a new learning task that they have not tried before. Ask the student to think about whether they would experience the emotion on their own or if it would impact on other people.

Step 3 - Finally, discuss with the student how they might avoid feeling this way. This allows the supervisor to discuss some basic coping mechanisms when they feel particular emotions.

Strategy 2 – Thermometer of experiences

Materials required:

- 1 picture or diagram of a thermometer

Step 1 - Place an image of a thermometer in a location that can be easily accessed by the student and the supervisor during their lessons.

Step 2 - On the thermometer, place the following labels that represent different emotions a person might experience when confronted with a happy or sad experience.

10 = Boiling point

9 = Extremely strong

8 = Very strong

7 = Quite strong

6 = Strong

5 = Considerable

4 = To a degree

3 = Concerned

2 = Slightly concerned

1 = Not concerned

Step 3 - When the student faces a situation that evokes an extreme emotional response, ask them to locate where this example may fit on the thermometer. Once they have located the relevant number, discuss with the student an approach that can be used to overcome the situation. Label this example on the thermometer for future reference as a visual guide to remind students how to overcome similar challenges they might face in their learning.

Positive ways of managing stress

Positive ways of managing stress strategies that assist a student to cope with new challenges and to moderate feelings of stress that they experience when undertaking a new challenge.

Strategy 1 – Identifying self-talk

Materials required:

- 1 piece of paper
- 1 pen/ pencil

Step 1 - The supervisor and student identify either one subject or a school day where they faced a number of challenges when completing their learning activities.

Step 2 - The student will draw a table with two columns. The title for the first column should be 'Positive Self-Talk' and the second column 'Negative Self-Talk'.

Step 3 - In the second column, the supervisor and student locate all the different forms of negative self-talk that was expressed when confronting challenges in either the one subject or for one day.

Step 4 - For each example of negative self-talk, the supervisor and the student consider a series of phrases that could be used to counter the negative reactions. Once the chart is complete, place the paper in a central location within the student's learning space. The supervisor should direct the student to positive self-talk phrases when confronted with similar issues in the future.

Strategy 2 – Guided relaxation

Materials required:

- Instructions below (to be read by the supervisor)
- Quiet, comfortable location (student needs to either sit in a chair or lie on the floor)

The supervisor should guide the student to complete the following instructions.

Step 1 - The student needs to shake their whole body for the first 10 seconds.

Step 2 - After shaking their body, instruct the student to stiffen every joint for the next 10 seconds.

Step 3 - Have the student release their tense joints. They should imagine themselves melting in either the chair or as they sit on the floor. All muscles should be stretched out during this time.

Step 4 - Ask the student to breath in for 5 seconds, hold the breath for 5 seconds and release over 5 seconds. Students should repeat this step 5 times until they can hear their own heartbeat.

Step 5 - The student should repeat step 2, tightening every muscle in their body.

Step 6 - Once completed, the student then repeat step 3 followed by step 4.

The supervisor should instruct the student to complete the steps above as many times as necessary. Remind the student of this process whenever they face a stressful situation in the future.

Provide reinforcement for positive behaviours

This is where you encourage or reward positive behaviour. Positive behaviour can be reinforced by:

- the use of positive body language (such as a hand gesture) when a student completes a task or process that is expected of them
- providing the student with a reward/ break (which could include free time 'brain break' or other agreed incentives) at different intervals to acknowledge when they have acted in a positive way
- provide verbal encouragement when a student is attempting to solve a problem independently or has acted upon one of the strategies above when overcoming a problem or learning obstacle.

