

# Intensive English unit - guidelines

Department of Education and Training

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# Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification: early childhood to Year 12 policy

The Department of Education and Training (department) is committed to improving education outcomes for every child and student in the Northern Territory (NT) by optimising curriculum provision, using evidence-based curriculum planning, delivery and assessment practices, and ensuring integrity in all reporting and certification obligations.

The Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification: early childhood to Year 12 policy (CARC policy), sets out the mandatory requirements for all NT Government schools and approved services in the delivery of curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification.

## 1. Intensive English Unit summary

Read these guidelines with section 8.2. of the CARC policy.

These guidelines provide information on the enrolment and operational requirements of a school with an Intensive English Unit (IEU), and provide specific advice on the curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements for students in an IEU program.

An IEU program delivers a targeted and intensive approach to students who have recently arrived in Australia and are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D). The program provides them with time to develop the depth of English language required to study and learn in the NT.

IEU units also provide a safe and supported introduction to Australian culture and local community while considering any additional needs due to trauma, social disadvantage and interrupted schooling, and prepares EAL/D learners to achieve academic success.

## 2. Intensive English Unit guidelines

### 2.1. Enrolment requirements of an IEU

#### 2.1.1. Criteria for entry

The requirements for enrolment in an IEU are, students:

- must be permitted to study in Australia
- must have recently arrived in Australia, that is within the previous 12 to 18 months
- must be in the beginning or emerging phases of the [Australian curriculum, assessment and reporting authority \(ACARA\) EAL/D learning progression](#)
- must hold Australian citizenship, permanent residency, or an approved provisional or temporary visa.

Primary holders of a student visa subclass 500 must have a study plan for placement in an IEU with a Confirmation of enrolment from International Services. Refer to section 20 of the [International student administration guidelines](#).

All other international students, as dependents of temporary visa holders, must have a Confirmation of placement from International Services. Refer to sections 21-25 of the International student administration guidelines.

Attendance in an IEU program is not mandatory unless International Services makes this a condition of an international student's Confirmation of enrolment, as part of their student visa subclass 500 application process.

Students are not required to reside in an IEU school's priority enrolment area, while attending an IEU program. However, both entry into an IEU class, and exiting into a mainstream class in the IEU school, are contingent on capacity. Refer to section 2.1.4. of the [Enrolment management and priority enrolment guidelines](#).

### 2.1.2. Criteria for exiting

Students exit an IEU program when they meet one of the following, whichever comes first:

- enrolled in an IEU for a maximum of 18 months for students in Transition to Year 6, or 24 months for students in Year 7 to Year 12
- working in the developing phase of the ACARA EAL/D learning progression for Standard Australian English (SAE) in writing.

### 2.1.3. Enrolment

Students who hold Australian citizenship, permanent residency or an approved provisional or temporary visa may apply for enrolment in an IEU, but their enrolment processes differ.

Non-IEU schools receiving enrolment applications may recommend that students apply to attend an IEU after an initial screening, refer to section 2.1.3.3. Parents should be directed to the [IEU program website](#) for further information and access to translated IEU information brochures.

#### 2.1.3.1. Domestic enrolments

- Domestic IEU enrolments can include students new to Australia, within 12 to 18 months of arrival, with one parent who has Australian citizenship, or Australian students who have lived abroad and have just returned to Australia.
- Re-enrolments occur when a student has already had time in an IEU and left, often due to family circumstances, before returning to Australia again. The previous time in the IEU is counted in the allowable time period.
- It is the school's responsibility to check if a student holds Australian documentation and proof of their recent arrival in Australia.

#### 2.1.3.2. International enrolments

- International student enrolments can include students already in Australia on various visas. Some visas permit government-funded study and require the payment of international student fees.
- Schools should redirect all international student inquiries to International Services in the first instance, using [internationalservice@education.nt.gov.au](mailto:internationalservice@education.nt.gov.au).

- International Services continue to monitor international students with a student visa subclass 500, once they have been found eligible to study and applications have been processed. International Services do not monitor other visa holders.

### 2.1.3.3. Screening for IEU eligibility

Any school that receives an application for enrolment from an EAL/D student should complete the [IEU eligibility screening assessment](#) to determine the student's Standard Australian English (SAE) level.

- Students must be in the beginning and emerging phases of the ACARA EAL/D learning progression to be eligible to participate in an IEU program.
- A more thorough assessment of an IEU student's SAE levels of proficiency should be made by their teacher once they have settled in. This should be completed in all four modes of English, using the [NT EAL/D learning progressions](#), within their first six weeks in an IEU.
- EAL/D students in the developing phase of learning SAE should enter directly into a mainstream class at the school in their priority enrolment area or can request enrolment at another preferred school although enrolment is not guaranteed.

### 2.1.3.4. IEU enrolment interviews

IEU schools should advise parents of what to bring to an IEU enrolment interview and check if they require an interpreter. Home language officers can provide support if they speak the language required or schools can use the free [Interpreting and translating service NT](#).

