

A young boy with dark hair and a wide smile is looking upwards and to the right. He is wearing a dark blue polo shirt with white stripes on the collar. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books and a large globe. The globe is blue and white, showing the Earth's continents and oceans. The boy is sitting at a desk with some papers and a book on it.

Student Support Services Guidelines

May 2012



Published by the Student Wellbeing
and Engagement Division
Department of Education and Early
Childhood Development
2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne,
Victoria, 3002.
May 2012

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Contents

Introduction	7
Governance and Accountability	11
Governance Model	14
Guiding Principles – Governance Model	17
Network Priority Setting	19
Service Planning	21
Student Support Services Resources	22
Disability Discrimination Act	24
Service Delivery Models	27
Roles and Responsibilities	31
Role Description – School Principal	32
Role Description – Executive Chair	34
Role Description – Executive Group	36
Role Description – SSS Coordinator	38
Role Description – Student Support Services	40
Role Description – Psychologists	42
Role Description – Speech Pathologists	44
Role Description – Social Workers	46
Role Description – Visiting Teachers	48
Role Description – Stream Leader	50
Role Description – Regional Advice and Liaison Officer	51
Role Description – Region	52
Role Description – School Wellbeing and Support Staff	53
Service Provision	57
Target Group	58
Holistic Service Provision	60
Service Delivery Continuum	62
Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention	63
Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention	65
Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention	67
Service Delivery Continuum – Restoring Wellbeing	69
Case Preparation	71
Informed Consent	73
Duty of Care/Reporting Child Abuse	75
Educational Needs Assessments	76
Emergency Management	78

Human Resources	81
Human Resource Management and Operations	82
HR Operations for VPS Employees in Networks	84
SSS Workforce Management and Planning	87
Induction	89
Professional Learning for Student Support Services – Principles	91
Professional Learning Requirements – Psychologists	93
Professional Learning Requirements – Speech Pathologists	95
Professional Learning Requirements – Social Workers	97
Professional Learning Requirements – Visiting Teachers	99
Professional Supervision	100
Budgets and Finance	103
SSS Network Budgets in 2012–13	104
Logistics	109
Accommodation	110
General Administration	112
File Management	114
Privacy and Confidentiality	116
Vehicles and Travel	118







Introduction

Introduction

Health and wellbeing is essential to students achieving successful learning outcomes, realising their potential, engaging in wider school life and successfully making transitions through different learning and life stages.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department) is committed to providing safe, inclusive and engaging learning environments in all Victorian schools. This is achieved through the provision of high quality education and support services that are constantly improving the learning outcomes of all students, and catering for diverse needs and learning styles.

Health and wellbeing is essential to students achieving successful learning outcomes, realising their potential, engaging in wider school life and successfully making transitions through different learning and life stages. By recognising the interconnectedness of positive health, wellbeing and learning outcomes, and addressing the needs of students and their families in a holistic manner, the Department seeks to ensure that every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life, while contributing to their local and global communities.

Diverse School Communities

Research by the Centre for Community and Child Health (2009) suggests that in an average student population of 1,000 P-12 students:

- 410 will have a chronic illness (eg asthma or allergy)
- 230 will be overweight or obese
- 150 will experience difficulty reading
- 150 will have a specific learning disability
- 140 will experience a mental health diagnosis
- 100 will be admitted to hospital in any given year

- 90 will exhibit behavioural problems
- 83 will have some form of disability, 43 of which will be severe
- 6 or more will have autism spectrum disorder.

Many of these students will require additional support beyond the general education provided by schools. Providing additional support can address issues such as special education and development, speech and language acquisition, social and emotional health, and engagement with learning.

Student Support Services

The purpose of Student Support Services is to assist children and young people facing a range of barriers to learning to achieve their educational and developmental potential through the provision of a range of strategies and specialised support at individual, group, school and network levels.

Student Support Services comprise a broad range of professionals including psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers and visiting teachers. Student Support Services officers work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within networks of schools, focusing on providing group based and individual support, workforce capacity building, and the provision of specialised services.

Student Support Services operate within networks of schools with objectives to:

- work in collaboration with services within the community to identify and intervene early with children and young people who have additional needs or are at risk of disengagement

- develop the capacity of the workforce within schools to meet the needs of children and young people who have additional needs, or are disadvantaged or vulnerable, to enable them to achieve successful education and wellbeing outcomes
- target the delivery of individual support services to those who require specialised expertise, assessment and intervention in order to overcome barriers to learning
- respond to emerging student wellbeing needs and contribute to identified school and network priorities
- respond to critical incidents involving students, staff and school communities
- facilitate and strengthen partnerships between Student Support Services in schools and early childhood services, community organisations, and community services (especially those related to health, families, children, mental health and youth services) in order to provide greater options and coordinated service provision for children, young people and their families.

Policy Context

Safe and Caring Schools Policy

As part of the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Education, the Government announced the Safe and Caring Schools policy commitment to transfer Student Support Services funding directly to schools to ensure Student Support Services are optimally placed to provide students with the necessary support in a timely manner.

To meet this commitment, the Department has implemented governance changes to provide networks of principals with the control and flexibility to enable government schools to provide the very best education for young Victorians.

The new governance and service delivery model is intended to:

- strengthen and build more effective relationships between principals and Student Support Services officers (SSSOs)
- improve the mutual understanding and respect for the network student services concerns of both principals and SSSOs
- give principals autonomy to decide the priorities of service within a transparent SSS budget allocation for their network
- enable principals to balance the needs of the students in their network to ensure fairness, equity and access in their prioritisation of Student Support Services
- improve opportunities to align the network objectives with the network wellbeing and strategic plans
- maintain a high-quality professional workforce which is timely and responsive to school needs
- improve transparency of funding allocations to resource and support schools
- create minimal disruption in services to schools in the transition to the new model.

Victorian Policy Context

The provision of Student Support Services is informed by a substantial policy context that draws on Departmental, Victorian Government and National policy priorities. The work of Student Support Services is also informed by individual school and network strategic planning, which informs the priorities of the service within this policy context.

Recognition and awareness of the broader policy context allows schools, principals and Student Support Services officers to more successfully create strong partnerships with other government agencies and community groups based on mutual understanding and respect. Knowledge of other programs, initiatives and services also enables educators and support services to provide comprehensive, integrated and tailored interventions for students, groups of students and their families that are responsive to individual or cohort needs, and which provide continuity of care both within and outside of the school gates.

The range of legislation and policies that principals and Student Support Services officers should be aware of is referenced throughout these guidelines. Further information about the Victorian policy context is also available on the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space.



About these guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to support principals and Student Support Services officers in implementing the governance and service delivery model that is a key element of the Victorian Government's Safe and Caring Schools policy.

The guidelines build upon previous guidelines reflecting the evolution of services provided by Student Support Services over time. In developing the guidelines, the Department has consulted with a range of principals, Student Support Services officers and stakeholders.

The guidelines provide a starting point for networks of principals to determine the service delivery model for Student Support Services in their network. Network Executive Groups will be able to complement the guidelines by developing their own local operating protocols over time within the context of these guidelines and policy directions established by government.

Users of these guidelines are strongly encouraged to check the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space and/or Schools Policy and Advisory Guide for the latest version of these guidelines.

Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space

Key to effective collaboration

These guidelines will continue to evolve as new governance arrangements become established in networks. To support the ongoing development of the guidelines, the Department has established an Ultranet Design Space which will include the most up-to-date information.

Principals and Student Support Services are encouraged to collaborate via the Design Space to share effective practice across the state.



To join this Design Space, principals, Student Support Services officers and other school based staff should:

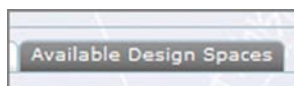
- 1 Logon to the Ultranet (www.ultranet.vic.edu.au)



- 2 Go to Design Spaces (the lightbulb icon in the docked menus at the bottom of the screen).



- 3 Choose the “Available Design Spaces” tab.



- 4 In the search box, type “120886088” and click search.



- 5 Click on the actions button and select “join”.



- 6 Enter the Design Space by clicking on the title.



Student Online Case System

A key knowledge management tool

To support principals and Student Support Services officers, an online case management system (SOCS) is being rolled out to schools from Term 3, 2012. Authorised school users, principals, SSSOs and SSS Coordinators can access the system via the Ultranet Student Support Services Design Space.

SOCS is a case management system for schools and Student Support Services officers that will facilitate the process of case preparation, case allocation, service activity and closure. It will create an ongoing record of the support provided by Student Support Services to students throughout their education and assist networks to facilitate the prioritisation of services.

SOCS will provide networks with a range of Student Support Services information e.g. number and type of requests for service, timeliness of service delivery and satisfaction with service outcomes.

Detailed information about the features of SOCS and how to use the system is available from the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space and professional learning and support will also be available.

Further advice and support

Principals, Student Support Services officers and schools can obtain further advice and support regarding Student Support Services from their Network Executive Chair, SSS Coordinator, Regional Advice and Liaison Officer or Stream Leaders.

Advice is also available via the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088).



A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a red cardigan over a floral top, is smiling and looking down at a young child. The child, with light brown hair and freckles, is wearing a red polo shirt and is focused on playing with colorful letter blocks on a whiteboard. The blocks are arranged in a grid on the whiteboard, with some blocks already placed and others being moved. The background shows a classroom setting with other children and desks.

Governance and Accountability

Governance Model

Through the governance model, principals will have greater flexibility to respond to local issues through autonomous decision making by principals or groups of principals.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the Student Support Services governance model.

Guideline

Overview

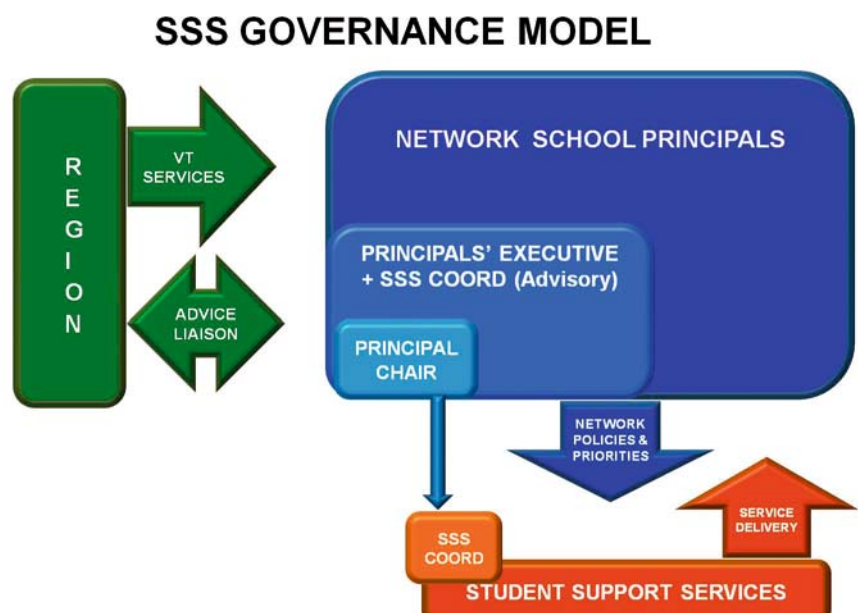
The governance model places responsibility for the management of SSS resources in networks of schools, providing governance and resource control to principals, whilst enabling schools to make economies of scale by pooling their SSS resources.

Key features of the model are:

- network principals, led by an Executive Chair and Executive Group, manage the SSS budget and workforce and set the policies and priorities for service delivery
- each network will receive funding to support the Executive Chair with the coordination and administration of the service across schools
- Student Support Services officers provide service to the network of schools, with professional leadership and support provided by Stream Leaders at a regional level
- each region has a Regional Advice and Liaison Officer to support principals and Regional Directors with advice about Student Support Services.

Model

The governance model is illustrated below:



Built into this governance model is a series of support mechanisms as follows:

- Each network has funding for SSS coordination and administration support for the Executive Chair to manage the personnel, budgets, operational issues and allocation of service to individual schools. Each network has the flexibility to employ officers for these roles or to use this funding for additional Student Support Services in schools and manage Student Support Services through the Executive Chair. The Executive Chair is ultimately responsible for the SSS management, administration and coordination arrangements for the network and will provide direction regarding the network priorities
- Each region has funding for one regional SSS advisory and liaison position to support schools. This position will manage the Visiting Teacher Service, may oversee regional emergency recovery, liaise between the Early Childhood Intervention Services and SSS in schools, provide advice and support to Executive Chairs and SSS Coordinators as required, particularly in court cases and tribunal hearings, and appoint and deploy the SSS Stream Leaders

- Each region has funding (1.2 full-time equivalent) to provide stream leadership for SSS. This funding and any positions created through this funding, will support SSS officers with the provision of professional learning and mentoring to maintain a high quality and professional service to schools. Stream leadership for Visiting Teachers will continue to be arranged and supported through the region.

Through the governance model, principals will have greater flexibility to respond to local issues through autonomous decision making by principals or groups of principals. The model offers schools increased transparency and accountability to meet the local needs of students within each network. There are guiding principles for the governance of Student Support Services that Executive Chairs and Executive Groups will be held accountable for meeting by Network Principals.

Each network is allocated a SSS budget which must be used to provide psychology, speech pathology, social work and related allied health professional services to support students with additional needs. The Visiting Teacher Service and its budget will be managed by regions.

Principals will be held accountable by the Executive Group and all other principals in the network for the management of Student Support Services and its budget and expenditure. Additionally, principals remain accountable to the Regional Director for their overall performance.





Model Benefits

The governance model will:

- strengthen and build more effective relationships between principals and SSSOs
- improve the mutual understanding and respect for the concerns of both principals and SSSOs related to Student Support Services
- support the integration of SSS services with other school based health and wellbeing services
- give networks of principals autonomy to decide the priorities of service within a transparent SSS budget allocation for their network
- enable networks of principals to balance the needs of the students in their network to ensure fairness, equity and access in their prioritisation of Student Support Services
- improve opportunities to align network objectives with network wellbeing and strategic plans
- maintain a high-quality professional workforce which is responsive to student and school needs
- improve transparency of funding allocations to resource and support schools.

Related Guidelines

- [Guiding Principles](#)

Department Resources

- [Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space \(120886088\)](#)
- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)

Guiding Principles – Governance Model

The following principles guide Student Support Services governance and service delivery in schools.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the Student Support Services guiding principles.

Guideline

Overview

The governance model for Student Support Services places the responsibility for the management of SSS resources in networks of schools, providing governance and resource control to principals, whilst enabling schools to make economies of scale by pooling their SSS resources.

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide Student Support Services governance and service delivery in schools.

Managing the service

- *Autonomy and devolution:* Decision making should be devolved as much as possible with school principals responsible for resources and their deployment.
- *Responsiveness:* Governance should be differentiated and responsive to local needs.
- *Transition:* Transition to the new model minimises disruption to service and provides appropriate support to staff.

Service delivery

- *Fairness, equity, access and stages of schooling:* Age appropriate and effective service delivery will support the best outcomes for every student ensuring minimum service provision and access for all whilst targeting areas of greatest need.

- *Prevention:* Primary and early intervention strategies should be a priority when these are more effective than reactive responses to individual crises.
- *Flexibility:* Capacity to respond to statewide priorities and the flexibility to adjust to the changing needs and emerging trends.
- *Integrated service alignment:* Opportunities are created to align closely with service partners and programs enabling a coordinated response.

Maintaining a professional workforce

- *Professionalism:* A high quality professional workforce will be maintained ensuring service standards, recruitment, retention, professional learning, supervision and support are effectively managed.

Ensuring program accountability

- *Accountability:* Clear and efficient processes are in place for managing the SSS program and reporting on outputs and outcomes at local and system-wide levels.

Funding and resource allocation

- *Service integrity:* Allocated SSS funding is used for the program and purpose for which it is provided – to support students with additional needs.
- *Transparency:* The source, allocation and use of funds are clear to all stakeholders.
- *Financial sustainability:* The service delivery processes must ensure that Student Support Services remains financially sustainable.

Until broader service delivery principles are defined for health and wellbeing services, the guiding principles above can be used by network principals when managing the Student Support Services.

Related Guidelines

- Governance Model

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)



Network Priority Setting

Priority setting for Student Support Services is led by the Executive Group and Executive Chair of the Network, in consultation with principals and the SSS Coordinator.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides a suggested process for Network Priority Setting for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Overview

Priority setting for Student Support Services is led by the Executive Group and Executive Chair of the Network, in consultation with principals and the SSS Coordinator.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Group to develop effective processes for consulting all principals within the network and incorporating the needs of every school (primary, secondary, P-12, special, language and reengagement programs etc) into an Annual Work plan that results in the best use of resources to achieve student and school outcomes.

Priorities for Student Support Services can include goals, targets and key strategies aimed at achieving the best possible results in three broad and interrelated outcomes areas that drive education provision in Victoria:

- student learning
- student engagement and wellbeing
- student pathways and transitions.

Priority setting for Student Support Services should also take into consideration primary prevention and early intervention strategies by schools, as the most effective way to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for all students, in addition to providing targeted services to individual students requiring intervention to address complex barriers to learning.

