NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

GUIDELINES

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Responsibility of:	School Support Services	**FILE2014/669**
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Target Audience:	Principals/Staff	

This document should be read in conjunction with:
- English as a Second Language policy
- NT Board of Studies Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting policy and guidelines: T-9
- NT Board of Studies Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Certification policy: Years 10-12

1. INTRODUCTION

The English as a Second Language (ESL) guidelines aims to assist schools to plan for and deliver ESL programs and instruction according to student linguistic and cultural needs and stage of schooling. These guidelines provide direction for curriculum implementation, ESL pedagogy, assessment and reporting procedures for students where English is an additional language in all Northern Territory (NT) Government schools and independent public school contexts. These contexts include:

Intensive English instruction for new arrivals	Intensive English instruction is where Standard Australian English is taught to migrant and refugee students new to Australia and in the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Beginning and Emerging Phase. Intensive English Units, primary and secondary, are located in specific schools in urban areas. Newly arrived students are eligible to attend Intensive English classes for a year. An additional semester of study in an Intensive English class is at the school's discretion.
	Schools with Intensive English classes are responsible for managing the transition from Intensive English classes to mainstream classes (see section 4.6 of these guidelines).
	Intensive English instruction prepares students for success at school, focussing on developing their confidence to live in the Australian community. The Intensive English language teaching, with specialist teachers of ESL and classroom support from the Home Language Officer, is designed to prepare students for further study and employment.
Remote and very remote NT Government schools	In remote and very remote schools, Aboriginal language speaking students are in the majority. Standard Australian English is rarely spoken in the home, and students may not have regular exposure to Standard Australian English, therefore the explicit teaching of Standard Australian English is imperative from Transition onwards. Students can fall into one of the following Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) EAL/D Phases: Beginning, Emerging, Developing, and Consolidating English Phases.
	Remote Aboriginal language speaking students require curriculum delivered in Standard Australian English to have explicit ESL intercultural pedagogy embedded to ensure they learn the Standard Australian English skills and

	understandings required to access the curriculum in all modes: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Schools will support the Working in Teams approach where team teaching is a feature. The team teaching strategy allows for the use of a student's home language as a bridge to learning Standard Australian English and learning new concepts through Standard Australian English.
ESL instruction in mainstream classrooms	Mainstream classes refer to schools in any geolocation where the majority of students speak English as a home language. ESL students in mainstream classes require ESL support in accessing curriculum where the concepts are complex and the language they are expected to comprehend or to produce is lexically dense. ESL instruction in mainstream classes uses ESL pedagogy, with Standard Australian English as the language of instruction, to explicitly teach the curriculum learning areas. ESL students in mainstream classes require teaching that incorporates visual and concrete aids and where the required language demands are modelled and deconstructed. Given the high numbers of ESL students in the Northern Territory, all schools must establish effective ESL programs for ESL students in mainstream classrooms as outlined in the fact sheet Guide to establishing a school ESL Program (staff access only).

2. DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal English is a dialect of English. Aboriginal English is a variety of English drawn from Aboriginal languages which differs from Standard Australian English in its systematic use of vocabulary, word and sentence meanings, grammar and genres. For the purpose of this policy, speakers of Aboriginal English are considered to be ESL learners.

Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers are identified Aboriginal paraprofessionals providing mentorship and support for Aboriginal students through their work with staff and school community members.

ACARA English as an Additional Language/Dialect Phase refers to the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression which provides broad descriptors of the characteristics of ESL students at four developmental stages of English language acquisition: Beginning, Emerging, Developing or Consolidating Phase.

Assistant teacher is a paraprofessional from the local community who speaks the language of the students and has an active role in supporting the teaching of the curriculum.

Dialect refers to different social, cultural and regional versions of a particular language. Dialects are identifiable by a particular set of systematic variations in their linguistic features. Standard Australian English and Aboriginal English are examples of dialects of English.[i]

ESL pedagogy is the systematic and explicit teaching of the Standard Australian English required for students to achieve in school. It is informed teaching that employs approaches and strategies that build students Standard Australian English language skills and knowledge while teaching the content of the age appropriate curriculum.

ESL students are those whose first language is a language or dialect other than English and who require explicit teaching to develop proficiency in Standard Australian English.

ESL teacher refers to a teacher with/working towards ESL qualifications or a quantity of ESL professional learning hours.

Explicit teaching is a method that delivers a series of supports or scaffolds whereby students are guided through the learning process using clear statements about the purpose and rationale for learning new skills and understandings using clear explanations and demonstrations of the instructional target, and supported practice with feedback until independent mastery has been achieved.[ii]

Home Language Officer is a paraprofessional who speaks language in common with some of the students in Intensive English classrooms (new arrivals) and who can support student learning through the use of home language to explain concepts, cross cultural development and other learning requirements in class.