## 2.1.4. Exiting processes

IEU students exit an IEU program when they are in the developing phase of the ACARA EAL/D learning progression. This phase begins at different NT EAL/D learning progression levels depending on a student's stage of schooling and the corresponding language demands in the curriculum for their year level. The variations are as follows:

- Transition to Year 2 students are in the developing phase between levels 2-3
- Year 3-6 students are in the developing phase between levels 3-4
- Year 7-12 students are in the developing phase between levels 4-5.

Students should exit an IEU program at the end of a semester to reduce disruption. IEU leadership must monitor the time that students have been in the IEU and their English proficiency levels, and support the implementation of a transition pathway.

Teachers should develop a transition pathway plan with students' parents as the student begins to enter the developing phase of SAE acquisition, or in the last semester in an IEU class. The plan should include participation in some appropriate mainstream classes.

IEU teachers must complete the following prior to the student exiting:

- discuss the next class or school for the student with the parents. This may be staying at the same school and moving into a mainstream classroom or enrolling in a different non-IEU school.
- notify International Services when international students, with a student visa subclass 500, are due to exit an IEU

- organise for a representative from a new school to visit a younger student in their IEU school, or for an older student to attend an orientation session at the new school.

Teachers should support the transition to mainstream classes with information and evidence of learning and wellbeing using the [IEU student transfer template](#).

### 2.1.5. Extension of time

Occasionally students in an IEU program may not be able to reach the developing phase in the time provided.

Principals can apply to extend a student's enrolment in an IEU for up to one semester by submitting a request to [otls.doe@education.nt.gov.au](mailto:otls.doe@education.nt.gov.au). The request must include evidence of learning and a plan to support the student to meet the exit criteria.

The extension of time panel consists of the Senior Director Darwin Region, and the Senior Director Primary and an EAL/D advisor from Teaching and Learning Services. The panel meet once per term and will inform the School Funding and Resourcing team and International Services of application outcomes.

## 2.2. Curriculum, assessment and reporting for an IEU

### 2.2.1. Curriculum and assessment requirements

The English and mathematics learning areas for each student's year level must be taught, assessed and reported on in IEU classes. IEU students must be given the opportunity to engage with other learning areas, with the content of these learning areas used as a vehicle for teaching subject-specific English.

IEU teachers are required to assess and monitor all students' progress in SAE using the NT EAL/D learning progressions, setting semesterly language learning goals.

### 2.2.2. Reporting requirements

IEU schools must provide semesterly parent-teacher discussions and written reports on each student's progress, refer to sections 6.5. and 7.3. of the CARC policy. Interpreting and translating should be provided if parents require it. Written IEU reports must:

- use the Educational Adjustment Plan (EAP) report format to record and report on semesterly language learning goals as well as the learning areas taught
- use the drop-down word options in the EAP report to express achievement in the learning areas taught for students continuing in the IEU program and use 5-point A-E grades for students due to exit the program.

IEU schools must inform International Services of unsatisfactory progress of IEU students, who are primary holders of a student visa subclass 500. Refer to section 20 of the International student administration guidelines.

## 2.3. IEU data management

### 2.3.1. Student Administration and Management System

The IEU program attracts additional funding per student. It is important that the correct information for IEU students is entered into the Student Administration and Management System (SAMS). Principals are responsible for checking this information as students enter and exit the IEU.

Do the following for each student:

- locate the Approved Program field under the Additional 1 tab
- select Other Units – IEU in the Approved Program field. This is a tracking tag on each IEU student's individual record in SAMS
- ensure the Approved Program IEU tag is removed from an IEU student's record when they exit the program or an IEU school. This includes their movement from one IEU school to another.

Additional information is required in SAMS for international students, including their residency status or visa subclass information, refer to the [International students – all visa subclass holders fact sheet](#).

Financial Services, International Services and Teaching and Learning Services use SAMS to monitor student numbers and their time in an IEU program.

### 2.3.2. Student progress data

Teachers must enter IEU student's English acquisition levels, determined using the NT EAL/D learning progressions, into the Student Achievement Information System (SAIS). This data can be viewed using the [EAL/D eDash platform](#).

## 2.4. IEU transport service

The NT Government provides transport assistance to and from school for eligible students who attend IEU schools. This service is provided by the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure for IEU students who live outside an IEU school's priority enrolment area.

Primary-aged students with little or no English should not travel alone on the usual school or public buses. The IEU student transport service is available to safely transport IEU students to their IEU school.

IEU schools should inform parents of this service and support them in the application process, where required. Refer to the [IEU program website](#) for the Guidelines for Intensive English Unit student transport.

The management of the IEU student transport service is the responsibility of Department of Logistics and Infrastructure, the Department of Education and Training's Schools division and school-based IEU leadership.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

Refer to section 9 of the CARC policy and to the [Intensive English Unit program statement](#) for roles and responsibilities. Additional roles and responsibilities are below.