Networks should also establish clear plans for the involvement of Student Support Services in managing critical incidents, emergencies and disasters.

Networks have the flexibility to design an operational model to best suit local priorities. This may be an existing process or a new process. Networks, through the Executive Group, decide the mix of services, priorities and allocations for:

- responses to urgent/high-level needs of students
- long-term or ongoing planned support
- prevention initiatives
- capacity building
- emergency management.



Developing Network Priorities

The development of network priorities broadly takes into consideration:

1. *Different service levels* – how Student Support Services resources are going to be allocated across different service levels, with a focus on primary prevention and early intervention activities.
2. *School priorities* – identification of individual students requiring specialised support, and broader issues to be addressed on a classroom, grade level or school wide basis.
3. *Network priorities* – broad areas of identified need particular to the network that can be addressed through services such as the provision of group-based interventions for particular cohorts of students, or learning and development training for school-based personnel. Networks can establish up to five priorities for action through the Student Online Case System (SOCS) the case management system.
4. *Government priorities* – particular issues or areas of need that are identified by the Department as needing to be addressed by schools through Student Support Services resources.

Related Guidelines

- Governance Model
- Guiding Principles
- Service Planning
- Emergency Management
- Student Online Case System

Department Resources

- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)
- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)

Service Planning

Networks should develop an Annual Work plan specifically for Student Support Services to assist in documenting service capacity and the network's priorities and expectations for the year.

Purpose of this Guideline

To outline the Network service planning requirements for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Overview

Planning and priority setting for Student Support Services is led by the Executive Group and Executive Chair, in consultation with principals and the SSS Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Executive Group to develop effective processes for consulting all principals within the network and incorporating the needs of every school into an Annual Work plan that results in the most effective allocation of resources and optimal student and school outcomes.

Principals will be held accountable by the Executive Group and all other principals in the network for the management of Student Support Services and its budget and expenditure. Additionally, principals remain accountable to their Regional Director for their overall performance.

Each network will be allocated a SSS budget which must be used to provide psychology, speech pathology, social work, and related allied health professional services to support students with additional needs.

Student Support Services Planning

Networks should develop an Annual Work plan specifically for Student Support Services to assist in documenting service capacity and the network's priorities and expectations for the year. An Annual Work plan may

also assist the Executive Chair and SSS Coordinator (where appointed) in the management, coordination and administration of Student Support Services, including meeting identified priorities.

An Annual Work plan may include:

- team overview – including staffing composition, roles and responsibilities, location, and basic information about network school characteristics
- annual priorities – linked to network strategic planning and aligned with broader regional and statewide priorities
- actions – may include targeted service delivery areas or professional learning strategies to support Student Support Services to deliver the plan.

One approach might be for networks to establish up to five priority levels for service delivery to guide the work of Student Support Service Officers. These priorities should be included in the Student Online Case System to guide service allocation.

A template for network service planning is available via the Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space.

Related Guidelines

- Reporting and Evaluation
- Accountability – General
- Network Priority Setting

Department Resources

- [School Accountability and Improvement Framework](#)
- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)

Student Support Services Resources

The model provides Student Support Services funding to schools through a coordinating school in each network. SSS funding will be quarantined and identifiable and school networks will be accountable for using the funds accordingly.

Purpose of this Guideline

To outline the funding and budget resources available to Networks for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Overview

Planning and priority setting for Student Support Services is led by the Executive Group and Executive Chair, in consultation with principals and the SSS Coordinator. The Executive Group and Executive Chair will manage the Student Support Services resources and personnel on behalf of all principals in each network. Networks will decide the mix of services and priorities/allocations for:

- response to urgent/high-level needs of students
- long-term or ongoing planned support
- prevention initiatives
- emergency management.

Each network is funded to enable the employment of a SSS Coordinator and to provide administrative support to organise the day-to-day management of SSSOs, if that is the network's decision regarding its mode of operation, under the direction of the Executive Chair.

Executive Chairs and SSS Coordinators are supported to manage Student Support Services through:

- guidelines and advice for principals with recommended student support service models to inform operational decision making in networks
- training and support for the Student Online Case System (SOCS)

- inclusion of the SSS Coordinator (if appointed) in an advisory capacity in each Executive Group
- continuation of the existing network resources for administration and coordination of Student Support Services
- dedicated professional development days for Executive Chairs and SSS Coordinators.

Proposed Resource Allocation

Direct allocation of the SSS budget and personnel to networks of schools will meet the Government's objectives of providing resource control to principals, whilst enabling schools to make economies of scale by pooling their SSS resources and to allocate SSS resources in accordance with network priorities.

There is a budget allocation in each network for SSS operational costs. The budget will cover expenses including accommodation (incl utilities etc), professional learning, assessment and test materials, publications, information technology, travel, mobile phones and vehicle leases.

The model provides Student Support Services funding to schools through a coordinating school in each network. SSS funding will be quarantined and identifiable and school networks will be accountable for using the funds accordingly. The Executive Chair and Executive Group will be accountable to all principals in the network through an annual, transparent report for the appropriate expenditure of Student Support Services resources.

Regions are funded for a Regional Advice and Liaison Officer and Stream Leaders.

Related Guidelines

- Human Resources
- Logistics
- Accommodation
- General Administration
- Travel and vehicles

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet
Design Space (120886088)



Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Standards for Education (2005) clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the DDA.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide advice to principals of their legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) Standards for Education 2005

Guideline

The Disability Standards for Education (2005) clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the DDA. The Standards cover the following areas:

- enrolment
- participation
- curriculum development
- Student Support Services
- harassment and victimisation.

All education providers and schools are required to comply with the Standards introduced by the Federal Government in August 2005.

The Standards are intended to give students with disabilities the same rights as other students. The Standards are based on the position that all students, including students with disabilities, should be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in an educationally supportive environment that values and encourages participation by all students. To achieve this, the effect of the Standards is to give students and prospective students with disabilities the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without disabilities. This includes the right to comparable access, services and facilities, and the right to participate in education and training unimpeded by discrimination,

including on the basis of stereotyped beliefs about the abilities and choices of students with disabilities.

The Standards apply to all students with disabilities – whether or not the student is eligible under the Program for Students with Disabilities. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides a range of resources, specialist knowledge and programs and procedures to schools to support the delivery of a high quality programs for all students, including students who are having difficulty learning. These resources may be provided in the Student Resource Package, through other support services such as by psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers, and visiting teachers, or through specific early identification and intervention programs.

The Standards inform and guide schools in providing high quality education to all students with disabilities.

Standards for Student Support Services

The following text is an extract from section 7.1 of the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

Note that the Standards are currently under review by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Workplace Relations. See <http://www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/programs/pages/disabilitystandardsforeducation.aspx> for further information and the latest version of the standards.

Disability Standards for Education 2005

7.1 Application of Part

This Part applies in relation to:

- a) a student with a disability who is enrolled in an educational institution; and
- b) an education provider that is:
 - i) the educational institution mentioned in paragraph (a); or
 - ii) an educational authority that administers the educational institution.

Rights given by this Part

The effect of the following standards is to give students with disabilities rights in relation to Student Support Services provided by educational authorities and institutions, on the same basis as students without disabilities.

The standards also give students with disabilities rights in relation to specialised services needed for them to participate in the educational activities for which they are enrolled. These services include specialist expertise, personal educational support or support for personal and medical care, without which some students with disabilities would not be able to access education and training.

7.2 Standards for support services

- 1) The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to use support services used by the students of the institution in general on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

- 2) If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and is of a kind that is provided by the education provider, the provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student has access to the service (but may arrange for it to be provided by another person or agency).

- 3) If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and is of a kind that is not provided by the provider, the provider must take reasonable steps to facilitate the provision of the service to the student by another person or agency.

- 4) Each of:

- a) the provision of access to specialised support services mentioned in subsection (2); and
- b) the facilitation by the provider of the provision of specialised support services mentioned in subsection (3);

is an adjustment for the purposes of these Standards.

- 5) The provider must:

- a) consult the student, or an associate of the student, about whether the disability affects the student's ability to access support services used by the students of the institution; and
- b) in the light of that consultation, decide whether an adjustment

is necessary to ensure that the student is able to access those support services on the same basis as a student without a disability; and

- c) if:

- i) an adjustment is necessary to achieve the aim mentioned in paragraph (b); and
- ii) a reasonable adjustment can be identified in relation to that aim;

make a reasonable adjustment for the student in accordance with Part 3.

- 6) The provider must:

- a) consult the student, or an associate of the student, about the need for the student to have access to specialised support services that are provided by the provider or by other persons or agencies; and
- b) in the light of that consultation, decide whether an adjustment of the kind mentioned in subsection (4) is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled; and

- c) if:

- i) an adjustment is necessary to achieve the aim mentioned in paragraph (b); and
- ii) a reasonable adjustment can be identified in relation to that aim;

make a reasonable adjustment for the student in accordance with Part 3.

- 7) The provider must repeat the processes set out in subsections (5) and (6) as necessary to allow for the changing needs of the student over time.
- 8) For this section:
 - a) the provider has taken reasonable steps to comply with subsection (1) if the provider has complied with subsection (5) and with subsection (7) as it relates to subsection (5); and
 - b) the provider has taken reasonable steps to comply with subsections (2) and (3) if the provider has complied with subsection (6) and with subsection (7) as it relates to subsection (6).

Note: See Part 10 [of the standards] for exceptions to the legal obligations set out in the standards. These include a provision that it is not unlawful for an education provider to fail to comply with a standard if, and to the extent that, compliance would impose unjustifiable hardship on the provider (section 10.2).

7.3 Measures for compliance with standards

Measures that the education provider may implement to ensure that the student is able to access support services used by students in general, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and to ensure his or her access to specialised support services, include measures ensuring that:

- a) staff of education providers are aware of the specialised services available for the student and are provided with information that enables them to assist the student to access the services that the student needs; and
- b) the provision of specialised services for the student, where necessary, is facilitated, including through collaborative arrangements with specialised service providers; and
- c) any necessary specialised equipment is provided to support the student in participating in the course or program; and
- d) appropriately trained support staff, such as specialist teachers, interpreters, note-takers and teachers' aides, are made available to students with disabilities.

Examples

Examples of the specialised services mentioned in paragraph 7.3 (c) include services in health, personal care and therapy, and services provided by speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

Examples of the specialised equipment mentioned in paragraph 7.3 (d) include adaptive technology and assistive devices.

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultramet Design Space (120886088)
- DEECD [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)

Other Resources

- DEEWR [Disability Standards for Education Website](#)

Related Legislation

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)

Service Delivery Models

Principals are responsible for determining the best service delivery model for the network that results in the best outcomes for students facing barriers to learning.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of service delivery models available for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Overview

Principals are responsible for determining the best service delivery model for the network that results in the best outcomes for students facing barriers to learning. A variety of identification, assessment and case management activities are possible within each model, such as:

- developing programs for students of a particular age or with particular issues
- referrals by individuals including students themselves, parents, teachers, principals, early childhood or community agencies
- service provision based on assessments of priority or need by teachers, principals, Student Support Services, SSS Coordinators or Executive Chairs.

Networks will also need to decide whether Student Support Services officers are to be located within individual schools or a base location, line management arrangements and how resource will be allocated in accordance with the Student Support Services Guidelines.

The service delivery model utilised may have significant variations between metropolitan and rural/regional areas, based on unique considerations such as remoteness, small school size, demographic, and highly transient

populations. These factors must be taken into consideration by principals when tailoring the governance, management and service delivery arrangements to each network.

Models

The following models are provided as examples of ways Networks may choose to manage Student Support Services.

Network Coordination Model

This model utilises a SSS Coordinator position to assess, allocate and manage requests for service provision from schools. Under this model, the SSS Coordinator is also likely to provide primary line management to Student Support Services officers, and support the Executive Chair to manage the coordination and administration of the service. Student Support Services officers may be accommodated in either a base location or individual schools.

Direct Service Model

Under this model, requests for service are sent to Student Support Services officers located within individual schools. This may or may not occur via the SSS Coordinator. Under this model, the Executive Chair is responsible for the coordination and administration of the broader SSS service in the network and is the main point of contact for school principals. Line management for Student Support Services officers may be provided by a nominated principal, SSS Coordinator, or a combination of the two. Networks have the flexibility to decide if a SSS Coordinator is utilised under this model, or to have a nominated principal provide coordination support, or another mechanism.

Outsourced Model

Under this model, the network allocates specific levels of resources to purchase services in psychology, speech pathology or social work at the network level or for individual schools based on anticipated levels of demand for these services. The network, or individual schools, would maintain agreements or contracts with service providers to facilitate the delivery of services.

Mixed Model

This is a hybrid model that utilises aspects of the above models, tailored to local needs. Many different variations of this model are possible. One possibility includes a network implementing the central coordination model for a proportion of student support resources in order to progress agreed network-wide or cross-school priorities, while the remaining resources are allocated through a direct service model as the most appropriate way for schools to tailor service provision.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)









Roles and Responsibilities

Role Description – School Principal

It is the role of schools to plan and implement strategies that maximise all students access to teaching and learning and help them to develop as healthy, secure and resilient people.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview of the role of the school principal in relation to the governance model for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

The network of school principals will be led by an Executive Chair and Executive Group to manage the SSS budget and workforce and to set the policies and priorities for service delivery.

School principals, working as a group, will decide the size and composition of their Executive Group.

Role

As part of the new governance model, school principals play an important role within each network. School principals contribute to the management of Student Support Services in the network by:

- electing the Executive Group on a biannual basis
- contributing to the development of service priorities for the network
- determining network SSS policies and guidelines within the broader framework of DEECD policies and priorities, and standards and requirements for accountability
- monitoring the allocation of Student Support Services resources across the network
- approving the annual report on network SSS provision

- determining the frequency of meetings for all principals in the network with there being a minimum of two per annum.

Case Preparation

Schools, as the primary provider of education, are responsible for providing high quality education and primary prevention and early intervention programs that address the health, wellbeing, education and learning needs of students.

It is the role of schools to plan and implement strategies that maximise all students access to teaching and learning and help them to develop as healthy, secure and resilient people. All other avenues of intervention and service provision offered by schools under the general curriculum should be explored before Student Support Services involvement occurs, to ensure services target students with the greatest need.

School principals have an important role to play in ensuring that there are processes in place to for the identification and follow up of students who require the assistance of Student Support Services and undertaking case preparation and monitoring for these students. This role is undertaken by principals or their delegate(s) in collaboration with the leadership team and a range of teaching staff in the school.

Case preparation is undertaken through the collection of information about the needs of a student that can then be provided to Student Support Services through the Student Online Case System.

Case preparation may include (but is not limited to):

- identification of students or groups of students who require additional assistance and the type of support they require
- collection of information on students' engagement and learning progress or difficulties
- review of relevant information available to the school which might help to clarify issues affecting student learning or wellbeing, such as specialist reports
- development of individual learning plans for students outlining a range of actions and classroom – and school-based strategies to address concerns
- evaluation of the effectiveness of individual learning plan actions and strategies
- identification of broader advice, expertise or services that may be required, such as consultation, professional learning, early intervention programs or group work with students.

The case preparation process ensures that utilisation of Student Support Services is prioritised in the most effective way by schools and networks to optimise support and encourage positive learning and engagement outcomes. This allows for a more focused approach to service provision and helps to consolidate or clarify the nature of the issues identified.

Appropriate responses

Case preparation helps to clarify the presenting problem or need. This may highlight that the presenting problem or need can be addressed by different strategies or approaches within the classroom or school, without the need for the additional assistance of Student Support Services.

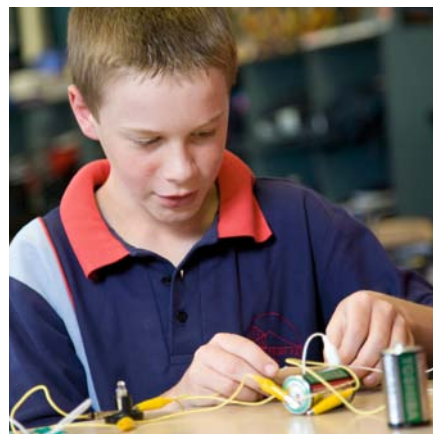
In some instances, it may help to identify that it is more appropriate to refer students to external services, particularly in the case of serious mental health issues, welfare concerns, sexual assault, autism assessment and various health issues.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – School Wellbeing and Support Staff
- Role Description – Executive Group

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)



Role Description – Executive Chair

The Executive Chair is responsible for the management of Student Support Services resources and personnel in collaboration with school principals and the SSS Coordinator, where one is appointed by the network.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an outline of the role of the Executive Chair in the governance structure for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Overview

Each network of schools is led by an Executive Chair and Executive Group to manage the SSS budget and workforce and to set the policies and priorities for service delivery.

The Executive Chair is responsible for the management of Student Support Services resources and personnel in collaboration with school principals and the SSS Coordinator, where one is appointed by the network.

Each network is funded to support the Executive Chair with administration and coordination of the service across schools.

Election

The Executive Chair of the SSS Network is elected by the network principals for a two year term and may seek re-election. Elections should be completed by the end of Term 1 in the year they are required.