3.2 Conflict resolution

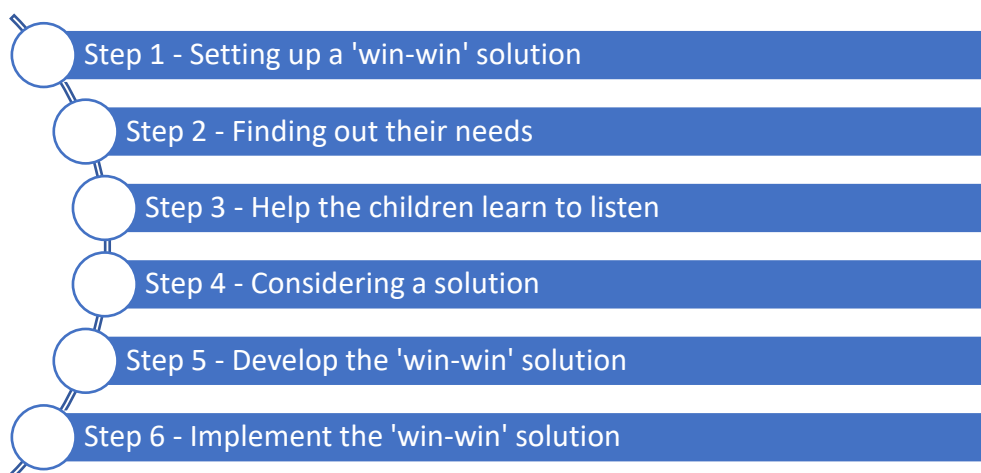
Conflict can occur at various times when a student is completing their schooling in distance education.

To resolve any conflict it is best if the solution is beneficial for the student, the supervisor and the teacher. This is called a 'win-win' approach because everybody benefits in solving the problem.

Supervisors can use this 'win-win' approach when:

- the student does not want to complete their distance education tasks
- the student may not be able to resolve problems by themselves
- there is conflict between the supervisor and the student which has caused stress for both parties.

If the supervisor believes that they cannot resolve the conflict issue with the student by themselves, they should make contact with the student's distance education school.



Step 1 – Setting up a ‘win-win’ solution

Setting up a 'win-win' situation with students enrolled in distance education might include:

- helping the student identify the problem when it is first experienced. This will help them understand ways to resolve it sooner
- provide time for the student to speak. Give them the opportunity to discuss what has caused the problem and will help reassure them that you want to help find a solution.

Step 2 – Finding out their needs

The needs of the student and supervisor can be found by:

- having the student show the cause of problems in Step 1

- explain to the student their responsibilities in distance education. The supervisor and the student should talk over the issue
- if the student has more than one concern, try to get them to list them in order of importance. Always try to solve the biggest problem first. The student and supervisor can then develop a plan to decide the order of solving each problem.

Step 3 – Help the child learn to listen

Supervisors can help their students learn to listen by:

- telling them that they now understand their problem after listening to them. Try using phrases such as, 'I can now see how this problem has caused you a lot of frustration'. Using words like this can help calm the student and show how talking about an issue can lead to faster solutions
- try to respond to the student in a practical way that deals with the problem and not be affected by the relationship held with the student
- explain how the problem can be solved together. Having the student feel that they are helping to solve the problem will allow them to work towards solving other issues that may arise in the future.

Step 4 – Considering a solution

Help the student to think of solutions to the problem. This might involve:

- brainstorming activities that you as the supervisor and the student could undertake together to solve the issue. This might involve looking at resources and other people who could help solve the problem
- draw a diagram that helps the student see the steps involved in solving the problem. Try to include what actions the student, supervisor and teacher need to do that overcome the problem
- aim to have no more than 2 or 3 solutions to the problem. Let the student have the opportunity to choose a solution they think will be the best.

Step 5 – Develop the 'win-win' solution

The 'win-win' solution may be found for both the student and supervisor by:

- checking over the solution to see whether it meets the needs of the student and supervisor
- talking over with the student what outcomes may follow from the decision that they have made. Help the student consider consequences that may result from the solution chosen
- discuss how aspects of each possible solution might be incorporated to help improve the overall solution selected by the student.

Step 6 – Implement the ‘win-win’ solution

Implementing the 'win-win' solution to overcome a problem may involve:

- testing the solution and evaluating the results. It is important that the student reflects on the way they have chosen to overcome the problem
- if the student begins to face stress when a solution does not go to plan, try to complete a relaxation activity. For examples of relaxation activities visit [Beyond Blue](#).
- reinforce how the solution has helped resolve both the student's needs and your own.