### 3.1. International Services

International Services must:

- provide a representative for the IEU management group
- check capacity with IEU schools for fee-paying international students.

### 3.2. Financial Services

Financial Services must:

- provide a representative for the IEU management group
- communicate IEU enrolment numbers to the Schools division.

### 3.3. Schools division

Refer to the Intensive English Unit program statement.

### 3.4. Teaching and Learning Services

Teaching and Learning Services must:

- communicate the outcomes of the extension of time applications with Financial Services.

### 3.5. Principals

IEU school principals must:

- use the Approved Program IEU tag in SAMS to ensure effective student monitoring
- ensure targeted EAL/D pedagogy and approaches are implemented in the IEU classes
- liaise with International Services and Melaleuca Australia Darwin
- effectively communicate with parents, students, and community support services, with interpreting and translating when necessary
- ensure the IEU program is supported by home language officers with additional languages and a high level of literacy in English
- create new IEU classes when overall additional numbers exceed a further 8 students beyond the recommended ratio of 15 students to one teacher
- ensure that IEU classes are given intensive support, for all language, literacy and numeracy lessons, by home language officers or school support assistants, in addition to the classroom teacher
- advise parents of the exit criteria and the most beneficial time for a student to exit an IEU program
- ensure IEU student personal and progress data is consistent and accurate
- advise International Services and parents when the IEU classes do not have capacity to enrol an IEU student application
- advise International Services and parents if an IEU student holding a student visa subclass 500 is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements.

### 3.6. Teachers

IEU teachers must:

- use the Northern Territory Teaching and Learning model to explicitly teach for the communication, socio-cultural, language and literacy learning needs of their beginning and emerging EAL/D learners
- create programs to specifically cater for the wellbeing needs of students, who may be impacted by the migration experience or the effects of trauma
- work collaboratively with home language officers and school support assistants to support the communication, classroom learning, and cultural wellbeing needs of students
- use the NT EAL/D learning progressions to monitor the English acquisition of IEU students, and communicate their readiness to exit the program and implement appropriate transition pathway plans
- provide evidence of student English proficiency and progress to support any extension of time application submitted
- ensure comprehensive student information is shared with the next class or school.

### 3.7. Home language officers

Home language officers must:

- interpret for parents by speaking one of their languages during the enrolment process and parent-teacher interviews, and by translating parent notes and student reports
- settle new students into the culture, routines and expectations of an Australian school
- team teach with the teacher, including planning, educating small groups of students with lesson plans provided, reviewing lessons, collecting assessment data, and student administration support
- help teachers to understand and navigate the cultural needs of their IEU students.

## 4. Definitions

Refer to section 11 of the CARC policy for a list of definitions.

Term	Definition
Confirmation of enrolment	Required approval from International Services for an International student enrolling in an Australian school as a primary holder of a student visa subclass 500, including a study plan as a condition of the Confirmation of enrolment.
Confirmation of placement	Required approval from International Services for an International student enrolling in an Australian school as a dependent on a temporary visa holder. This includes a number of visa types.

## 5. Related legislation, policies and resources

### 5.1. Policies

- IEU program statement - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/6458>
- Guidelines for Intensive English Unit student transport - <https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/english-as-a-second-language/intensive-english-unit-program>
- International student administration guidelines - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4410>
- EAL/D guidelines - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/curriculum>
- Enrolment management and priority enrolment guidelines - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment/enrolment>

### 5.2. Resources

- Australian curriculum, assessment and reporting authority (ACARA) EAL/D learning progression - <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/student-diversity/eal-d-students#accordion-47609c6685-item-d7e361f211>
  - NT EALD learning progressions - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/teaching-and-learning/pedagogy/english-additional-language-dialect#resources1405>
  - IEU eLearn resources - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/teaching-and-learning/programsother/intensive-english-units>
  - IEU program website - <https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/english-as-a-second-language/intensive-english-unit-program>
  - International students – all visa subclass holders fact sheet - <http://ed.ntschoools.net/infotech/sas/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?View=%7b65b08d23-4f3b-4314-aedf-9bccc813afaf%7d&SortField=Title&SortDir=Asc>
- Interpreting and translating service NT - <https://nt.gov.au/community/interpreting-and-translating-services/interpreting-and-translating-service-nt>

Acronym	Full form
ACARA	Australian curriculum, assessment and reporting authority
CARC	Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification
EAL/D	English as an additional language or dialect
IEU	Intensive English Unit
NT	Northern Territory
SAE	Standard Australian English
SAIS	Student Achievement Information System
SAMS	Student Administration and Management System

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3	December 2022	Teaching and Learning Services	Consultation with stakeholders incorporated
4	November 2025	Teaching and Learning Services	IEU policy and operational guidelines combined to make these IEU guidelines. Content reviewed to align to the CARC policy, and the current NT Government and department organisation structures.