Role

The role of the Executive Chair should be clearly defined in the Terms of Reference for the network established by the Executive Group and endorsed by network principals through its Annual Work plan.

The role of the Executive Chair may include (but is not limited to):

- representing the needs and interests of the Executive Group and network school principals
- working with the Executive Group to establish the Terms of Reference of the Executive Group
- working with the Executive Group and network principals to establish priorities for service delivery and lead network planning for the network
- implementing network SSS policies and guidelines within statewide policies, priorities, standards and requirements for accountability
- responding to critical incidents and emergencies in accordance with the network emergency management plan
- selecting and recommending the appointment of the SSS Coordinator (in accordance with standard recruitment processes) to the Executive Group and Network Principals
- line management of the network SSS Coordinator
- consideration of network recruitment and retention strategies for Student Support Services
- responding to grievances from network principals and Student Support Services officers
- preparation of the annual report(s) and budgets.

The Executive Chair manages Student Support Services resources and personnel on behalf of all principals in each network, although this role may be delegated to a SSS Coordinator if one is appointed by the Network.

SSS Coordinators and Stream Leaders will be useful resources for Executive Chairs to call upon for support in regard to network planning, management of Student Support Services, professional learning and supervision.

Following consultation with network principals the Executive Chair will lead the Executive Group to decide the mix of network services and priorities/allocations for:

- response to urgent /high-level needs of students
- long-term or ongoing planned support
- prevention initiatives
- capacity building
- emergency management.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – Executive Group
- Role Description – SSS Coordinators
- Role Description – Regional Advice and Liaison Officer

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)



Role Description – Executive Group

School principals determine the size and composition of their Executive Group. The Executive Group consists of school principals who govern and administer their Student Support Services.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an outline the role of Executive Group in the governance structure for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Overview

The network of school principals will be led by an Executive Chair and Executive Group to manage the SSS budget and workforce and to set the policies and priorities for service delivery. Each network receives funding to support the Executive Chair with administration and coordination of the service across schools.

School principals determine the size and composition of their Executive Group. The Executive Group consists of school principals who govern and administer their Student Support Services. Once an Executive Group is established, they will appoint an Executive Chair from their membership to lead the group and manage Student Support Services for every school (primary, secondary, P-12, special, language and reengagement programs etc.) within the network.

Where appointed, the SSS Coordinator provides support to the Executive Chair to deploy the Student Support Services within the network, in accordance with network policies and guidelines. Student Support Service officers will provide service support to students within each network, as allocated by the SSS Coordinator.

Election

The composition of the Executive Group is determined by network principals. The Executive Group will:

- be elected by the network principals for two year terms, members may seek re-election
- include an appropriate mix of principals from primary, secondary, specialist schools and reengagement programs as determined by network principals
- include the principal of the coordinating school for finance and human resources for the network
- include the SSS Coordinator, if appointed
- elect an Executive Chair and Deputy Chair (if required) to lead the Executive Group.

Elections should be completed by the end of Term 1 in the year they are required.

The SSS Coordinator, if appointed, is automatically an advisory member of the Executive Group and attends meetings of the Executive Group.

If a Network chooses not to employ a SSS Coordinator, the Executive Group should appoint a SSS Officer from the network to advise and support the Executive Group.

Role

The role of the Executive Group should be clearly defined in the Terms of Reference for the network established by the Executive Group and endorsed by network principals.

The key role of the Executive Group may include (but is not limited to):

- developing Terms of Reference for the Executive Group and Executive Chair for approval by network principals
- overseeing the development of an Annual Work plan
- representing the needs and interests of network principals in regard to Student Support Services
- working with the Executive Group and network principals to determine network SSS policies and guidelines within the broader framework of DEECD policies and priorities, and standards and requirements for accountability established by professional bodies
- establishing emergency management procedures for critical incidents, emergencies or disasters that affect more than one school
- supporting the Executive Chair to manage Student Support Services in the Network (via the SSS Coordinator if appointed)
- meeting with the Executive Chair on an 'as needed' basis
- determining the frequency of Executive Group meetings
- recommending for network approval SSS policies and operational guidelines for the delivery of services within the network
- approving the appointment of the SSS Coordinator.

The Executive Chair will lead the Executive Group to decide the mix of network services and priorities/allocations for:

- response to urgent /high-level needs of students
- long-term or ongoing planned support
- prevention initiatives
- capacity building
- emergency management.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – Executive Chair
- Role Description – SSS Coordinator
- Network Priority Setting
- Service Planning

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)



Role Description – SSS Coordinator

SSS Coordinators provide support to the Executive Chair to deploy Student Support Services within the network, in accordance with government, Department and network policies and guidelines.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an outline the role of SSS Coordinator in the governance structure for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Overview

SSS Coordinators provide support to the Executive Chair to deploy Student Support Services within the network, in accordance with government, Department and network policies and guidelines.

Appointment

The SSS Coordinator is appointed by the Executive Chair following consultation with the Executive Group and network principals. Appointment of the SSS Coordinator is undertaken using standard recruitment processes and should be advertised via Recruitment Online.

While the Executive Group can recruit a SSS Coordinator appropriate to the needs of the network, it is **strongly** recommended that SSS Coordinators be an allied health professional or have significant allied health experience. This will ensure that the SSS Coordinator can provide appropriate support to the Executive Chair, Executive Group and Student Support Services officers if the network believes this might support the operation of that network and employment mix within the network.

Role

The SSS Coordinator works with the Executive Chair to manage Student Support Services in the network and provide advice to the Executive Group and Executive Chair on the operation of Student Support Services in the Network.

The key role of the SSS Coordinator may include (but is not limited to):

- line management and leadership of Student Support Services officers in accordance with network and Departmental policies and guidelines
- recruitment, appointment and induction of Student Support Services officers as required
- performance appraisal of Student Support Services officers within the network
- acting as an advisory member of the Executive Group
- establishing and strengthening links and pathways between relevant departments, services, community organisations and schools to optimise support for vulnerable children, young people and their families
- coordination of the Student Online Case System within the network
- facilitating network meetings of Student Support Services officers as required
- collection of required SSS data to provide the basis for reporting and accountability
- consulting and working with regional Stream Leaders to support ongoing professional development of Student Support Services
- management of administrative staff if required.

SSS Administration

Each network is funded for the provision of administrative support to organise the day-to-day management of SSSOs under the direction of the Executive Chair and SSS Coordinator. Administration activities may include:

- maintaining base room resources (e.g., stationery orders) for co-located Student Support Services officers
- ordering test materials (e.g., test forms/equipment etc) to support service provision
- coordinating and supporting of Executive Group meetings.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – Executive Group
- Role Description – Executive Chair
- General Administration

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)



Role Description – Student Support Services

Student Support Services officers work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within schools and networks of schools, focusing on providing group based and individual support, workforce capacity building, and the provision of specialised services.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the role of Student Support Services.

Guideline

Multi-disciplinary teams

Student Support Services officers work in multidisciplinary teams, enabling strong collaboration between a team of professionals from different professional streams with varied and complimentary capabilities, knowledge and training. This approach provides greater capacity to respond to the differing and complex needs of students, while creating opportunities to share information.

Student Support Services officers work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within schools and networks of schools, focusing on providing group based and individual support, workforce capacity building, and the provision of specialised services.

Role

Operating individually and in teams, Student Support Services work:

- directly with groups of students and individuals to:
 - provide direct support or intervention to address barriers to learning and engagement
 - undertake various assessments (eg cognitive, speech and language, psychosocial) as required to identify additional learning needs and at risk or vulnerable student cohorts

- respond to critical incidents, emergencies and disasters and providing recovery and restoring wellbeing.
- to build workforce capacity by:
 - working with schools to strengthen student wellbeing processes and programs to benefit all students
 - providing advice and expertise about student wellbeing, engagement and inclusion
 - improving school capacity to meet the needs of students with additional needs through consultancy, professional learning, teaching and learning strategies, service coordination and case management
 - contributing to the development of student learning or support plans for students with disabilities, behavioural issues or other learning and wellbeing needs, including identifying and facilitating the involvement of other services
 - contributing to the development and implementation of student wellbeing primary prevention and early intervention programs and strategies in schools
 - assisting schools to identify students with additional learning, wellbeing, or communication needs in order to commence earlier support planning and prevent disengagement.

Specialised Services

Student Support Services officers provide professional advice, consultancy and support to principals, school staff, school communities and school networks. Their roles and functions may differ significantly, depending on their particular discipline or expertise.

Each SSS network is able to employ or contract psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers to deliver Student Support Services, providing schools with the expertise of multiple allied health professionals from different disciplines who are trained to address physical, developmental, educational, emotional, cognitive, communicative, and social barriers to learning.

This arrangement facilitates:

- consistency and continuity of service provision
- timeliness of response to requests for assistance
- the formation of strong relationships between schools and Student Support Services officers
- collaboration between professionals from different disciplines
- a greater capacity to respond to students' differing and complex needs, particularly those who have disengaged from school, have a severe disability, or are in out-of-home care
- provision of the most appropriate services based on cross-discipline expertise.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Psychologists
- Role Description – Speech Pathologists
- Role Description – Social Workers
- Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- Statewide Vision Resource Centre (www.svrc.vic.edu.au)
- Victorian Deaf Education Institute (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/vdei>)



Role Description – Psychologists

Psychologists and Guidance Officers provide comprehensive psychological services to schools. Psychologists are concerned with psychological and mental health issues that are affect developmental and learning outcomes and student wellbeing.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of Student Support Services, particularly Psychologists and Guidance Officers.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Psychologists and guidance officers are experienced in assessing and developing strategies to address the emotional and mental health needs of children, young people and their families, within an educational context. They work as part of multidisciplinary teams in schools and networks to support students and teachers.

Psychologists and guidance officers provide comprehensive psychological services to schools. Psychologists are concerned with psychological and mental health issues that affect developmental and learning outcomes and student wellbeing. This can encompass a broad range of areas including, but not limited to, learning issues, cognitive issues, behavioural issues, disabilities, mental health, school and work transitions, self-esteem, grief and loss, trauma, anger management, relationships, conflict, sexuality, and drug/alcohol involvement.

Role

Services provided by psychologists may include (but are not limited to):

- conducting individual assessments regarding development, learning and behavioural difficulties and risk assessments for serious mental health issues
- completing assessment reports
- providing individual counselling and support, group interventions or family engagement related to educational and wellbeing outcomes for students
- supporting teachers by providing advice about relevant teaching and learning strategies
- assisting teachers with program development and implementation
- providing support and advice about the requirements of the Program for Students with Disabilities including acting as a DEECD nominee if required
- providing professional learning to teachers and school communities
- providing advice to schools on wellbeing and engagement policies
- liaising with community service organisations, DHS, hospitals, specialist programs and other professionals
- emergency management and attending critical incidents in schools where appropriate
- providing case support, assistance and peer supervision to other psychologists and Student Support Services officers.

All psychology/guidance stream officers are required to possess a graduate or postgraduate qualification in psychology, along with registration with the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Agency as appropriate for the level of the role. Guidance Officers require appropriate teaching qualifications and registrations in addition to their qualifications in psychology.

Networks may choose to employ provisional psychologists and arrange the required level of professional supervision. However, it should be noted that there are significant obligations relating to supervision of, and professional learning for, provisional psychologists which must be provided by the network. Executive Chairs and SSS Coordinators should seek advice from Stream Leaders regarding these arrangements and the suitability of using provisional psychologists within a network.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Speech Pathologists
- Role Description – Social Workers
- Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- Program for Students with Disabilities



Role Description – Speech Pathologists

Speech pathologists assess and treat communication impairments, disorders or disabilities, as well as complex communication needs arising from disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy or intellectual disability etc.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of Speech Pathologists.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Speech pathologists have an in-depth knowledge of all aspects of communication including speaking, listening, language, pragmatics, and reading, in addition to augmentative communication methods (signs, symbols and gestures). They work as part of multidisciplinary teams in schools and networks to support students and teachers.

Speech pathologists assess and treat communication impairments, disorders or disabilities, as well as complex communication needs arising from disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy or intellectual disability etc. Children and young people who have difficulties in swallowing are generally referred to external specialist services.

Communication difficulties arise when a child or young person has problems with speaking, expressive or receptive language, pragmatics, articulation, voice, fluency, hearing, or reading (e.g. phonological processing) and writing. Communication difficulties can affect a child's ability to understand others and to be understood themselves, which can impact on their learning, literacy, social development and quality of life.

Speech pathologists are experienced in the assessment and treatment of communication difficulties and provide intervention and support to teachers and families in the development of effective programs and strategies for students with additional communication needs that create barriers to learning.

Role

Services provided by speech pathologists may include (but are not limited to):

- conducting speech and language assessments (e.g., speech, oral language, phonological awareness, voice, fluency, pragmatics etc)
- completing assessment reports
- providing speech therapy intervention to individual students and groups of students
- consulting with teachers and providing advice about relevant teaching and learning strategies in order to build capacity in schools
- providing group interventions including coordination of the Language Support Program assisting teachers with program development and implementation
- collaborating with allied health professionals in response to the needs of students, their families and schools
- providing professional development for teachers and integration aides in relation to speech and language
- providing support and advice about the requirements of the Program for Students with Disabilities including acting as a DEECD nominee if required

- providing case support and assistance to other speech pathologists and Student Support Services officers.

All speech pathology stream officers are required to possess approved qualifications in speech pathology that are acceptable for membership to Speech Pathology Australia, including a university degree.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Psychologists
- Role Description – Social Workers
- Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Language Support Program



Role Description – Social Workers

School social work is a specific field of social work that encompasses direct practice, service management, organisational development and system change, policy, research and education and professional development.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of Social workers.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Social workers are highly trained professionals, dedicated to working in partnership with individuals, groups and communities to help them reach their full potential by addressing barriers to health and wellbeing. These barriers may include social and economic disadvantage, individual differences resulting from cultural, language and sexual preferences, bullying, grief and loss, substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness. They do this by working with individuals, groups and communities in the pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources and by working with individuals toward the realisation of their intellectual, physical and emotional potentials (About Social Work, AASW 2004).

School social work is a specific field of social work that encompasses direct practice, service management, organisational development and system change, policy, research and education and professional development. School social workers have unique access to and ability to work with individuals,

groups and communities at the interface between the student, school organisation and curriculum, peers, family, neighborhood and wider society (AASW Standards for School Social Workers – August 2008).

Social workers are experienced in the development and implementation of programs and strategies that foster resilience in children and young people and address their social, emotional and educational needs. Social Workers address individual functioning related to the whole system around a child and intervenes at these levels. Social workers also undertake psychosocial assessments, mental health tests/assessments. They work as part of multidisciplinary teams in schools and networks to support students and teachers.

Role

Services provided by social workers may include (but are not limited to):

- psycho-social assessment including risk assessment in cases of serious mental illness (e.g., suicidal ideation and self-harm)
- emergency management and critical incident response
- advocacy and support for students and families
- liaison with external community service providers or allied health professionals
- consultation and advice for teachers about program development and implementation

- individual counselling and group interventions
- classroom and behaviour management
- professional development (e.g., teachers, welfare staff and integration aides)
- providing case support and assistance to other social workers and Student Support Services officers.

All social workers are required to have graduate or postgraduate qualifications in social work or other qualifications that meets the requirements for membership of the [Australian Association of Social Workers](#).

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Psychologists
- Role Description – Speech Pathologists
- Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Types of social work provision may include:

Prevention	Early Intervention	Intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs (small groups, whole class, year levels) • Wellbeing strategies and activities • Provision of professional development for teachers • Parent information and education • Development of student wellbeing policies and guidelines • Research into student issues • Community service planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work with students with particular needs • Development of innovative programs to meet needs • Consultation with teachers or families • Implementation of student supports • Counselling and casework • Review of school issues or policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling and casework • Referral to other services • Consultation with teachers • School policy change • Individual crisis intervention • Community crisis management • Critical incident management



Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Visiting teachers provide direct teaching, high-level advice and a range of supports to classroom teachers, education support staff, students, families and the wider school community.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of visiting teachers.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Visiting teachers provide direct teaching, high-level advice and a range of supports to classroom teachers, education support staff, students, families and the wider school community. Visiting teachers often provide region-wide support to students, working with eligible students in three streams: physical/health impaired, vision impaired, and hearing impaired. Visiting teachers may also be employed in specialist areas, such as autism, learning difficulties/disabilities, attendance or behaviour support where they have the required expertise.

Role

Visiting teachers undertake a variety of roles that may include (but are not limited to):

- direct teaching and assessment of students, including monitoring, evaluating and reporting student progress
- providing specialist advice and support to school staff to support the teaching of students with additional learning, visual, hearing, physical, health or wellbeing needs

- assisting schools in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of integrated support services for students with additional needs
- assisting the class teacher to modify curriculum where required
- modelling exemplary practice
- implementing student supports such as specialist curriculum in Braille, hearing tactics and use of adaptive technology.
- liaising with parents, medical and paramedical personnel and relevant disability and support agencies
- providing case support and assistance to other visiting teachers and Student Support Services officers.