3.3 Mental health support

Mental health issues may affect students studying through distance education.

The information listed below includes lists of symptoms, possible causes and strategies to support students who may be experiencing mental health concerns.



Anxiety

Symptoms

Common symptoms that can show a child is experiencing anxiety may include:

- difficulties sleeping at night or headaches before a social event
- struggling to ask for help or participate in a learning activity
- feeling physically unwell, usually shown through the student having stomach pains

- feeling extremely scared when having to face a specific situation (such as speaking in an online forum)
- losing concentration after a serious event (such as a car crash).

Causes

Common causes that can lead to a child experiencing anxiety may include:

- witnessing a life threatening event (usually as a result of a major accident)
- being exposed to extreme violence through events shown in the media
- being placed in a high pressured environment where the child is expected to meet high expectations
- fear of being isolated from the loss of a close friend or family event
- performing in front of a large audience.

What to do next

Suggested actions to help deal with anxiety could include:

- contacting the distance education school to seek assistance. This might also include visiting a learning hub or location that can give advice.

Depression

Symptoms

Common symptoms that can show a child is experiencing depression may include:

- student is quiet and doesn't seem interested in activities they normally enjoy
- agitation shown through nervous physical movements (such as rapidly shaking knees when they are sitting)
- appearing constantly sad during any activity or experience
- withdrawing from social events with friends and family
- being unable to concentrate or the student loses their memory when completing a learning activity.

Causes

Common causes that can lead to a child experiencing depression may include:

- losing a friend or family member that they had a close connection with
- being isolated from their peers both socially and emotionally
- being constantly exposed to negative behaviours that cause them to lose a sense of self worth.

What to do next

Suggested actions to help deal with depression could include:

- contacting the distance education school to seek assistance
- remind the student that everyone can experience good and bad days. It is important to have a positive outlook
- try having a sleep to help overcome the feeling of being mentally exhausted
- seeing a psychologist to develop a depression treatment plan
- role model ways to turn negative thoughts into positive thoughts or experiences
- try relaxation exercises with the student, such as yoga/ meditation, or walking. Build these times and activities into their timetable.

Self Harm

Symptoms

Common symptoms that can indicate a child is experiencing self harm may include:

- visible signs of cutting, burning, self poisoning, hair pulling or scratching the skin
- not participating in activities
- acting in a highly emotional way to different events on a regular basis.

Causes

Common causes that can lead to a child experiencing self harm may include:

- losing a friend or family member they had a close connection with
- being isolated from either a peer or an event which leaves them feeling disconnected
- ongoing exposure to negative behaviours that lead to the student losing a sense of self worth.

What to do next

Suggested actions to respond to incidents of self harm could include:

- contacting the distance education school to seek assistance
- responding calmly and sensitively to the issue. It is important that you do not blame the student or become angry as a result of self-harm
- provide first aid to individuals who have experienced self harm
- contact a psychologist to develop a support plan for the student.

Trauma

Symptoms

Common symptoms that can indicate a child is experiencing trauma may include:

- being isolated from particular events or social situations
- being prone to accidents or falls that are linked to a trigger event that is confrontational
- feeling unsafe or they may be constantly seeking assurance that they are in a safe environment
- loud and sudden outbursts to react to certain events or situations experienced by the student.

Causes

Common causes that can lead to a child experiencing trauma may include:

- one off events (such as a major car accident) that create psychological distress or fear
- exposure to repeated incidents of violence
- ongoing conflict that is the result of living through war or family abuse
- natural disasters or severe weather events that are unexpected
- medical procedures that did not go to plan or had unexpected outcomes
- loss of a family member or significant other.

What to do next

Suggested actions to address incidents of trauma could include:

- contacting the distance education school to seek assistance
- talking to the child directly about the traumatic event they have experienced, ensuring that their reactions are not judged
- provide routines that are predictable and involve consistency
- create a space where the student can relax and are surrounded by items that make them feel comfortable.

