

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with other ICPA Qld Inc Policy documents.



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY: TO ENSURE THAT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IS UTILISED TO THE BEST POSSIBLE ADVANTAGE FOR RURAL AND REMOTE STUDENTS.

OBJECTIVES:

- That information technology be utilised to:
 - a. Achieve optimum learning outcomes for all students.
 - b. Improve personal contact between students, Home Tutors, and teachers.
 - c. Address the needs of rural, remote, and isolated students.
 - d. Complement the importance of human interaction.
- That with the implementation of information and communication technology, adequate funds be allocated as an enhancement to current school budgets.
- Key stakeholders are authentically and regularly consulted.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- That:
 - a. SDE students are provided with affordable communications connection and devices capable of carrying clear, reliable two-way voice and data.
 - b. Geographically isolated students have communication infrastructure and maintenance, internally and externally, that gives access to and encourages extension of all services offered by Education Queensland. (2018: A1, A2)
 - c. Adequate and affordable data plans and internet capacity be available for all students to allow for full participation in the curriculum. (2015: A15, A16, A17) (2019: A2, A3)
 - d. DoE provide sufficient bandwidth to SDE's to support remote learning (2020: A5)
 - e. Variations in the operations of individual Schools of Distance Education is recognised.
 - f. Download and upload services to all schools remains compatible with industry standards.
 - g. All Distance education material be trialled with delivery via satellite technology to ensure compatibility as they are developed.
 - h. Priority of access to satellite systems that deliver distance education to rural and remote students.
 - i. The installation of secondary phone lines in Geographically Isolated DE classrooms is subsidised and timely. (2017: A13, S1) (2021: A3)- Out - this is never going to happen
 - j. The best connectivity service available is utilised in small schools. (2019: S1, S2) (2020: F2, S3) (A5 2022)
 - k. Mobile towers providing 3G are upgraded with 4 or 5G in a timely manner ensuring no reduction in service footprint (2021: S1)
 - l. Ensure rural and remote telecommunications infrastructure is maintained to high working standards especially in vulnerable areas. (2023: A1)

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SUPPORT

- That Technical ICT support be maintained and extended to include:
 - a. Full time technical officers' positions and or funding to assist-Schools of Distance Education and small rural schools. F2:2020 (2022: A4)
 - b. Increase in technical personnel available to rural band 5 & 6 schools.
 - c. Regular maintenance and setting up of equipment in rural schools. (2016: A9, A11, FM4)
 - d. A realistic internet and hardware subsidy be made available to all geographically isolated SDE students. (2021: A5) (2022: A3)
 - e. That ongoing financial assistance be available to support the costs of IT implementation and upgrading.
- That support services include:
 - a. Professional Development and technical support for staff in Rural and Remote schools.
 - b. Professional Development and technical support for Home Tutors and remote classrooms.
 - c. Tutoring of school elected digital learning support materials, once deemed suitable and capable of achieving desired learning outcomes.

GENERAL

- That research and trials investigating the optimum platforms and techniques for Distance Education Students continue.
- That there be equitable consideration given to the needs of geographically isolated Non-Government SDE students. (2016: A10)
- That a Universal Services Obligation is retained for all members to have reliable access to voice communication. (2017: A2)
- That the Federal Governments Mobile Black Spot Program rollout prioritises small rural schools that have no existing mobile coverage. (2017: S2) (2021: S2) (2022; A7)
- Investigate and develop best practice guidelines for screen time for students in Schools of Distance Education. (2019: A1)