All visiting teachers require appropriate teaching qualifications and registration with the [Victorian Institute of Teaching](#), as well as a recognised special education qualification in a specialist area of education as appropriate (for example hearing impairment, vision impairment, learning difficulties/disabilities, additional health or physical needs, autism or behaviour support).

Visiting teachers also work with a range of Department and external agencies such as the [Victorian Deaf Education Institute](#), [Statewide Vision Resource Centre](#), [Autism Teaching Institute](#), Royal Children's Hospital Education Institute, and Monash Children's Hospital and provide information regarding specific disabilities, conditions or related issues and their educational implications.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Psychologists
- Role Description – Speech Pathologists
- Role Description – Social Workers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)



Role Description – Stream Leader

Stream leaders support SSS officers with the provision of professional learning and mentoring to maintain a high quality and professional service to schools.



Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of stream leaders.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Each region has funding (1.2 full-time equivalent) to provide stream leadership for Student Support Services. This funding and any positions created through this funding, will support SSS officers with the provision of professional learning and mentoring to maintain a high quality and professional service to schools. Stream leadership for visiting teachers will continue to be arranged and supported through the region.

Regions will determine the mix of stream leaders within the context of the workforce and available budget in the region. It is expected that stream leader positions in psychology, speech pathology, social work and visiting teachers will be managed by the region.

Role

The role of Stream Leaders may include (but is not limited to):

- providing professional learning and support to Student Support Services officers in their stream within a region (eg conferences, provision of resources and workshops)
- providing or arranging for professional supervision (individual and/or group) of Student Support Services officers in consultation with SSS Coordinators
- providing advice and support to SSS Coordinators to support the management of Student Support Services officers

- providing support and advice about the requirements of the Program for Students with Disabilities
- identifying emerging issues for their stream and communicating these to Executive Chairs for consideration in network planning
- participating in network planning upon request from Executive Chairs
- consulting and working with SSS Coordinators across the region to support ongoing professional development of Student Support Services
- participating in network meetings of Student Support Services officers
- disseminating relevant profession specific information and materials
- ensuring that each stream meets professional requirements for registration
- working with stream leaders across the state to ensure that practices for service delivery in regions and networks operate in accordance with guidance from professional associations (eg Australian Psychological Society, Speech Pathology Australia, Australian Association of Social Workers, Victorian Institute of Teaching).
- Work with RALOs to identify and manage Student Support Services issues at a regional level.

Related Guidelines

- Role Descriptions for Student Support Services
- Network Planning

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Role Description – Regional Advice and Liaison Officer

Each region has a Regional Advice and Liaison Officer to support Executive Chairs and Regional Directors with advice about Student Support Services in the region.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of the Regional Advice and Liaison Officer.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Governance Model

Guideline

Overview

Each region has a Regional Advice and Liaison Officer to support Executive Chairs and Regional Directors with advice about Student Support Services in the region.

Role

The role of Regional Advice and Liaison Officers may include (but is not limited to):

- managing stream leaders within the region
- managing the Visiting Teacher Team Leader and Visiting Teacher service in the region

- providing an interface between Early Childhood Intervention Services and Student Support Services in schools
 - providing support and advice to Executive Chairs as appropriate and in response to court or tribunal hearings (in collaboration with the Department's Legal Unit).
 - appointing and managing Student Support Services Stream Leaders.
- The RALO may also be responsible for coordinating regional emergency management and critical incident recovery (see SSS guidelines for Emergency Management).

Related Guidelines

- Role Descriptions for Student Support Services
- Emergency Management

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)

Role Description – Region

The region, through the Regional Director, Regional Advice and Liaison Officer and Stream Leaders, is responsible for ensuring that networks operate within statewide policies, priorities, standards and requirements for accountability.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the role of the Regional Office in supporting Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Governance Model

Guideline

Overview

The region, through the Regional Director, Regional Advice and Liaison Officer and Stream Leaders, is responsible for:

- ensuring that networks operate within statewide policies, priorities, standards and requirements for accountability
- supporting the Executive Chairs of SSS networks
- management of emergencies/critical incidents beyond the capacity of school networks including temporary redirection of network Student Support Services resources

- working with the central office when emergencies/critical incidents are beyond regional capabilities to effectively respond
- management of legal issues related to Student Support Services provision
- liaison and support to Executive Chairs of SSS networks
- liaison with ECIS and networks on Student Support Services provision
- management and provision of Visiting Teacher services across the region.

Related Guidelines

- Role Descriptions for Student Support Services

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)

Role Description – School Wellbeing and Support Staff

Development of connections between schools and local service providers is essential to effective delivery of Student Support Services.



Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of school wellbeing and support staff through governance structure of Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Role Description – Student Support Services

Guideline

Overview

Student Support Services are part of a range of student wellbeing, health and child and family support services. Support services for children, young people and their families play a variety of roles, depending on individual needs. Support may be provided by one or more services working together to optimise support service provision.

Development of connections between schools and local service providers is essential to effective delivery of Student Support Services. Local service providers may be able to provide timely and ongoing support to children, young people and their families, particularly those with additional needs or vulnerabilities.

Student Support Services planning may include strategies for working with school wellbeing and support services staff to:

- strengthen school–parent partnerships
- strengthen the relationship between Student Support Services and other DEECD staff, including early childhood services, school nurses and School-Focused Youth Service coordinators
- strengthen partnerships between Student Support Services networks and key government and community support agencies
- identify service gaps and working within the network to address issues
- develop professional networks for school wellbeing staff
- build the capacity of schools to respond to the learning and wellbeing needs of students
- identify prevention and early intervention activities for learning and wellbeing issues
- coordinate integration support for students with additional learning needs.

School health and wellbeing workforces within DEECD may include the following roles and programs:

Roles	Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Welfare Officers • Student Welfare Coordinators • Secondary School Nurses • Primary School Nurses • School-appointed wellbeing and engagement staff • Chaplains • Integration aides • Koori Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) • Pre-School Field Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-Focused Youth Service • Early Childhood Intervention Services (including specialist children's services) • School Care Program • Program for Students with Disabilities, including the Language Support Program • Kindergarten Inclusion Support Services • Maternal and Child Health Services

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – School Principals
- Role Description – Executive Group
- Role Description – Psychologists
- Role Description – Speech Pathologists
- Role Description – Social Workers
- Role Description – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- Primary Welfare Officer program <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/support/primarywelfare/default.htm>

- Student Welfare Coordinator <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/support/studentwelfare.htm>
- Secondary School Nursing program <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/schoolnursing/default.htm>
- Primary School Nursing <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/schoolnursing/default.htm>
- School-appointed wellbeing and engagement staff <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/schoolprofessionals/health/default.htm>
- School-Focused Youth Service <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/sfyouthservices/default.htm>









Service Provision

Target Group

Student Support Services provide schools with the additional specialist support required to address students' barriers to learning that cannot be completely addressed through general education and wellbeing service provision.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview of the target group for schools to consider under the governance model for the Student Support Services.

Guideline

Target Group

Schools, as the primary provider of education, are responsible for providing high quality education and primary prevention and early intervention programs that address the health, wellbeing, education and learning needs of students.

It is the role of schools to plan and implement strategies that maximise students' access to teaching and learning and help them to develop as healthy, secure and resilient people. All other avenues of intervention and service provision offered by schools under the general curriculum should be explored before Student Support Services involvement occurs, to ensure services target students with the greatest need.

Student Support Services provide schools with the additional specialist support required to address students' barriers to learning that cannot be completely addressed through general education and wellbeing service provision. This may include interventions with individual students or groups of students, building workforce capacity through the provision of professional advice or training, facilitating relationships with and referrals to community services, and responding to critical incidents and emergencies.

These services are provided across the continuum of service delivery, from primary prevention, early intervention and complex intervention, to restoring wellbeing (postvention). Student Support Services officers are highly trained professionals with technical expertise in disciplines where teachers may only have generalist knowledge.

A comprehensive case preparation should be undertaken by the school before deciding on whether a student or groups of students require Student Support Services. Case preparation provides schools with the opportunity to conduct their own assessment of students and gain a clearer picture of student needs, adequacy of current approaches and reasons why a student may require additional assistance, are at risk of disengagement, or experiencing difficulties with learning or wellbeing.

Appropriate responses

Schools may find that once a case preparation process has occurred, the presenting problem or need can be addressed by a range of strategies and approaches within the classroom or school, without the need for the additional assistance of Student Support Services.

In some instances, it may be more appropriate to refer students to external services, particularly in the case of serious mental health issues, family issues, welfare concerns (e.g., DHS notifications), sexual assault, autism assessment and for some health issues.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – School Principal
- Holistic Service Provision
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Models

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- Student Mapping Tool



Holistic Service Provision

Holistic service provision aims to provide the most appropriate assistance and services to students to promote their ability to achieve academically, socially and emotionally.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the general principles underpinning holistic service provision for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Student Support Services form an integral part of the broader health and wellbeing team in each school. These services work in partnership with schools, families, and external community services providers, to provide a holistic response to students' educational, social, emotional and psychological health and wellbeing at school. Holistic service provision can only occur with the assistance of strong partnerships and mutual respect for the roles of different parties.

Parents, carers and families are recognised for their central role as primary caregivers who provide strong support for the development of children and young people, including the achievement of positive health, wellbeing and learning outcomes.

Schools, including teachers and principals, are recognised as fulfilling the important role of providing high quality education services that equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience they need to reach their full potential.

Within the context of the school environment, the principle of holistic service provision aims to provide the most appropriate assistance and services to students to promote their ability to achieve academically, socially and emotionally. Holistic service provision involves:

- comprehensively assessing support needs in the context of the student's school performance, emotional and psychological maturity
- identifying, drawing on and developing the existing strengths and skills of students
- developing classroom based strategies to overcome problems
- following a case work approach
- maintaining up to date and accurate records that can be utilised and shared by the relevant professionals as a high quality resource, while ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of students and their families
- involving family members in discussions about their child's additional needs and ensuring that school and Student Support Services officers maintain open lines of communication at all stages of referral, assessment, intervention and evaluation

- drawing on partnerships with external service providers to facilitate the provision of additional support as appropriate. This may include community service providers, other government departments, and not for profit agencies, that can provide support to students and their families, either within the school environment, or in the community.

Related Guidelines

- Target Group
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum
 - Primary Prevention
- Service Delivery Continuum
 - Early Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum
 - Complex Restoration
- Service Delivery Continuum
 - Restoring Wellbeing

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [The Student Mapping Tool](#)
- [The Ultranet](#)
- [Fuse](#)



Service Delivery Continuum

As allied health professionals, Student Support Services are able to provide assistance in both secondary and tertiary interventions, in addition to primary prevention.



Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the service delivery continuum for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Primary prevention and early intervention strategies are more likely to be comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate if the pedagogical expertise of teachers is combined with the expertise of Student Support Services. A best practice approach ensures targeted service delivery effective use of services, and pragmatic utilisation of Student Support Services funding, which in turn results in the most beneficial outcomes for students.

Interventions requiring complex responses and strategies designed to restore wellbeing after critical incidents necessarily involve the provision of specialised expertise from Student Support Services officers in collaboration with school professionals, particularly when the needs of students, families and the school community exceed that which the general curriculum is designed to accommodate. As allied health professionals, Student Support Services are able to provide assistance in both secondary and tertiary interventions, in addition to primary prevention.

An essential component of any health and wellbeing program is post intervention continuity and follow-up. This may see Student Support Services officers working with teachers to:

- develop strategies to implement in the classroom such as modified curriculum or behavior management recommendations
- follow-up with parents at home, through activities such as guided reading using phonetic approaches to unfamiliar words
- make referrals to community services to link students and families to external community and private service providers that can provide ongoing support, assistance and a sense of belonging
- undertake periodic assessments/informal 'checking in' by school based staff, health and wellbeing staff and Student Support Services officers to assess the ongoing health, wellbeing and learning outcomes of students, and provide additional assistance as required.

Related Guidelines

- Target Group
- Holistic Service Provision
- Multi-disciplinary approach

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- [Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)
- [It's Not Okay to Be Away](#)

Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention

As allied health professionals, Student Support Services are able to provide assistance in both secondary and tertiary interventions, in addition to primary prevention.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of primary prevention approaches for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

Service Delivery Continuum

Guideline

Overview

Primary prevention and early intervention strategies are more likely to be comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate if the pedagogical expertise of teachers is combined with the expertise of Student Support Services. A best practice approach ensures targeted service delivery effective use of services, and pragmatic utilisation of Student Support Services funding, which in turn results in the most beneficial outcomes for students.

Interventions requiring complex responses and strategies designed to restore wellbeing after critical incidents necessarily involve the provision of specialised expertise from Student Support Services officers in collaboration with school professionals, particularly when the needs of students, families and the school community exceed that which the general curriculum is designed to accommodate. As allied health professionals, Student Support Services are able to provide assistance in both secondary and tertiary interventions, in addition to primary prevention.

Primary Prevention

Primary prevention strategies are the most effective way to promote health and wellbeing and educational outcomes in children, and constitute the vast majority of programs delivered by schools. Primary prevention strategies build resilience and promote wellbeing in children and young people by enhancing the emotional and social health of all students. This is achieved through raising awareness about what makes students resilient, developing strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and increasing coping skills. A strength of primary prevention is that it is an inclusive approach that engages with children and young people and acknowledges their rights and responsibilities in influencing their social, emotional and educational environment.

Primary prevention strategies can include:

- *Planning* – of coordinated whole school approaches to health and wellbeing, such as developing a Student Engagement Policy that includes the school's engagement and bullying policy
- *Programs* – delivered on a group basis, by year, level or whole school, recognising that students of different ages have different social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs. These programs also teach skills such as cooperation, self-awareness, communication, optimistic thinking, values clarification, assertiveness and goal setting



- *Professional development* – including formal training, information sessions or professional support for teachers and Student Support Services officers in the broad range of strategies and approaches to developing resilience and wellbeing in students during transitions and throughout their school career.

Primary prevention activities are developed to cater for the diversity of the student body, including abilities, cultural and language backgrounds, interests, experiences, and preferred learning styles. They are also developed in recognition of the central role family and community play in the development of children and young people, and the importance of strong relationships between schools and families.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Role Description – School Principal
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Restoring Wellbeing

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- [Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)
- [It's Not Okay to Be Away](#)
- [School Focused Youth Service](#)

Other Resources

- Kids Matter

Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention

The success of early intervention strategies lies in early identification of students at risk, comprehensive assessment procedures and the provision of appropriate, targeted services.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of early intervention approaches for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Service Delivery Continuum

Guideline

Overview

Primary prevention and early intervention strategies are more likely to be comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate if the pedagogical expertise of teachers is combined with the expertise of Student Support Services. A best practice approach ensures targeted service delivery effective use of services, and pragmatic utilisation of Student Support Services funding, which in turn results in the most beneficial outcomes for students.

Interventions requiring complex responses and strategies designed to restore wellbeing after critical incidents necessarily involve the provision of specialised expertise from Student Support Services officers in collaboration with school professionals, particularly when the needs of students, families and the school community exceed that which the general curriculum is designed to accommodate. As allied health professionals, Student Support Services are able to provide assistance in both secondary and tertiary interventions, in addition to primary prevention.

Despite a strong focus on preventative activities, some students face barriers to learning or have additional needs that are not adequately addressed through the general curriculum and primary prevention approach. Research shows that early identification and intervention to address risk, vulnerability or need, results in the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Early Intervention

The aim of early intervention strategies is to protect the wellbeing of students and facilitate their learning by strengthening coping skills and reducing risk for students who have been identified as possessing ongoing social, emotional, and/or physical risks or needs. Early intervention strategies target these students so that the intensity, severity and duration of the risk or need are reduced.

Students who have a number of risk factors operating in their lives are a particular focus of early intervention programs. Their multiple needs mean these individuals are especially vulnerable when service systems are poorly integrated and uncoordinated. It is essential that early intervention service provision is both holistic and integrated to ensure comprehensive service delivery, smooth transitions, and culturally and linguistically appropriate approaches that recognise the importance of both family and community in students' lives.

The success of early intervention strategies lies in early identification of students at risk, comprehensive assessment procedures and the provision of appropriate, targeted services. Ongoing monitoring and management is required to remain responsive to the changing needs of at risk students, and ensure that the programs or services provided are achieving the desired results.

A commitment to service excellence and evidence-based services assists in achieving better outcomes by constantly improving identification, assessment and management of students at risk, through evaluation and reflective practices.

Early intervention strategies can include:

- *Planning* – of coordinated whole school approaches to early intervention strategies (e.g., School Wide Positive Behaviour Support) that facilitate early identification of students facing barriers to learning. This may be incorporated into the school's Student Engagement Policy and includes strategies of systematic identification and referral pathways to both Student Support Services and external services. Effective partnerships with all stakeholders within and external to the school community are essential to integrated service provision.
- *Knowledge of programs* – delivered for individual or groups of students, based on identified barriers to learning or additional needs. A comprehensive assessment process should occur before referral to Student Support Services

to ensure that the students in greatest need are targeted. Early intervention programs should address any underlying factors that are influencing a student's health, wellbeing and learning at school, and involve referral to external community agencies or private services if appropriate.