Serious behaviour

Symptoms

Common symptoms that can indicate a child is experiencing serious behaviour difficulties may include:

- difficulties retaining new information due to memory loss
- responding impulsively to events that involve large amounts of aggression
- consistently demonstrating low self-esteem and being unwilling to try new activities
- feeling disconnected and isolated from family and friends which acts as a motivator for extreme behaviour.

Causes

Common causes that lead to a child experiencing serious behaviour difficulties may include:

- factors the student has inherited that can influence temperament
- distractions that may be present in the home learning environment
- extreme circumstances including poverty, poor housing and hardships which trigger emotional outbursts
- being rejected by peers during social events (could involve sports teams or interest groups)
- psychological conditions that are diagnosed and treated by a medical expert.

What to do next

Suggested actions to address serious behaviour could include:

- contacting the distance education school to seek assistance
- closely monitor the learning environment to locate any distractions or activities that changes the student's behaviour. Respond to these as they arise
- build cooperative relationships with the student. Try to address the behaviour rather than the student personally when dealing with any outburst
- establish fair and consistent consequences for actions that are inappropriate
- seek strategies to help students identify their feelings which trigger negative behaviours.

Further information

For further information and resources to support a student's mental health, please contact the distance education school directly or visit [Head to Health](#) for resources related to mental health awareness.

4. Technology in distance education

4.1 Student portal

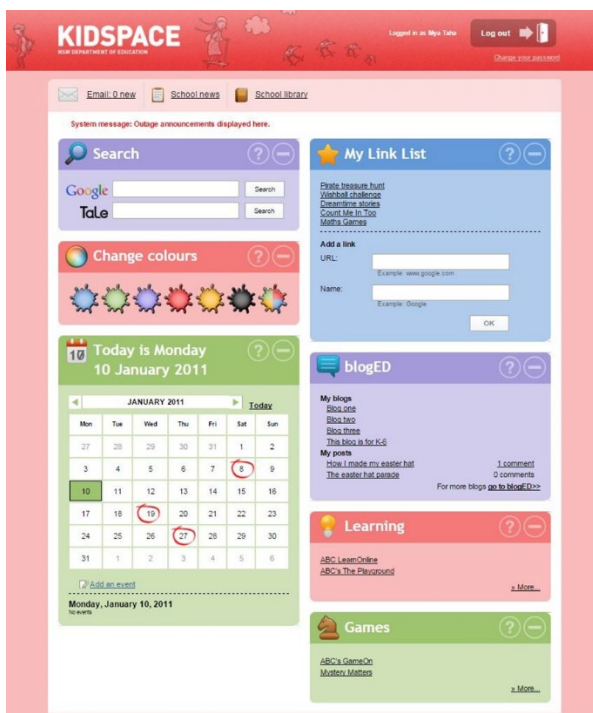
The Portal is the gateway to learning tools and other online resources provided by the Department.

The Student Portal is typically used by students enrolled in distance education to:

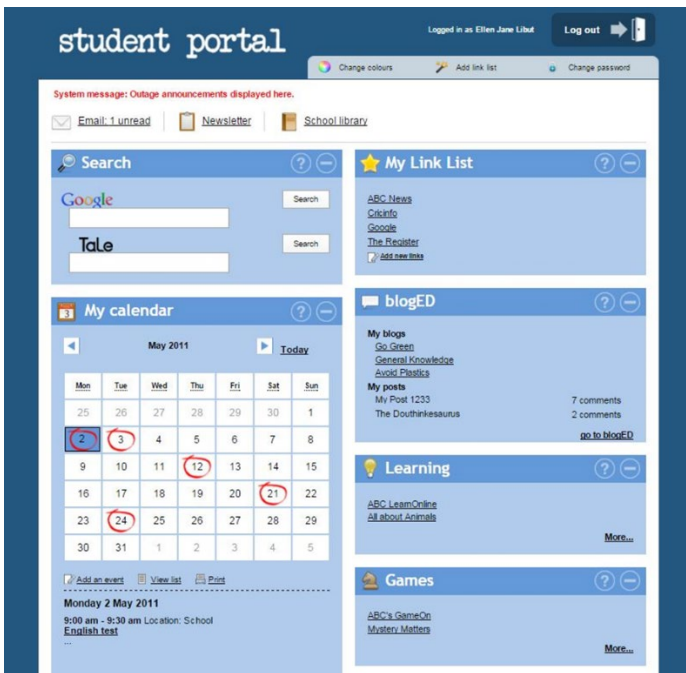
- email teachers with questions on learning tasks. Learning tasks may also be sent by the teacher by email
- access the school's library services
- connect to e-learning resources that are used by distance education schools.