Home/local language is the language the student speaks in the home and is used to support access to the learning of new concepts.

NT Curriculum Framework English as a Second Language Levels (NTCF ESL Levels) consist of three booklets: Introduction, ESL Early Childhood and Primary Learners and ESL Secondary Learners. The NTCF ESL Levels are used to:
- identify Standard Australian English proficiency in four modes (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in four elements (communication, socio-cultural knowledge, language structures and features and learning-how-to-learn)
- assess ESL students' Standard Australian English knowledge and skills achievement
- set individual language learning goals for students
- plan for Standard Australian English language teaching.

Student Achievement and Information System is a department data capturing platform where teachers record students' NTCF ESL Levels for monitoring purposes and to generate reports for parents.

Standard Australian English is the variety of spoken and written English language in Australia used in more formal settings, such as for official or public purposes, and recorded in dictionaries, style guides and grammars. While it is always dynamic and evolving, it is recognised as the 'common language' of Australians.

<div align="right">ACARA EAL/D overview and advice (2014) pg 33</div>

Teaching Teams refers to two adults working together with one class. There are many variations of teaching teams, such as: classroom teacher with assistant teacher, classroom teacher and ESL teacher, classroom teacher and Home Language Officer where available.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Directors (North and South) will:
- deploy and enable directorate resources to maximise ESL student achievement
- incorporate actions, performance indicators and targets in directorate planning and performance review to maximise ESL student achievement
- oversee effective implementation and monitoring of the ESL policy and guidelines in schools.

Regional Directors will:
- deploy and enable regional resources to maximise impact for ESL learners
- ensure professional learning is provided for teachers in planning, teaching, assessing and reporting for ESL students to deepen pedagogical practice
- monitor and evaluate progress towards improved educational achievement of ESL students, identifying instances of best-practice to achieve continuous improvement through analysis of ESL data

- incorporate actions, performance indicators and targets in regional planning and performance review to maximise ESL student achievement.

Learning and Performance Network Leaders and Regional Advisors will:
- identify professional learning needs to build capacity in ESL pedagogy across the region
- provide ESL pedagogy models, advice and professional learning for teachers and teaching teams appropriate to school context
- monitor students' progress in schools through the [Student Achievement Information System (SAIS) (staff access only)](#) ESL data and provide ESL pedagogical advice to maximise student outcomes
- mentor and coach teachers and school leaders in ESL pedagogy and assessment
- support teachers to assess, monitor, moderate and record student achievement in learning areas and progress in Standard Australian English
- collaborate with School Support Services to ensure consistency in knowledge and information is provided to schools.

Principals will:
- lead evidence informed whole of school strategies to maximise ESL student learning by:
  - aligning school planning and performance review to support ESL student learning through ESL pedagogy
  - aligning and deploying school resources to maximise ESL student success in learning
- ensure teaching teams have access to professional learning and support for effective ESL teaching
- ensure student progress in Standard Australian English is assessed and recorded in all four modes (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in SAIS using the NTCF ESL Levels
- ensure teachers report to parents using the ACARA EAL/D Phases
- review progress of implementation of ESL programs in their school, using SAIS ESL data and evidence.

Teachers (including classroom, learning area, subject and Intensive English) will:
- engage in professional learning in ESL pedagogy, linguistic knowledge and cross-cultural understandings
- where possible, utilise paraprofessionals to support the teaching and learning of ESL students in all contexts
- plan and teach the curriculum, as part of a teaching team where appropriate, using ESL pedagogy
- identify students' English language proficiency using the NTCF ESL Levels to inform planning and teaching
- assess and monitor student progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing in Standard Australian English using NTCF ESL Levels and record in SAIS
- report to parents using the ACARA EAL/D Phases
- provide written comments in learning area reports about identified ESL students' progress in Standard Australian English within their subject.

ESL teachers will:
- model teaching the curriculum through an appropriate degree of ESL pedagogy and explicit teaching suitable to the ESL cohort by:
  - engaging in co-planning and co-teaching with teachers of ESL students
  - supporting teachers to identify the NTCF ESL Levels and ACARA EAL/D Phase and set the language learning goals for students
  - supporting teachers in monitoring their students' Standard Australian English language growth and recording their NTCF ESL Levels into SAIS
  - assisting in the clarifying and confirming (moderation) of student work to ensure consistency of teacher judgement when assigning NTCF ESL Levels and ACARA EAL/D Phases
  - engaging in ongoing ESL professional learning.