- *Professional development* – for teachers and Student Support Services officers in the broad range of strategies and approaches to addressing the needs of students who are facing barriers to learning. A collaborative approach to sharing learning supports high quality service provision. Professional development may also include formal training, information sessions or professional support.

Student Support Services officers have a key role to play in developing strategic approaches to early intervention in schools, by providing specialised support and advice within their area of expertise. Student Support Services can provide assistance with existing initiatives, such as:

- addressing special needs of student identified through:
 - the Transition Learning and Development Statement
 - School Entrant Health Questionnaire
 - English and Maths Online Interviews for Prep students
 - ABLES Assessments
- assisting teachers in identifying students at risk on entering school, student strengths, weaknesses and planning future programming.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Role Description – School Principal
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Restoring Wellbeing

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [School Focused Youth Service](#)

Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention

Interventions requiring complex responses aim to provide effective treatment and support to students in crisis, many of whom are experiencing multiple barriers to learning that are affecting their health, wellbeing and educational outcomes.



Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of complex intervention approaches for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Service Delivery Continuum

Guideline

Overview

Interventions requiring complex responses aim to provide effective treatment and support to students in crisis, many of whom are experiencing multiple barriers to learning that are affecting their health, wellbeing and educational outcomes. Concerted efforts by schools, in partnership with their communities, are needed to intervene when initial action to prevent or divert the development of these serious difficulties is not successful.

Risk factors that can contribute to students being in crisis can include learning and language difficulties, disabilities, mental health issues, family breakdown including placement in out-of-home care, abuse and neglect, sexual identity and substance abuse. These factors can result in students disengaging from school, significant behavioural issues including truancy, bullying, and violence, the likelihood of teenage pregnancy, and poor health, wellbeing and educational outcomes. Collaborative intervention to improve such behaviour is a crucial area of work for schools, Student Support Services and community services.

Complex Interventions

Responding effectively to students in crisis requires a focus on:

- documenting procedures for identifying students at risk to ensure no students ‘fall through the gap’. Such procedures may include comprehensive assessment of barriers to learning, documented primary prevention and early intervention activities and consideration of the services available from community agencies
- clear case preparation and management procedures
- timely access to counselling and treatment
- strong partnerships with the student and family, relevant community groups and external service providers to ensure a tailored, culturally appropriate, holistic intervention is developed
- strong framework of support for intervention, that may include a case management plan, student support group, and individual student learning plan, which are agreed to by the student, parents and relevant school professionals and external providers
- continuity of care, including a stable advocate or mentor
- continual monitoring of student progress and the appropriateness of the intervention, including celebrating successes
- appropriate professional development for teachers and Student Support Services officers.



Strategies

Strategies to support interventions requiring complex responses can include:

- *Planning* – a case management approach that is supported by clear referral pathways and follow up procedures that use standardised templates which encourage comprehensive and accurate assessments. This may include documenting proposed services and providers, nominated key contact people within the school and relevant community service agencies, additional confidentiality and privacy issues that may arise when utilising multiple services both within and external to the school, and monitoring and evaluation procedures. Other tools include Student Support Groups, Individual Learning Plans, Managed Individual Pathways, Career Action Plans etc
- *Knowledge of Programs* – are primarily delivered to individual students with multiple complex and varying needs that are creating barriers to learning and affecting health and wellbeing. Schools with a high proportion of at risk students may also deliver interventions on a group basis, as a more appropriate response that addresses the needs of the student body effectively and holistically.

- *Professional Development* – is crucial for teachers and Student Support Services officers dealing with students who require complex responses, as they will continue to be a primary source of constancy and support for the student within the school environment. Specialised training may need to be provided to respond to local needs. Professional development may also include formal training, information sessions, mentoring or professional support.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Role Description – School Principal
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Restoring Wellbeing

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Out-of-home care](#)
- [Managed Individual Pathways/ Wannik MIPs](#)
- [Mind Matters Plus](#)

Service Delivery Continuum – Restoring Wellbeing

Student Support Services, particularly psychologists, guidance officers and social workers can provide valuable assistance to schools in restoring wellbeing, and managing the needs of school communities in crisis.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of restoring wellbeing approaches for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

- Service Delivery Continuum

Guideline

Restoring Wellbeing

Restoring wellbeing involves providing appropriate support to students, their families and the school community who are affected by an emergency situation, natural disaster or traumatic incident such as suicide, accident or illness.

Preparedness, appropriate response and recovery activities following a potentially traumatic event can mitigate the impact of trauma related symptoms and facilitate the ongoing development of resilience, including appropriate coping skills. The impact of a traumatic event may be felt to varying degrees by different students, their families or other members of the school community, depending on their exposure to or connectedness with the incident, previous personal experience, existing support networks and level of resilience or coping skills.

Programs and responses designed to restore wellbeing after a critical incident should closely monitor and manage the emotional and psychological effects on the school community. Student Support Services, particularly psychologists, guidance officers and social workers can provide valuable assistance to schools in restoring wellbeing, and managing the

needs of school communities in crisis. Follow up strategies are best developed by Student Support Services officers in consultation with schools and families.

Schools should continue to provide support to students to re-integrate them into the school community after a crisis or complex intervention has been addressed. Under the School Engagement Policy Guidelines, schools should focus on:

- creating a positive school culture that is fair and respectful
- expecting positive, supportive and respectful relationships
- encouraging students to participate and express themselves
- implementing preventative and early intervention approaches
- building a safe and supportive school environment
- proactively engaging with parents/ carers
- promoting pro-social values and behaviours
- responding to individual students
- linking to the local community
- valuing diversity
- restoring normality.



Strategies

Strategies to support restoring wellbeing can include:

- *Planning* – an emergency management plan for the school and network that is regularly updated and contains the four components of preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. This plan must be communicated to all staff and students and appropriate training provided including regular testing of emergency management protocols such as fire drills
- *Programs* – each critical incident is likely to require a tailored response that reflects the nature of the incident and its possible effects on the school community at large. However, the school emergency management plan should detail the general procedures to be followed during an incident and principles for developing appropriate responses
- *Professional Development* – teachers and Student Support Services officers need to be aware of how people can be affected by potentially traumatic incidents and emergencies and the importance of monitoring the reactions of vulnerable students. Staff should also monitor their own health and wellbeing. Professional learning, support, and mentoring should be provided along with opportunities for debriefing with colleagues or by independent professionals.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Service Delivery Continuum
- Service Delivery Continuum – Primary Prevention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Early Intervention
- Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- [Calmer Classrooms: a guide to working with traumatised children](#)
- [Emergency and critical incident management](#)
- [Emergencies and Natural Disasters](#)
- [DEECD Employee Assistance Program](#) (1800 337 068)
- [Lifeline](#) (131 114)
- [Beyond Blue](#) (1300 22 4636)

Case Preparation

The case preparation process ensures that utilisation of Student Support Services is prioritised in the most effective way to optimise support and encourage positive learning and engagement outcomes.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview on case preparation processes for schools and Student Support Services.

Guideline

Overview

Schools are expected to provide safe, secure, supportive and engaging learning environments so that student participation and learning is maximised.

Schools, as the primary provider of education, are responsible for providing high quality education and primary prevention and early intervention programs that address all students' health, wellbeing, education and learning needs. It is the role of schools to plan and implement strategies that maximise all students' access to teaching and learning and helps them to develop as healthy, secure and resilient people. All other avenues of intervention and service provision offered by schools under the general curriculum should be explored before referral to Student Support Services occurs, to ensure services target students with the greatest need.

Schools undertake a range of activities to support student participation including:

- developing student engagement policies
- managing student intake processes such as admission, enrolment, student placement and transfer arrangements

- developing tailored curriculum to support the learning and teaching needs of students in the classroom, especially for students with disabilities and additional learning needs
- managing student attendance requirements and supporting school attendance exemption processes
- supporting student transition:
 - into primary school
 - between grades
 - between schools
 - from primary school to secondary school
 - from secondary school to employment or further education and training.

Case Preparation

When school based staff are assessing whether a student, group of students or teacher(s) requires support from Student Support Services, the school prepares a case via the Student Online Case System (SOCS).

There are two types of cases that can be created and managed through SOCS:

- Individual Student Cases – targeting issues or improvements for an individual student
- Program Cases – targeting issues or improvements for a program involving a group of students or a group or school teachers.



A case preparation of students' needs should include:

- identification of students or groups of students who require additional assistance and the type of support they require
- collection of information on students' engagement and learning progress or difficulties
- review of relevant information available to the school which might help to clarify issues affecting student learning or wellbeing, such as previous assessments or specialist reports
- development of individual learning plans for students outlining a range of actions and classroom – and school-based strategies to address concerns
- evaluation of the effectiveness of individual learning plan actions and strategies
- identification of broader advice, expertise or services that may be required, such as consultation, professional learning, early intervention programs or group work with students.

The case preparation process ensures that utilisation of Student Support Services is prioritised in the most effective way to optimise support and encourage positive learning and engagement outcomes. This allows for a more focused approach to service provision and helps to consolidate or clarify the nature of the issues identified.

Related Guidelines

- Role Description – Student Support Services
- Role Description – School Wellbeing and Support Staff
- Role Description – Executive Group
- Role Description – School Principal

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Informed Consent

When an activity at school is not covered by implied parental consent specific authorisation is required from a parent/guardian. Student Support Services are not covered by implied parental consent.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview of the process to obtain informed consent for Student Support Services.

Prerequisite Guideline

Student Safety: Parental responsibility – the Schools Policy and Advisory Guide assist principals and staff to act in accordance with the law when disputes arise within families concerning who is responsible for students and their educational welfare.

Guideline

Overview

In general, when an activity at school is not covered by implied parental consent specific authorisation is required from a parent/guardian. Student Support Services are not covered by implied parental consent.

Informed consent for the provision of Student Support Services, such as consultation, observation, assessment and intervention, and the release of student information from the school to Student Support Services, must be obtained by schools as part of the case preparation process.

The parent/guardian or student (in the case of a mature minor) should be asked to acknowledge their understanding that information will be provided on a strictly 'need to know' basis. The parent/guardian or student has the opportunity to refuse consent or consent to a full or limited range of services.

Mature Minor

A student can consent to being provided with Student Support Services in the form of direct assistance without parent/guardian consent only if that student is assessed as a mature-minor. A mature-minor is a young person who is assessed as being sufficiently mature and competent to make decisions about their own healthcare and wellbeing.

A school principal or Student Support Services officer can undertake the mature-minor assessment of an individual student to determine whether a student is capable of providing consent. Guidance material is available via the School Policy and Advisory Guide to guide this decision making. While all students should be assessed using the same criteria, particular issues, such as mental health and developmental and behavioural issues, should be taken into consideration when making an assessment about whether the student can be considered a mature-minor.

It is generally considered that in the absence of exceptional or compelling circumstances, Student Support Services are more effectively provided where there is parent/guardian consent and liaison with the student's family, even if the student is assessed as a mature-minor.

Related Guidelines

- Case Preparation
- Duty of Care/Mandatory Reporting

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide

Other Resources

A sample Student Support Services Consent Form is available from the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088) for schools to utilise when seeking consent from a parent/guardian or mature minor, which states that information will be kept confidential. A privacy statement must be included with the consent form.



Duty of Care/ Reporting Child Abuse

Schools and Student Support Services officers must take all measures that are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under their care from risks of injury that the staff member should reasonably have foreseen.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview on the process for reporting child abuse for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers should be directed to, and acquaint themselves with the following sections of the School Policy and Advisory Guide when dealing with issues of duty of care, including prevention and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect, as well as responding to allegations of student sexual assault or problem sexual behaviour:

- [Student Safety – Duty of Care](#)
- [Student Safety – Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting](#)
- [Student Safety – Responding to Student Sexual Assault](#)

Schools and Student Support Services officers must take all measures that are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under their care from risks of injury that the staff member should reasonably have foreseen. Schools must have in place systems to adequately supervise students in order to meet their duty of care obligations.

According to the Children, Youth and Families Act (2005), psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers are not mandated professionals and are not legally required to make a mandatory report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Protection if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection.

However, Student Support Services have an ethical and moral obligation to make

a report to DHS Child Protection if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection or a criminal offence may have been perpetrated.

Visiting Teachers (or any other SSSO with a teaching registration) are mandated to report if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection to DHS Child Protection if they are employed as a teacher under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 or registered to teach by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Non-mandated staff should speak with the school principal if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. Any person who believes on reasonable ground that a child is in need of protection can make a report to DHS Child Protection.

Related Guidelines

- Case Preparation
- Informed Consent

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraneet Design Space (120886088)
- [Protecting the Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People](#)
- Step-by-Step guide to making a mandatory report Child Protection or Child First
- The Department of Health has also prepared an information sharing guide for registered school teachers and principals in Victoria, see [Providing support to vulnerable children and families](#)
- [Responding to allegations of student sexual assault. Procedures for Victorian Government Schools](#)

Educational Needs Assessments

An Education Support Guarantee for children and young people in out-of-home care has been established.

Purpose of this Guideline

To outline the responsibilities of Student Support Services to provide an educational needs assessment for every child or young person enrolled at a government school that resides in kinship or foster care and has been in out-of-home care for a period of three months or longer.

Guideline

The *Out-of-Home Care Education Commitment: A Partnering Agreement between the Department of Human Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria (the Partnering Agreement)* commits all parties to improve the educational experience and outcomes of children and young people in out-of-home care in Victoria. Children and young people in out-of-home care often face multiple barriers to positive engagement in education and to their wellbeing. The Government has prioritised wellbeing support for this vulnerable cohort of children and young people.

As part of the Partnering Agreement, an Education Support Guarantee for children and young people in out-of-home care has been established and commits schools and education-related health and wellbeing services and programs to providing an increased level of support and responsiveness to the educational needs of children and young people in out-of-home care. The elements of the Education Support Guarantee that are incorporated within the Partnering Agreement are:

- allocation of teacher or staff member as a learning mentor to each child or young person in out-of-home care enrolled in a school
- prioritisation of support for children and young people in out-of-home care through education related health and wellbeing services to ensure that these services are highly accessible and responsive to the needs of this group
- an educational needs assessment for every student who has resided in out-of-home care for a period of three months or longer to identify their individual learning needs and to inform their Individual Education Plan
- priority status for post-round applications to the Program for Students with Disabilities for children and young people in out-of-home care enrolled at a government school
- checklists outlining the commitments and responsibilities for schools and case managers from DHS or community service organisations when a child or young person enters out-of-home care or when they are enrolled at a school.

Educational Needs Assessment

An educational needs assessment is undertaken to identify the particular learning needs of a student in out-of-home care. An educational needs assessment should be accessed through Student Support Services for every child or young person enrolled at a government school that:

- resides in kinship or foster care, and
- has been in out-of-home care for a period of three months or longer.

The educational needs assessment will provide advice to the child or young person's Student Support Group and significantly inform their Individual Education Plan. It may also provide advice about further services or supports that may be required.

The educational needs assessment is not a prescriptive assessment or set of assessments, rather, it should respond to the individual needs and circumstances of the child or young person.

The Student Support Services officer will draw from a wide range of assessment types including screening assessments, standardised psychometric assessments, behaviour checklists, tests of an individual's receptive and expressive language and social competency.

Guidelines for providing an educational needs assessment for a child or young person in out-of-home care in a Victorian government school are under development and will be made available on the Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space.

Related Guidelines

- Holistic Provision
- Service Delivery Continuum – Complex Intervention

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Out-of-home care](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

Other Resources

- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Student Support Groups](#)
- Learning Mentor– A learning mentor is a teacher or staff member within a school who is designated to support the educational needs of a child or young person in out-of-home care, help them stay connected to their schooling and overcome barriers that may affect their learning. School principals must allocate a learning mentor for every child and young person living in out-of-home care. Training and advice for learning mentors is under development and will be made available on the Student Support Services design space.

Related Legislation

- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Health Records Act 2001



Emergency Management

Every school (government and non-government) has an emergency management plan that outlines responsibilities, procedures and actions in the event of an emergency.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidance to Executive Chairs and Executive Groups in managing emergencies and natural disasters that impact upon multiple schools or networks.

Guideline

The Government is committed to ensuring that all schools are as ready as possible for dealing with emergencies including natural disasters. The safety of children and staff is paramount.

Every school (government and non-government) has an emergency management plan that outlines responsibilities, procedures and actions in the event of an emergency.

If a critical incident or emergency is specific to a school then the response will be managed by the school and supported by the emergency management procedures established by the network (eg reallocation of network staff to manage critical incidents) and region if required.

In the event of critical incidents or emergencies that affect multiple schools in a network or multiple networks, the Regional Advice and Liaison Officer (RALO) will work with the Regional Director, Executive Chairs, SSS Coordinators and the Emergency and Security Management Division to coordinate an appropriate response.

As part of planning and priority setting, the Executive Group should determine the contact person for emergencies (this is likely to generally be the Executive Chair and/or the SSS Coordinator). Careful consideration needs to be given to who will take on the contact role in an emergency.