Please note that all communication between teachers and students will most likely be made using the Department email account.

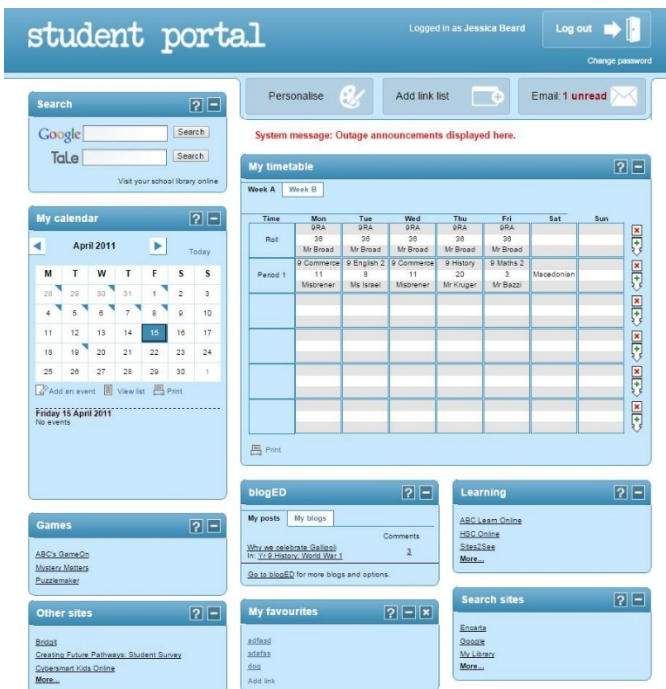
Kidspage – Year Kindergarten-2



Student portal – Year 3-6



Student portal – Year 7-12



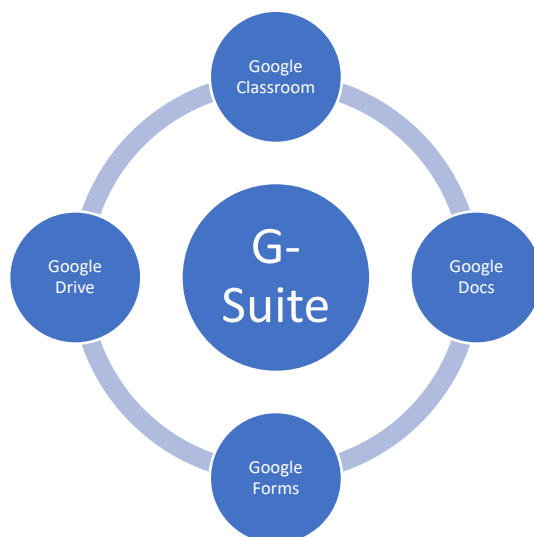
Further information

For more information visit the [student portal](#) section of the NSW Department of Education's website.

4.2 Technology applications

Schools use a number of learning technologies and online platforms in distance education.

Google



Google Classroom

With Google Classroom, teachers can establish a virtual classroom where they can 'set tasks', monitor group work and restore resources for student learning. Teachers can link students to online recordings and demonstrations using this learning platform. Students access Google Classroom using the Student Portal.

More information - further information about Google Classroom can be accessed through the Student Portal and at [Google Classroom support](#).