Networks can decide the mix of services and priorities/allocations for:

- response to urgent /high-level needs of students
- long-term or ongoing planned support
- prevention initiatives
- capacity building
- emergency management.

The impact of an emergency can be stressful and exhausting, and people are encouraged to look after themselves and their wellbeing. To support each other we can:

- be aware of the different ways that people react and respect those differences
- be kind to each other – be gentle and understanding as people may not be operating at their best
- give yourself, and others, time and try to maintain routines of rest, relaxation and exercise.

Department Resources

- [DEECD Safety, Security and Emergency Management Website](#)
- [DEECD Emergency and Natural Disasters Website](#)
- [DEECD Emergency and Natural Disasters Website – Support for Staff](#)
- [DEECD Safety, Security and Emergency Management](#)
- [Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit \(SCIAU\)](#)
- [Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space \(120886088\)](#)







Human Resources

Human Resource Management and Operations

All Student Support Services officers, whether they are Victorian Public Service (VPS) in the Allied Health structure or Teaching Service employees in the Education Support (ES) structure, will be managed through a coordinating school in each network.

Purpose of this Guideline

To outline the processes and procedures for management of Student Support Services officers within networks.

Guideline

Overview

With the transfer of SSS resources to school networks, all Student Support Services officers, whether they are Victorian Public Service (VPS) in the Allied Health structure or Teaching Service employees in the Education Support (ES) structure, will be managed through a coordinating school in each network.

The coordinating school in each network will be the pay location for all SSS officers in that network and the designated manager for payroll purposes will be the principal of the network coordinating school (who may be the Executive Chair or another nominated principal).

The line manager of Student Support Services officers will be the Executive Chair or SSS Coordinator, as determined by the Executive Group. Visiting Teachers will be employed and managed by regions.

Currently employed Student Support Services officers

Existing SSS officers will transfer as VPS employees from their regional location to school networks effective from 1 July 2012. It will not be possible for networks to extend or renew fixed-term VPS employment after that date.

While the network will have management responsibility for existing VPS employees, payroll processing will be carried out by Schools HR Services.

For ES employees, payroll transactions will be processed by the base school as with other ES employees.

New employment

Any SSS vacancies arising after 1 July 2012 will be advertised in the ES structure through Recruitment Online. Recruitment processes will be the same as is currently the case for ES employment. A VPS and ES employment ready reference guide is available via the Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space.

Benchmark accountability and responsibility statements for SSS vacancies are available for use on Recruitment Online. Schools can tailor these to network requirements.

For ES employees, payroll transactions will be processed by the coordinating school as with other ES employees.

Performance management

Performance management will be the responsibility of the Executive Chair, but may be delegated to, for example, another network principal or the SSS Coordinator.

Note that the performance management cycle for VPS employees will remain 1 July – 30 June. For ES employees the cycle runs from 1 May to 30 April.

Performance management guidelines for both ES and VPS employees can be found on HRWeb.

Leave and other payroll transactions

Leave

Employees, whether VPS or ES, will be able to use eduPay to apply for personal, recreation or long service leave and maintain or update personal and bank details.

Leave applications for all SSS officers will be approved by the coordinating school manager (or delegate). Leave transactions not available on eduPay will be processed at the base school for ES employees or by Schools HR Services for VPS employees.

Flexible working arrangements

An employee may request a flexible work arrangement to assist them to balance their work and life/family commitments. Requests will be assessed by the principal/manager on a case-by-case basis taking into account legislative requirements and the needs of both the employee and the workplace. Information about flexible work arrangements is available on HRWeb.

Other payroll transactions

For VPS employees, payroll transactions such as time fraction/work schedule changes, higher duties and other allowances, salary progression, cessation of employment or leave not processed through the eduPay system (eg maternity leave) will be processed by Schools HR Services based upon decisions by the designated manager.

For ES employees, the processing will be done at the network coordinating school.

Disputes and grievances

Grievance resolution procedures for VPS and ES employees can be accessed via the Grievances page on HRWeb.

Personnel files

VPS personnel files will remain located in the Schools HR Branch at 2 Treasury Place. Personnel files for VPS employees who transfer to or are re-employed in the ES structure will be transferred to their coordinating school. For new or transferring ES employees personnel files will be the responsibility of the coordinating school.

Advice and support

For both ES and VPS employees schools should contact Schools HR Services. A dedicated mail box will be available for enquiries, or schools can ring the appropriate Schools HR number for their region.

Department Resources

- [HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)

Related Legislation

- [Legislation](#)

Related Ministerial Orders

- [Ministerial Orders](#)

HR Operations for VPS Employees in Networks

SSS officers will transfer as VPS employees from their regional location to school networks effective from 1 July 2012

Purpose of this Guideline

To outline the processes and procedures for HR operations for VPS Student Support Services officers within networks. For ES employees all HR operations are processed through the coordinating school.

Prerequisite Guideline

- HR Management and Operations

Guideline

Overview

Existing SSS officers will transfer as VPS employees from their regional location to school networks effective from 1 July 2012. While the network will have management responsibility for existing VPS employees, payroll transactions will be carried out by Schools HR Services.

The coordinating school in each network will be the pay location for all SSS employees in that network, and the designated manager will be the principal of the coordinating school (who may be the Executive Chair or another nominated principal).

Leave

Automatic processing (eduPay Employee Self Service)

Student Support Services officers should use eduPay for:

- personal leave (sick and carer's)
- recreation leave
- long service leave
- leave without pay
- updating personal, bank and pay distribution details

Employees apply for leave through eduPay, the coordinating school principal (as designated manager) receives the application for approval, and the leave is automatically processed on the payroll, when approved.

Manual processing of leave

Where the coordinating school principal has approved an application and manual processing is required the appropriate form must be returned to Schools HR Services. All forms are available on the [Forms – Public Service Staff](#) page on HRWeb.

Leave Process	Form
Amendments to absence entries that have been previously processed through eduPay	<u>VPS eduPay Leave Amendment form</u>
Study leave, exam leave or graduation leave	<u>VPS Application for Study and Related Leave</u>
Parental absence (maternity, parental, partner or adoption)	<u>VPS Parental Absence form</u>
Other types of leave not available on ESS or where eduPay cannot be accessed	<u>VPS Leave Application form</u>
Applications for pay in advance for recreation leave or long service leave	<u>VPS Application for Pay in Advance</u>
Applications for payment of all or part of long service leave entitlement	<u>VPS Long Service Leave Application</u>

Other payroll transactions

All payroll transactions will be processed by Schools HR Services following decisions by the coordinating school principal. All forms are available on the [Forms – Public Service Staff](#) page on HRWeb. For any payroll transactions not covered in the table below, contact Schools HR Services.



Transaction	Form
Change of time fraction or work schedule	VPS Work Schedule or Hours Change form
Higher Duties	VPS Higher Duties Application form
Self-funded Leave (eg 48/52)	Additional (Self-funded) Leave Arrangement form
Salary Progression	Forward the completed and signed performance assessment pro-forma to Schools HR Services
Overtime	VPS Overtime Claim form
Salary mischarge	VPS Salary Charge Amendment form
Cessation of employment	VPS Notification to Cease Employment form and, if necessary, the Long Service Leave Election – Non-payment of Pay in Lieu form

Advice and support

For both ES and VPS employees schools should contact Schools HR Services as they normally do. A dedicated mail box will be available for email enquiries, or schools can ring 1800 641 943.

Related Guidelines

- [HR Management and Operations](#)

Department Resources

- [HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultraneet Design Space (120886088)

Related Legislation

- [Legislation](#)

Related Ministerial Orders

- [Ministerial Orders](#)



SSS Workforce Management and Planning

Each network will be able to plan the configuration of its workforce to deliver Student Support Services.



Purpose of this Guideline

To guide management of Student Support Services officers within networks.

Prerequisite Guideline

- HR Management and Operations

Guideline

Network SSS Budget and Workforce Plan

Each network will be able to plan the configuration of its workforce to deliver Student Support Services. When a network has determined the configuration of its workforce it will match this against the allied health workforce that will have transferred to the network. Existing SSS officers will be matched against the work requirements and workforce plan of the network which will take into account the demand for various Student Support Services from schools.

Existing employment arrangements

Current ongoing and fixed-term VPS SSS officers will be managed by their network against their existing employment arrangements, which include classification level, salary, time-fraction and whether they are ongoing or fixed-term.

Performance assessment cycle

VPS employees are subject to the VPS Performance Development Plan (PDP) procedures that can be located at HRWeb. The main differences between what schools already do in respect to performance development plans for its employees are:

- the PDP cycle for VPS staff runs from 1 July to 30 June each year. This cycle is established under industrial agreement and cannot be changed, as is the case for Teaching Service employees where the cycle runs from 1 May to 30 April each year
- a VPS employee must be advised a minimum of 3 months prior to the end of the cycle (i.e. 1 April) while a Teacher Service employee must be notified a minimum of 4 months prior to the end of the cycle (i.e. 1 January)
- a different pro forma than what is currently used for the Teaching Service (copy attached), a copy of which must be retained by the bases school with the original being forwarded to Schools HR Services.

Other than the above the key aspects that remain the same for VPS employees as for teaching service are:

- performance targets are established in consultation with the employee
- each employee has a mid-year assessment against performance targets by their manager that is recorded
- performance assessment is undertaken for all employees irrespective of whether or not they are at the top of their salary scale
- a final performance assessment for the 12 month cycle is completed that determines salary progression within the salary range of the employee's position. Refer to operational guidelines in respect to how the PDP pro forma is processed to initiate salary action.

Professional Development

Professional development planning for employees is a normal function of an organisation. The professional development needs of employees should be considered as part of the workforce planning process within a network. This will apply to the workforce of the network as a whole, irrespective of whether an employee is VPS or ES class.

Unsatisfactory Performance

The principles of unsatisfactory performance are not different for VPS and Teaching Service employees, with particular emphasis on:

- the application of procedural fairness
- the need to clearly identify the areas of concern regarding the conduct of an employee's duties.
- the employee is given the opportunity to respond and their response is properly considered.
- the opportunity to improve performance is provided, including appropriate support.

Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance for VPS and ES staff can be accessed from the [Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct](#) page on HRWeb.

New employment

All new employment will be within the Education Support Class structure using the same processes and policies that apply to other ES employees.

New positions will be created within the ES structure using the relevant [Dimensions of Work](#) applying under the Victorian Government Schools – School Services Officers Agreement 2004 (as varied 2008).

To assist networks in classifying positions benchmark responsibility and accountability statements for SSS positions are attached. Note that these positions fall into the professional services area, which starts at Level 2, range 3.

[Recruitment in Schools](#) guidelines apply to new positions or employment.

Identification of excess employees

Where workforce planning decisions result in the need to identify an excess employee within the network that may be a VPS employee the network needs to ensure that applicable processes are followed. Where the workforce is all VPS staff the guidelines applicable to the VPS are to be followed. Refer to the [Excess Procedures – Public Service](#) page on HRWeb for further details.

The important aspect to note is that prior to commencing an identification of excess process the network must advise the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) of the proposed change to the workforce plan that will necessitate the commencement of an excess process. The notification to the CPSU should be in writing containing the following information:

- the reason for the change
- rationale for the change
- details relating to the current and new structure
- the impact on employee group within the network

The CPSU must have a minimum of 5 working days to respond and the network is to respond to any feedback from the CPSU explaining how the network intends to proceed and explaining the reasons for its decisions.

The CPSU contact is Nick Church at: nchurch@cpsuvic.org

Related Guidelines

- HR Management and Operations – overview
- HR Operations for VPS employees in networks

Department Resources

- [HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Related Legislation

- [Legislation](#)

Related Ministerial Orders

- [Ministerial Orders](#)

Induction

The induction process provides Student Support Services officers with a knowledge base and broad range of contacts essential to operating effectively within the Department.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidance on induction procedures for new Student Support Services officers.

Guideline

Overview

Induction is the starting point for the ongoing management, support and development of new staff. In general, the induction process provides more intensive support in the first few days to a week but may continue three months or longer after job commencement. Depending on local arrangements, the induction process may be coordinated by a the SSS Coordinator (if appointed), or the Executive Chair.

Induction for Visiting Teachers will be managed by the regions in consultation with the Visiting Teacher Stream Leader.

The line manager/s for Student Support Services (generally the SSS coordinator) in each network should ensure that each new staff member receives induction at all working locations, which may include a base location, network school or multiple schools. Stream leaders may support SSS Coordinators by providing advice about professional standards and responsibilities.

An important component of induction involves setting clear expectations for the position, including the role of Student Support Services in contributing to student learning and outcomes, and the integrated approach utilised by schools to promote student health and wellbeing. Induction includes the provision of information about the Department and whole-of-government systems, policies, procedures, organisational and workplace priorities, local work environment, values and standards of behaviour.

The induction process provides Student Support Services officers with a knowledge base and broad range of contacts essential to operating effectively within the Department. A thorough induction process should facilitate good working relationships with colleagues and management, and provide opportunities for staff to reflect on the responsibilities of the role independently, and in consultation with supervisors and peers.

Summarised, the purpose of induction is to assist newly appointed Student Support Services officers to:

- understand DEECD structure, purpose and priorities
- understand the Network structure, purpose and priorities
- familiarise themselves with DEECD policies and procedures (eg, PSD)
- gain a clear understanding of the role and work requirements, including the roles and responsibilities of other staff

- understand professional values, standards and behavior
- be clear about their responsibilities and accountabilities
- establish and maintain good working relationships
- know who to approach for assistance and support
- easily locate the resources and facilities required to perform the role
- participate in the performance planning process and associated activity to meet individual and workplace needs.

Department Resources

- Induction Template – a sample checklist of induction activities that should occur for new Student Support Services Officers at the school, network and regional level, including professional support and development and resources will be available from the SSS Ultranet design Space.
- [Induction in Effective Schools program](#)
- [School Policy and Advisory Guide Workforce management section](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Induction](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)



Professional Learning for Student Support Services – Principles

Professional development, supervision and support are considered ongoing processes that are critical to maintaining service standards and expertise of the education workforce.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the general principles underpinning professional learning for Student Support Services officers.

Guideline

Professional development, supervision and support are considered ongoing processes that are critical to maintaining service standards and expertise of the education workforce. These processes are supported through the provision of appropriate training, supervision, support materials, leadership structures and collegiate affiliation between Student Support Services officers and their manager. Regional Stream Leaders are able to provide professional learning and support to Student Support Services officers in their stream within a region (e.g. conferences, provision of resources and workshops)

Access to professional learning is an essential element for Student Support Services officers, enabling the workforce to provide and maintain high quality professional services. Professional learning is an integral part of the professional development process, which includes induction, mentoring, consultation, operational debriefing, access to short courses and formal tertiary training.

The SSS Coordinator, in consultation with the Executive Chair and Executive Group, is responsible for managing professional learning activities across a network. Regional Stream Leaders are available to provide advice regarding professional learning for Student Support Services.

Planning

Professional learning for Student Support Services should be planned and implemented as part of the performance and development cycle for Student Support Services. This should occur for individual officers and may also require consideration of professional learning activities for professional streams or mixed groups of Student Support Services officers.

Planning for professional learning should take into consideration network priorities so that staff are supported in their efforts to achieve these priorities.

Professional Learning Principles

Professional learning should be planned and delivered in accordance with the following principles:

1. Professional learning is focused on improving student outcomes
2. Professional learning is embedded in the everyday practice
3. Professional learning is informed by the best available research
4. Professional learning is collaborative, involving reflection and feedback
5. Professional learning is informed by data and evidence
6. Professional learning is ongoing, supported and enabled by leaders at all levels of the system – school, network, regional and central offices
7. Professional learning is an individual and collective responsibility.

These principles are drawn from *The Seven Principles of Highly Effective Learning Guide* available from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website.

Resources

Resources for professional learning are available to each network through the Student Support Services Budget. These may be supplemented by statewide or regional professional learning initiatives from time to time.

Networks should consider developing professional learning policies or plans to guide Student Support Services in regard to professional learning priorities or activities.

Attendance

Requirements relating to ongoing training should be discussed between Student Support Services and their line manager to ensure that attendance at professional development activities to meet registration requirements are accommodated.

Related Guidelines

- Professional Learning Requirements – Psychologists
- Professional Learning Requirements – Speech Pathologists
- Professional Learning Requirements – Social Workers
- Professional Learning Requirements – Visiting Teachers
- Professional Supervision
- Role Description – Stream Leaders
- Role Description – SSS Coordinator

Department Resources

- [Professional Learning Website on HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)



Professional Learning Requirements – Psychologists

The performance and development plan for SSSO Psychologists must capture and accommodate the professional learning requirements of the Psychology Board of Australia.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide information about the professional learning and development requirements for Student Support Services officers within the Psychology Stream, as per the Psychology Board of Australia eligibility requirements for registration as a psychologist in Australia.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers who are employed under the psychology stream, must have provisional or general registration with the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Agency. In order to maintain registration each year, psychologists must fulfill specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements established by the Agency.