Google Docs

Google Docs allow students to complete written tasks using a single document. Students can access Google Docs using the Student Portal or using a link generated by the document owner.

More information - further information about Google Docs can be accessed through the Student Portal and at [Google Docs help](#).

Google Forms

Google Forms are used to create and complete online surveys and quizzes. The data is often collected by the teacher or another author to make decisions on student learning or gain feedback on an activity.

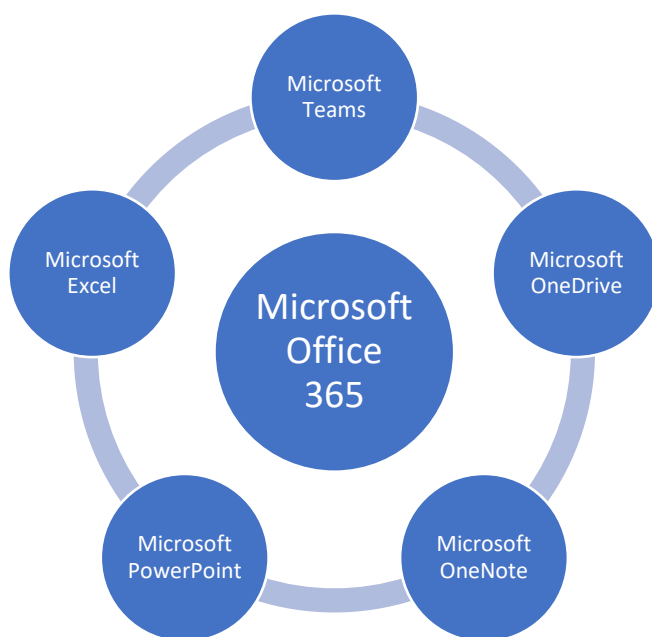
Further information about Google Forms can be found at [Google Forms help](#).

Google Drive

Google Drive is an online storage space where a student can save their files and learning activities. These files can be made accessible to other people through sharing a link to the drive. Students can access Google Drive using the Student Portal or using a link generated by the document owner.

Further information about Google Drive can be accessed through the Student Portal and at [Google Drive help](#).

Microsoft



Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams can be used to store files and collaborate with other students or teachers in a subject area or for a particular project. Students can also connect with other member of the team using the live chat feed.

Further information about Microsoft Teams can be found at [Microsoft Teams video training](#).

Microsoft OneDrive

Microsoft OneDrive is an online storage facility where a student can save Microsoft documents and store student responses. Students can work together to develop written documents, with real time editing functions. Microsoft OneDrive can be accessed by students using the Student Portal.

Further information about Microsoft OneDrive can be accessed through the Student Portal. General information can also be found at [OneDrive video training](#).

Microsoft OneNote

Microsoft OneNote is an online notebook where a student can record their responses to learning tasks and share these with other students or teachers. Each notebook can be customised to suit student needs, including the ability to add or change sections according to different categories of information.

Further information about Microsoft OneNote can be found at [OneNote video training](#).

Microsoft PowerPoint

Microsoft PowerPoint is used to digitally create presentations that combine written text, videos, audio and visual information. PowerPoint files can be shared using Microsoft OneDrive, attached to emails or downloaded to a USB.

Further information about Microsoft PowerPoint can be found at [PowerPoint for Windows training](#).

Microsoft Excel

Microsoft Excel allows a student to create their own spreadsheets to show data and solve mathematical questions involve large amounts of data. Further information about Excel can be found at [Excel for Windows training](#).

Adobe Acrobat

This allows students to access documents that are saved in 'PDF' format. Students can also create their own forms using this software, with fields to enter information.

Further training and information on this product can be found at [Getting started with Adobe Acrobat](#).

For training and information on any of the wide range of the Adobe products with relevance to any subject or age group visit the [Adobe Education Exchange](#).

Oliver – My School Library

Oliver is the NSW Department of Education's library system. Each school maintains their own Oliver System that monitors processes related to borrowing equipment and accessing digital support for students from Kindergarten to Year 12. Oliver can be accessed by students using the Student Portal.