General Registration

In summary, these requirements are as follows:

1. Development of a learning plan, based on current skills and knowledge, that identifies areas for learning and improvement, and which is outcomes focused, contributes to continuing competence in the psychologist's field of practice and seeks to improve the psychologist's practice. This learning plan must be kept up to date with recent CDP activities.
2. A minimum of 30 hours of continuing professional development, that:

- a. is primarily within or relevant to the psychologist's field of practice
- b. includes a minimum of 10 hours formalised peer development
- c. as a recommendation, has a minimum of 10 hours 'active' CPD such as attending seminars that have oral or written activities to enhance and test learning.

Psychologists should see the Continuing Professional Development Registration Standard published by the Australian Psychological Society for further information.

Provisional Registration

Provisional psychologists must achieve a range of core capabilities, plus the following professional learning requirements:

1. one hour of supervision to 17.5 hours of supervised practice, of which:
 - a. two-thirds is individual supervision
 - b. the remaining third is either individual or group supervision.
2. A minimum of 60 hours professional development per year (if working full time, pro rata, if part time), that is designed to meet the core capabilities.
3. 40 per cent client contact, 60 per cent client related activities.

There are a range of other administrative measures that must also be kept, including 6 monthly progress reports.

See the Provisional Registration Standard for further information.

General Performance and Development

Performance and development arrangements for Student Support Services officers vary depending on the employment agreement:

- Student Support Services officers employed under the VPS Allied Health Adaptive Structure are required to participate in the Performance Enhancement Cycle (PEC)
- Student Support Services officers employed as Education Support Class participate in the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) for teaching staff arrangements.

The performance and development plan for SSSO Psychologists must capture and accommodate the professional learning requirements of the Psychology Board of Australia.

Department Resources

- [Performance and Development Guidelines for Education Support Staff](#)
- [Performance Enhancement Cycle for VPS staff](#)
- [Professional Learning Website on HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- [Continuing professional development registration standard](#) – Psychology Board of Australia
- [Provisional registration standard](#) – Psychology Board of Australia (includes professional learning requirements)



Professional Learning Requirements – Speech Pathologists

Speech Pathology Australia runs a voluntary professional learning program to ensure the skills and knowledge of its members continue to develop.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide information about the professional learning and development requirements for Student Support Services officers within the Speech Pathology Stream, as per the Speech Pathology Australia eligibility requirements for the voluntary Professional Self Regulation program which confers Certified Practising Speech Pathologist status.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers who are employed as speech pathologists must have a graduate or post graduate tertiary qualification in speech pathology and be eligible for membership with Speech Pathology Australia.

Speech Pathology Australia runs a voluntary professional learning program to ensure the skills and knowledge of its members continue to develop. Successful participation in the Program confers the title, Certified Practising Speech Pathologist, including CPSP post nominals, to eligible members from the Practising and Full-time Postgraduate Student member categories.

Professional Self Regulation Program

Successful participation in the Professional Self Regulation (PSR) program and maintenance of CPSP status requires accruing a minimum number of professional development points each year, over a three-year period, and through clinical practice.

In summary, the requirements of the PSR program area as follows:

1. Accrue a minimum of 60 points continuing education in three years with:
 - a. a minimum of 15 points per year
 - b. a minimum of 10 points per year must be accrued in clinical practice related activities (defined as being related to direct client management)
 - c. points being accrued from a minimum of two different activity types per year
 - d. a maximum of 12 points per activity type per year.
2. Eligible professional development includes: independent study; attendance at conferences, expeditions, workshops or special interest groups; teaching or presenting at a workshop, conference, to community groups, other professionals, client or carer groups; participation in research activities, student supervision; mentoring peer support and staff supervision; participation in the Speech Pathology Association activities; external study; and mastering technology.

The continuing education requirements results in a commitment of approximately 20 hours per year, or 25 minutes per week.

See the Professional Self Regulation Program Booklet for further information.

General Performance and Development

Performance and development arrangements for Student Support Services officers vary depending on the employment agreement:

- Student Support Services officers employed under the VPS Allied Health Adaptive Structure are required to participate in the Performance Enhancement Cycle (PEC)
- Student Support Services officers employed as Education Support Class participate in the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) for teaching staff arrangements.

The performance and development plan for SSSO speech pathologists must capture and accommodate for the professional learning requirements for participation in the Professional Self Regulation Program if the SSSO wishes to participate.

Department Resources

- [Performance and Development Guidelines for Education Support Staff](#)
- [Performance Enhancement Cycle for VPS staff](#)
- [Professional Learning Website on HRWeb](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- [Professional Self Regulation Program](#) – Speech Pathology Australia
- [Position Statement: The Role and Value of Professional Support](#) (2006) – Speech Pathology Australia
- [Competency-Based Occupational Standards for Speech Pathologists: Entry Level \(2011\)](#) –Speech Pathology Australia, see particularly Unit 6: Professional and supervisory practice, and Unit 7: Lifelong learning and reflective practice.



Professional Learning Requirements – Social Workers

Social workers who are members of the AASW commit to continuing professional development and lifelong learning as part of their membership and associated Code of Ethics

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide information about the professional learning and development requirements for Student Support Services officers within the Social Worker Stream, as per the Australia Association of Social Workers eligibility requirements for the Continuing Professional Development Policy.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers who are employed under the social work stream, must have graduate or postgraduate qualifications in social work, or other qualifications that are acceptable for membership to the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW).

Social workers who are members of the AASW commit to continuing professional development and lifelong learning as part of their membership and associated Code of Ethics. From 2011–12, all members (excluding student members) are required to earn a minimum of 10 points under each professional development activity category, for a total of 30 points each membership year. Penalties for not achieving this requirement do not apply in 2011–12, but may apply in future years.

Continuing Professional Development Policy

In summary, the requirements of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy are as follows:

1. For 'all members', a minimum of 30 points per year from the CPD activity categories with 10 points from each category.
2. To attain 'Accredited Social Worker' status, a minimum of 75 points per year from the CPD activity categories, with a minimum of 25 points per category (including the minimum CDP requirements for all members).
3. From 2012–13, to attain 'Accredited Mental Health Social Worker' status, a minimum of 75 points per year from the CPD activity categories (including the minimum CDP requirements for 'all members'). 30 points must be relevant to mental health practice, with 10 points of Focused Psychological Strategies related CPD (to meet mandatory Government requirements).
4. The three activity categories are:
 - a. Reflection, Ethical Practice & Career Development
 - b. Skills & Knowledge
 - c. Contributing to the Profession.

The AASW has developed a 'My CPD Plan' template, completion and uploading of which will earn members 5 CPD points. See the Continuing Professional Development Policy for further information.

Proposed National Registration

The AASW is currently working towards achieving registration through the National Regulation and Accreditation Scheme, administered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. If successful, the social work profession would be regulated through model national law and subject to provisions and oversight similar to the other 10 health professions currently registered, such as the Psychology Board of Australia. A submission to Health Ministers was made in October 2011. Further information will be provided once it becomes available.

General Performance and Development

Performance and development arrangements for Student Support Services officers vary depending on the employment agreement:

- Student Support Services officers employed under the VPS Allied Health Adaptive Structure are required to participate in the Performance Enhancement Cycle (PEC)
- Student Support Services officers employed as Education Support Class participate in the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) for teaching staff arrangements.

The performance and development plan for SSSO Social workers must capture and accommodate the professional learning requirements for registration with the Australian Association of Social Workers.

Department Resources

- [Performance and Development Guidelines for Education Support Staff](#)
- [Performance Enhancement Cycle for VPS staff](#)
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

Australian Association of Social Workers:

- [Continuing Professional Development Policy \(2011–12\)](#)
- [Practice Standard for School Social Workers](#)
- [Code of Ethics \(2010 – current ed.\)](#)



Professional Learning Requirements – Visiting Teachers

Visiting Teachers must be able to meet the Victorian Institute of Teaching Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide information about the professional learning and development requirements for Visiting Teachers.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers who are employed in the Visiting Teacher stream, must have qualifications in teaching and accreditation to teach in Victorian schools through the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Visiting Teachers must be able to meet the Victorian Institute of Teaching Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration. In addition, Visiting Teachers are required to have a Special Education qualification, appropriate to their Visiting Teacher Service stream.

Teachers are required to declare that they have undertaken a defined quantity and scope of professional development activities when applying for renewal of registration. The quantity of professional development activities will be phased in until 2012 when teachers will be required to have undertaken 100 hours in the previous five years.

Recruitment of Visiting Teachers

Where the view is formed that a teacher vacancy in a special setting (or a visiting teacher position), which requires an approved special education qualification, may not attract applications from teachers with that qualification then the following advice may be included in the job opening when the teacher vacancy is created on Recruitment Online:

“Teachers who do not have an approved special education qualification but do have current provisional or full registration from the Victorian Institute of Teaching may apply. Preference will be given to applicants who have an approved special education qualification.”

Where the vacancy was advertised as an ongoing position and an external applicant who does not have an approved special education qualification is selected that person can only be offered fixed term employment for a period not exceeding five years.

General Performance and Development

Visiting Teachers are employed under teaching conditions and are required to meet VIT requirements and participate in the Performance and Development guideline of professional standards for teachers.

Department Resources

- Performance and Development Guide for Teacher Class
- VIT Standards of Professional Practice for Full registration
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- VIT Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration
- Performance and Development Guide for Teacher Class

Professional Supervision

Regular supervision and professional development is a registration requirement for psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers and time must be available for Student Support Services to undertake supervision on a regular basis.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide an overview of the principles underpinning professional supervision for Student Support Services officers.

Guideline

Professional supervision is an important component of Student Support Services officers' ongoing professional development. Supervision provides a collaborative forum in which supervisors and staff members can reflect on the content, process and progress of their work, creating a context in which collegiate professional learning can take place.

Regular supervision and professional development is a registration requirement for psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers and time must be available for Student Support Services to undertake supervision on a regular basis. Supervision may be provided by other Student Support Services officers (as appropriate) within the network or may need to be provided by external providers in order to meet registration requirements.

Types

The three core interrelated functions of supervision, adapted from the Kadushin (1992) *Supervision in social work*. (Columbia University Press: New York) model are:

- administrative – planning, distributing, monitoring and evaluating staff work tasks and performance planning. In other settings, the administrative component of supervision may also be known as the managerial function
- educative – ensuring that staff members develop the knowledge and skills required for the role. This aspect of supervision is sometimes referred to as professional or clinical supervision, depending upon the work setting
- supportive – assisting staff to maintain positive working relationships and develop the skills to respond to challenges in the work environment.

Student Support Services officers benefit from a range of supervisory arrangements that may be provided on a formal one-on-one basis, or more informal group basis that encourages team learning and peer collaboration:

- day-to-day supervision by a line manager, including general advice and guidance, administrative support and facilitating participation in stream supervision, professional development and learning activities
- collegiate supervision by Regional Stream Leaders, who provide supervision, guidance and support within each professional discipline of psychology, speech pathology and social work. Visiting teachers also receive professional supervision and support from a Regional Visiting Teacher Team and Stream Leaders.

- peer supervision by other professionals within the network to discuss issues of professional practice or case management
- mentoring by experienced Student Support Services officers for new or less experienced staff, providing valuable informal support including professional conversations, feedback, reflective practice and advocacy.

Line management of Student Support Services officers will generally be undertaken by the SSS Coordinator but may vary from network to network, depending on the management model implemented.

Networks should ensure that there are clear arrangements and delegations in place to provide a supportive and collaborative working environment for Student Support Services officers. Line managers, SSS Coordinators (if utilised), Executive Chairs and Regional Stream Leaders should work in conjunction to ensure that the profession-specific supervision, educative and professional learning needs of each individual staff member are addressed.

Related Guidelines

- Professional Learning Principles
- Professional Learning Requirements – Psychologists
- Professional Learning Requirements – Speech Pathologists
- Professional Learning Requirements – Social Workers
- Professional Learning Requirements – Visiting Teachers

Department Resources

- [Professional Learning Website on HRWeb](#)
- [Allied Health Adaptive Structure](#)
- [Education Support Officers](#)
- [Professional Development](#)
- [Performance and Development Culture in Schools](#)
- [Performance and Development Guidelines for Education Support Staff](#)
- [Performance Enhancement Cycle for VPS staff](#)
- Performance and Development Guide for Teacher Class
- VIT Standards of Professional Practice for full registration
- The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct
- Student Support Services Ultramet Design Space (120886088)







Budgets and Finance

SSS Network Budgets in 2012–13

It is critical that all aspects of management for the SSS budget, including reporting, transaction processing, budget transfers and reconciliation, operate independently of the SRP of the coordinating school.

Purpose of this Guideline

Provides an outline of how SSS network budgets will operate from 1 July 2012.

Guideline

Overview

Budgets have been issued for each of the 51 SSS networks that will manage the delivery of SSS services to schools in 2012–13.

The budgets will operate on similar self management principles to those that underpin the Student Resource Package (SRP). In this first year of operation two components are shown:

- allocations for 1 July to 31 December 2012
- provisional allocations for 1 January to 31 December 2013.

This is to assist with the transition from the former financial year cycle to calendar year budgets which will operate from 2013. The 2013 allocation is provisional only at this time. As with the SRP, indicative budgets for the 2013 school year will be issued in late September in 2012.

The budgets will be administered by the coordinator school that has been nominated for each SSS network. Budget reporting and transaction processing will be undertaken via the coordinator school in a similar way to the SRP, except that SSS funding will be quarantined and managed wholly by the coordinator schools under the authority of the SSS network and the Executive Chair.

It is critical that all aspects of management for the SSS budget, including reporting, transaction processing, budget transfers and reconciliation, operate independently of the SRP of the coordinating school. Unique SRP sub-program codes will be created in CASES21 Finance to track expenditure against SSS budgets, to enable all activity to be separated from school SRP operations.

Basis for budget

In 2012–13, SSS network budgets have been calculated to enable the continuation of existing service levels to schools. Credit funding has been allocated to SSS networks to provide for the salaries and on-costs of the psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists and youth workers that have previously operated in each network. Visiting teacher services will continue to be managed by regions.

In addition, funding is included for a SSS Coordinator, accommodation (incl utilities etc), professional learning, assessment and test materials, publications, information technology, travel, mobile phones and vehicle leases. Where services or administration have traditionally been outsourced, funding has been allocated in the form of cash.

Credit salary budgets have been adjusted to include provision for the 2012–13 impact of previous EBA cost movements and to acknowledge funded unfilled vacancies (ie. where funding has not been diverted to other activities such as outsourcing). An allowance has also been made for the estimated impact of increments for staff not at the top of salary scale.

The budget statement issued for each network separately identifies allocations (as credit or cash) for:

- professional salaries (incl. on-costs)
- administration salaries (incl. on-costs)
- outsourced services
- outsourced administration
- operating costs.

Provisional budgets have been provided to Executive Chairs to enable SSS networks to review allocations and seek clarification, corrections or adjustments where needed prior to 1 July 2012.

Salary On-costs

Funds are included in the SSS network budget to meet relevant salary on-costs associated with the payment of salaries and allowances on the central payroll. This includes superannuation, payroll tax and Worksafe as outlined at right.

Superannuation	<p>Superannuation is budgeted and charged at a deemed rate based on the total credit allocations in the SSS network budget. As with the SRP, the rate is referenced to the aggregate cost of superannuation, rather than being determined for each setting. Superannuation will be cost neutral for the SSS network, unless the credit component is in deficit. In this instance, superannuation will be charged on the deficit and budget provision must be made by the network.</p> <p>The superannuation rate in 2012 is 8.5%, consistent with the SRP. Rates are current at time of publication. Refer to the SRP Guide for latest rates.</p>
Payroll Tax	<p>Funding for payroll tax is included in the SSS network budget as part of the credit allocation. Payroll tax is charged each fortnight against actual salaries on the payroll. The payroll tax rate in 2012 is 4.9%, consistent with the SRP. Rates are current at time of publication. Refer to the SRP Guide for latest rates.</p>
Worksafe	<p>Worksafe will be both budgeted and charged in the SSS network using notional deemed figures. This Worksafe treatment in SSS networks differs from the approach in the SRP, as networks do not have the same entity status as schools.</p> <p>SSS officers will be categorised as Exempt Category staff in coordinator schools. It will be important for coordinator schools, on behalf of the SSS network, to liaise with the Employee Health Unit to confirm SSS officers are exempted from the school's own Worksafe charges. Refer to the SRP guide for further information www.education.vic.gov.au/management/srp/budget/ref037.</p> <p>Under this approach, Worksafe for SSS officers is effectively cost neutral for SSS networks and for coordinator schools.</p>
Other oncosts	<p>Other on-costs relating to long-service leave and fringe benefits tax will be managed centrally, consistent with the SRP.</p>

Credit and Cash

The SSS budget has been categorised into credit or cash based wholly on an assessment of existing service requirements. Therefore the relative split between credit and cash varies for each network.

As with the SRP, funding can be transferred between credit and cash utilising the regular online SRP facility. The normal verification procedures will apply to confirm that sufficient uncommitted credit funding is available to support credit-to-cash transfers.

All transfers will be actioned by the coordinator school subject to the approval of the Executive Chair on behalf of the network.