Further information about Oliver can be accessed through the Student Portal. General introductory support and training can be found at [Oliver – The school library system](#).

Note: Individual schools are responsible for developing policies regarding borrowing and returning of equipment.

BlogED

This provides a platform for students to post topics and questions regarding what they are currently studying. This platform can also provide students the opportunity to undertake group work in a secure, virtual environment. The teacher can establish an account where they approve posts before they are made public.

Further learning and information on blogging can be found at [Blogging in Plain English](#) on the [Teacher Tube](#) website.

5. Contacts and personnel

A reference list of key support personnel in the NSW Department of Education.

Assistant Principal Learning and Support

Works closely with schools to support learning plans and support for students with a disability or additional learning needs.

Classroom Teacher

- Has the responsibility of ensuring students are learning in every class.
- Monitor, assess and provide feedback on student learning.

Itinerant Support Teachers

- Work directly with schools to provide learning support to students with a disability.
- There are three types of Itinerant support teachers. These include:
 - a. Itinerant Support Teachers (Early Intervention) – providing support to students in their early years of schooling
 - b. Itinerant Support Teachers (Hearing or Vision) – supporting students with confirmed hearing or vision loss from the time of diagnosis to Year 12.
 - c. Itinerant Support Teachers (Conductive Hearing Loss) – providing support to schools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have a conductive hearing loss.
- Detailed information can be found on the [Itinerant Support Teachers section](#) at the NSW Department of Education.

Learning and Support Team

- Operates in a school to ensure the specific needs of students are met as part of their learning program.
- Core responsibilities include:
 - a) identify and design responses to the learning needs of students as required
 - b) coordinate whole school approaches to deliver learning programs
 - c) connect students with processes and resources needed to undertake school in the case where the student has an additional learning need
 - d) provide teachers with professional learning and resources so they meet the needs of students in their class

- e) establish relationships with staff, parents and professionals in the wider community to meet the needs of students.

Learning Support Teacher

Provides direct assistance to students with additional learning and support needs. Learning support teachers can assist students with various cultural, language and socio-economic backgrounds.

School Counsellor

- Qualified teachers who also have qualifications in school counselling.
- Support the work of classroom teachers through providing an assessment of student needs and supporting the welfare provisions developed by the school.

Senior Psychologist – Education

- Coordinate and supervise school counsellors and psychologists delivering on the ground support to students and teachers.
- Work with the Education Service teams to support student learning and improve wellbeing procedures.

Support Teacher Transition

- Teachers who provide assistance to students and their families at times when they transition. Examples might include moving from primary to secondary school or transitioning to employment.
- Teachers may also provide information on subject selection and opportunities for families to connect with government agencies.

6. School information documents

Documents are typically required to be completed upon enrolment at a NSW public school.

The links below will take you to the relevant website where information and documents can be downloaded. In all cases, individual schools must be contacted if you require further information.

[Application to Enrol in a NSW Government School](#) - this site includes the standard enrolment form for any student intending to enrol in a NSW Government School.

[Absentee Notices for Students](#) - the information provided in the following link outlines procedures and reasons that relate to student absences from school.

[Exemption from Attendance at a Public School](#) - includes the policy and procedures when a student is looking to apply for an exemption from schooling for a set period of time.

[Anaphylaxis Information](#) - includes information that must be disclosed to a school if a student is at risk of anaphylaxis.

[Student Behaviour Code](#) - the behaviour code addressed on the following website includes standard behaviour expectations for all students attending a NSW Government School. Individual schools are responsible for developing their own policies and expectations that address these common standards.

[Best Start Information](#) - the Best Start assessment applies to all students enrolled in Kindergarten. The assessment is used by teachers to determine a student's abilities and areas for development upon entering school regarding literacy and numeracy.

[Diabetes Information Sheet](#) - outlines information for parents and carers of students who are diagnosed with diabetes.

[Allergy Information](#) - the following link outlines procedures for parents and carers to notify schools of student allergies.

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