The cash component of the network budget will be paid to the coordinator school in equal quarterly installments at the commencement of each term. Cash payments in respect of credit-to-cash transfers will be included with the quarterly grant.

Refer to the SRP Guide for further information.

Annual Reconciliation

The SSS network budget will be subject to an annual reconciliation process. Procedures for the reconciliation will be similar to those applying for the SRP.

Verified surpluses will be carried forward and verified deficits will be subject to recovery. The annual reconciliation will be actioned by the coordinator school and will require the endorsement of the Executive Chair on behalf of the network.

Consistent with the SRP cycle, the first reconciliation will be undertaken as of the end of the 2012 school year. Refer to the SRP Guide for further information. www.education.vic.gov.au/management/srp/budget/reconciliation.htm.

Relief Management

Consistent with the model that has previously operated in regions, SSS networks will need to develop a relief management strategy with a view to the total budget available (both credit and cash) and utilising flexibilities that become available over time from factors such as staffing attrition.

With the exception of certain nominated leave items, SSS networks will be expected to manage their overall relief requirements within the available budget. The nominated leave items are consistent with the SRP and comprise long service leave, paid family/paternity leave, Worksafe absences after the first ten days and major sporting competition leave. Defense Force leave make-up pay may also be supported if applicable.

Similarly, the Long-term Leave Support Scheme – which operates in the SRP to assist schools to manage long term leave costs – will also operate for SSS Officers. The scheme provides for an annual self-insurance premium to be charged for leave over 30 days, rather than the highly volatile cost of actual leave replacement. The premium will be charged based on 0.788% of the credit component. Rates are current at time of publication. Refer to the SRP Guide for latest rates.

Refer to the SRP Guide for further information www.education.vic.gov.au/management/srp/budget/relief.htm.

The references in the SRP Guide to relief for teachers and Education Support Officers will be updated in 2013 to include SSS officers.

Reports

A suite of online reports will be available for the SSS network budget similar to those provided for the SRP.

The SSS network, under the leadership of the Executive Chair, is responsible for the management of the network budget. Online reports will be available to the coordinator school, which has been charged with day-to-day administration of the budget.

In summary the reports include:

Management Report	A summary of the budget financial position, including the projected surplus or deficit, based on current salary commitments.
SSS Budget Report	Latest SSS network budget update, including any revisions or adjustments.
Salaries Fortnightly Transaction Report	Itemised charges for each employee. Coordinator schools will be provided with SFTR reports showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• charges to the school (SRP and Strategic Programs)• charges to the SSS network• items not charged to the school or network (ie outside budget)
Employee Charging History Report	Itemised history of salary charges for each employee.
Salary Mischarging Corrections Report	A summary of corrections processed on behalf of the network.

Assistance with Deficit Management and Workforce Bridging

The reform of the Student Support Services model is aimed at enabling principals and schools to take control of services and to determine how best to manage delivery in meeting the needs of students.

The model is underpinned by the principle of self management. In this context, all available funding has been allocated to SSS networks as part of the reform. It is therefore incumbent on SSS networks to develop service and management strategies that are capable of being sustained within budget over time.

SSS networks will enjoy similar flexibilities and responsibilities to those pertaining to the SRP, particularly in managing savings that may occur from factors such as staffing attrition and pressures that may emerge due to leave replacement. While these factors may balance out over time, annual variations will need to be carefully managed.

Deficit management and workforce planning support will be available to SSS networks in similar circumstances to those applying to the SRP. Support in these circumstances may be available through a combination of:

- management support for workforce planning through Regional Finance Managers, Schools Finance Liaison Officers and Workforce Bridging Officers.
- financial support via Workforce Bridging if the shortfall is not linked to local management decisions

The aim at all times will be to assist SSS networks to make the transition from a deficit to a 'within budget' situation.

Further information about support for deficit management and workforce bridging is available in the SRP Guide. www.education.vic.gov.au/management/srp/budget/deficits.htm.

Related Guidelines

- Human Resources Management and Operations

Department Resources

- Guide to the SRP: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/srp/>
- School Finance Division: Student Support Services SRP and budget advice, ph: 9637 2569
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)





Logistics

Accommodation

Student Support Services officers will generally work in a variety of locations in the course of their work, depending on regional (for visiting teachers) or network needs and organisation.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidelines on accommodation requirements for Student Support Services officers.

Guideline

Student Support Services officers will generally work in a variety of locations in the course of their work, depending on regional (for visiting teachers) or network needs and organisation, including:

- network base location – a centralised office space where the SSS Coordinator may be based, records centrally kept and a base of operations for Student Support Services officers to complete paperwork, consult with colleagues and staff from other professional disciplines, and receive professional supervision and training
- schools – Student Support Services officers may be located in one or more schools-based accommodation, depending on the size and needs of the school/s officers have been allocated to. Schools may function as a base location or simply place of work, depending on network arrangements
- travel – Student Support Services officers are often required to travel at regular intervals between a base location, schools, regional office and other work locations. It is important that arrangements are in place to ensure safe, secure and efficient transit between workplaces.

In all circumstances, whether at network base locations, in schools or in transit, Student Support Services officers must be provided with accommodation and equipment that is appropriate to the variety of tasks they perform for a diverse client base. Accommodation and equipment must also comply with occupational health and safety requirements and Departmental policies. It is the responsibility of the Executive Chair and Network Principals to ensure appropriate accommodation at schools and base locations.

Key considerations include:

- the often private and confidential nature of services provided, which require a secure, acoustically separate, and appropriate place to convene meetings with parents, students support groups and related professionals
- the need for a quiet place where assessments and interventions can be conducted, with a minimum amount of distraction
- suitable office and meeting space for collegiate meetings of health and wellbeing teams to conduct case discussions, and consult with community services as required
- access to information technology, Departmental computer networks (eduStar), the internet and telephony
- lockable filing cabinets for the storage of DCS files
- furniture suitable for both adults and children

- the access requirements of students, parents and staff, which may include disability access
- office equipment that is ergonomic and suitable to complete administrative tasks
- safe vehicle use, driver fatigue and personal safety.

It is the role of Network Principals, through the Executive Group and in consultation with the SSS Coordinator, to determine the most appropriate location for Student Support Services teams, taking into account local needs, geography and availability of suitable space.



Department Resources

- [Employee Health and Safety](#)
- [Driver Safety](#)
- Further information on employee health, safety and WorkCover in DEECD can be found at <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/HRWeb/safetyhw/default.htm>
- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)

Other Resources

- [Officewise](#)
- [Guide to safe work related driving](#)

Related Legislation

- Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Workplace Amenities and Work Environment Compliance Code 2008

General Administration

Each network is funded for the provision of administrative support to organise the day-to-day management of SSSOs under the direction of the Executive Chair and SSS Coordinator.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidance on the management of general administration for Student Support Service.

Guideline

SSS Administration

Each network is funded for the provision of administrative support to organise the day-to-day management of SSSOs under the direction of the Executive Chair and SSS Coordinator. Administration activities may include:

- maintaining base room resources (e.g., stationery orders) for collocated Student Support Services officers
- ordering test materials (e.g., test forms/equipment etc) to support service provision
- coordinating and supporting of network Executive Group meetings.

Management and service administration

Line-management for SSS officers will be determined by the Executive Group. In most cases the line manager of Student Support Services officers will be the SSS Coordinator, but the Executive Chair, a principal at an individual school, or a nominated principal for the network may also take on this role. The Executive Group will provide a clear line-management structure to SSSOs in each network.

Each network will manage administrative tasks associated with employment, such as professional development and resources, leave, vehicle usage and expense claims.

Professional Support and SSS administration

Performance enhancement cycles (PECs), leadership, file management processes and administration time, management of integrated service delivery relationships and professional supervision for SSSOs will be managed at the network level. PECs for SSSOs will be undertaken by their direct line-manager. Adequate professional support to meet the requirements of SSS professional associations will continue to be supported in the new model.

Accommodation

The new governance and resource model does not recommend changes to the workplace location and co-location of SSSOs. Over time, there is flexibility built into the model for the Executive Group to reassess the effectiveness of the existing workplace location and determine the best arrangements for the delivery of SSS services. Where this affects work locations, such change will be done in consultation with relevant staff.

Related Guidelines

- File Management
- Fleet Cars and Travel

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- [Archives and record management](#)
- [Policy: archives and records](#)

Other Resources

- [General Retention & Disposal Authority for School Records](#), in particular for Student Support Services sections 3.8.0 to 3.8.3.
- [07/01 General Retention & Disposal Authority for General Administrative Functions](#)

Related Legislation

- Health Records Act 2001
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Public Records Act 1973



File Management

The Executive Chair of the Network is responsible for ensuring the proper management of the Department Confidential Student (DCS) files in line with the policies established by the network.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidance on the management of confidential files and information collected by Student Support Services officers in the course of their duties.

Guideline

Schools are responsible for the creation, management and disposal of records relating to all aspects of school administration. These records include school student files, student reports, school based personal staff files, financial records, building and facilities records, school council files, staff selection documents, and correspondence.

Networks and schools need to properly manage records in order to:

- meet legislative responsibilities
- ensure records are stored when needed and destroyed when permissible
- meet administrative responsibilities to staff and students.

Schools must also create, manage and dispose of public records (electronic and hardcopy) in accordance with standards set by the Public Record Office Victoria and guidelines issued by the Department.

The Student Online Case System (SOCS) has the capacity to upload documents, thereby allowing access online to authorised users.

Roles and responsibilities

Executive Chair

The Executive Chair of the Network is responsible for ensuring the proper management of the Department Confidential Student (DCS) files in line with the policies established by the network.

Executive Group

School Networks, through the Executive Group, should establish policies for the proper management of DCS files, including issues such as storage location and access authority.

The Executive Group should:

- determine a policy for the management of DCS files within the network
- determine an appropriate location for files to facilitate the delivery of services
- document procedures for the management of files, including access, confidentiality and security
- communicate to all schools and Student Support Services procedures for file management arrangements in place within the network.

School Principals

Schools principals should:

- ensure the confidentiality and security of files where they are stored at a school location
- ensure that only authorised persons access, disseminate, transfer and destroy files, e.g. psychology files may only be accessed by registered psychologists.

Student Support Services officers

Student Support Services officers should:

- ensure that files are kept up-to-date
- ensure that only officers working with a particular case have access to relevant files.

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultraset Design Space (120886088)
- Archives and record management
- Policy: archives and records

Other Resources

- General Retention & Disposal Authority for School Records, in particular for Student Support Services sections 3.8.0 to 3.8.3
- 07/01 General Retention & Disposal Authority for General Administrative Functions

Related Legislation

- Health Records Act 2001
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Public Records Act 1973



Privacy and Confidentiality

The Victorian privacy laws, the Information Privacy Act 2000 and Health Records Act 2001, provide for the protection of personal and health information.

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline provides an overview of privacy processes for Student Support Services.

Guideline

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development staff are required by law to protect the personal and health information a school collects and holds. The Victorian privacy laws, the Information Privacy Act 2000 and Health Records Act 2001, provide for the protection of personal and health information.

Student Support Services files are known as Department Confidential Student (DCS) files, to make a clear distinction between files that are established as a result of intervention by a Student Support Services officer, and those a school might ordinarily keep about a student enrolled at the school.

DCS files can contain information which may be highly confidential in nature, including family details, records of interventions and reports from Student Support Services working with the student and/or family. Under the Health Records Act, DCS files, created by Student Support Services and

the personal information contained within, is considered to be “health information” and subject to the Health Privacy Principles of the Health Records Act 2001. These principles restrict the use, access, dissemination and other associated record management issues associated with these files.

The Executive Chair and network principals are responsible for the management and secure storage of DCS files in line with network policies to ensure confidentiality is maintained and access is limited to only those professionals who require access in accordance with the purpose for which the information was collected, for example, direct case management or service provision.

Inappropriate disclosure of confidential information has the potential to cause harm to individual students and their families and may constitute a breach of privacy legislation given the sensitive nature of the confidential information contained in the DCS file.

Networks, schools and principals are responsible for ensuring that all school staff, including teachers, Student Support Services officers and other education support staff are aware of their obligations with regards to privacy and confidentiality of student files.

Related Guidelines

- File Management

Department Resources

- Student Support Services Ultranet Design Space (120886088)
- **Information Privacy** – The School Policy and Advisory Guide provides information about the obligations of a school concerning the need to have a privacy policy, legislative requirements, compliance strategies and privacy exemptions.
- **Privacy for the Department** – provides a range of information, resources and contacts to assist schools and staff to comply with their obligations under privacy legislation (edumail PIN and Password required).
- **Student Privacy** – The School Policy and Advisory Guide provides information about how schools should respond to requests for information from a variety of sources, from parents and other government departments, to lawyers and the police.



Vehicles and Travel

Networks should consider developing travel and expenses policies to support the operational requirements of Student Support Services provision in their Network.

Purpose of this Guideline

To provide guidance on the management and general administration of SSS fleet vehicles and travel expenses.

Prerequisite Guideline

- DEECD Fleet Policy

Guideline

DEECD provides a number of Government vehicles for use by rural and regionally based Student Support Services officers as in-kind support to enable travel between schools within their network.

These guidelines are provided as a supplement to the DEECD Fleet Policy.

Driver Registration

Executive Chairs are responsible for ensuring that the drivers of Government vehicles hold a current driver's licence appropriate to the type of vehicle. Employees using a Government vehicle for the first time must present a current driver's licence to the network administrator, who will photocopy and securely file the information. An 'Application to Drive Vehicle' form must also be completed and approved before driving a government vehicle, which will also be securely filed by the Network. Networks can obtain a copy of the 'Application to Drive Vehicle' form from the Regional Office.

Log Books

Drivers of Government vehicles must make and maintain suitable records of all journeys in departmental logbooks.

Each network with the use of a Government vehicle is required to record the vehicle use monthly on the DEECD FBT Tracker available at: <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/fbt>. It is essential that this information is recorded regularly as it will impact on the calculation of the Departmental FBT obligation. To obtain access to FBT Tracker SSS Coordinators or network administrators are to notify Fleet Services via email at: fleet.service@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Executive Chairs are to ensure that log books are subject to regular review, are available for inspection and are archived in accordance with DEECD Records Management Policy.

Fuel Cards

All government vehicles have fuel cards provided in accordance with the suppliers on the Whole of Government Contract. Fuel is to be purchased through these suppliers. When purchasing fuel, an accurate odometer reading must be provided.

In the case of a fuel card being lost or stolen, notify Fleet Services via email at: fleet.service@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Vehicle Maintenance and Servicing

All Government vehicles are purchased with pre-paid standard scheduled servicing. Each network is required to arrange for scheduled services through the relevant local car dealer. A copy of the servicing details are included with the vehicle when the vehicle is delivered to the network. Additional charges arising from scheduled servicing (wiper blades, wheel balance and rotation etc.) can be charged to Procurement Division using charge code: 11-3743-86080-374105-0000.

Roadside Assistance

24 hour roadside assistance is available for all Government vehicles. Contact numbers for roadside assistance can be found in vehicle log books and keytags. Roadside assistance can only be used when the vehicle breaks down, not in the case of an accident.

Windscreens and Tires

DEECD maintains contracts with Beaufort and Bridgestone for tires and Windscreens O'Brien for auto glass repairs and replacement. Networks should use these suppliers as required.

Washing of Cars

Networks are responsible for ensuring Government vehicles are washed and detailed as required. This cost will be met by the Networks.

Garaging of Government Vehicles

In general, all Government vehicles should be garaged overnight at the appropriate Department location. If a vehicle is not garaged at a Department location, it must not be parked in a public thoroughfare.

Accident Procedures

In the event of an accident staff and public safety is the primary concern.

Drivers of Government vehicles must comply with the relevant Traffic Acts and or Regulations concerning notification of accidents to the police. Under no circumstances should liability for an accident be admitted.

An Accident Claim Form must be completed thoroughly and immediately for any accident or incident and forwarded to Fleet Services via email at: fleet.service@edumail.vic.gov.au.

If the vehicle is not drivable, arrange for towing via nearest towing facility to nearest Lumley Insurance approved repairer.

For information on control measures related to unreported damage to vehicles or dangerous driving offences please refer to section 4.2 of the DEECD Fleet Policy.

Parking and Traffic Infringements

Drivers are responsible for all parking or traffic infringements.

Vehicle Replacement Procedures

DEECD regional offices will maintain responsibility for receiving new cars and disposal procedures for old cars. Networks will receive an email to advise that a car is scheduled to be replaced and to confirm that the vehicle is required.

Networks will be required to arrange for the old car to be detailed prior to return to regional office for collection of replacement vehicle.

DEECD regional offices will ensure new cars are provided with appropriate fuel cards, log books and key tags.

Travel and Expenses

Networks should develop travel and expenses policies to support the operational requirements of Student Support Services provision in their Network.

Related Guidelines

- General Administration

Department Resources

- [DEECD Fleet Policy](#)
- [Victorian Government Standard Motor Vehicle Policy](#)
- [FBT Implications – Motor Vehicles](#)
- [DEECD Fleet Services Key Documents](#)
- [DEECD Personal Expenses](#)
- Student Support Services Ultramet Design Space (120886088)