Assistant teachers (depending on level of training) with the teacher, will:
- support teachers through an understanding of their own, and the student's, culture and home/local language to communicate effectively with students
- engage in professional learning
- actively learn to understand curriculum and associated documents to support students' learning
- assist with the preparation of lessons and lesson plans
- assist with the delivery of prepared activities/lessons
- assist with assessing and maintaining records of student progress.

School Support Services will:
- lead the development of policy, guidelines and other documentation relating to ESL teaching and learning (including teaching and professional learning resources)
- facilitate the publication of quality ESL professional learning resources and support documents for the department
- deliver professional learning in partnership with regional offices
- advise on effective ESL planning, teaching, assessing and reporting in schools.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF ESL PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

Effective implementation of ESL programs within a school requires a coordinated approach at whole-of-school level that supports and informs classroom-level ESL program delivery.

Figure1: Whole-of-school approach to ESL instruction
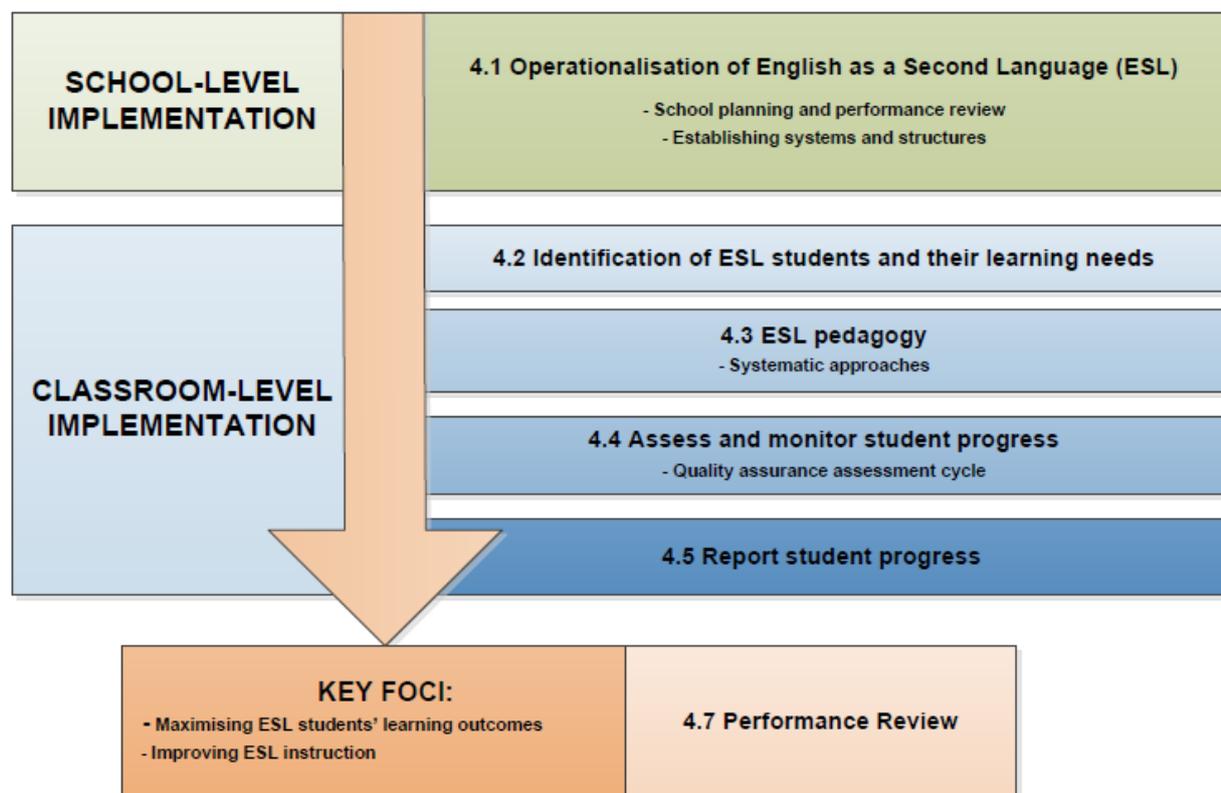
4.1   Operationalising of ESL programs in schools

School planning and performance review
Principals integrate the teaching of ESL students into whole-of-school planning and performance review documents. Key performance indicators tied to ESL program effectiveness will be identified, monitored and reviewed.

Establishing systems, structures and processes
Principals ensure that specialist ESL staff are deployed to achieve successful and sustainable learning programs for ESL learners ensuring Standard Australian English language and literacy growth is achieved. The effective implementation and operation of an ESL program requires a school to:

- identify the local cohort of ESL students and mobility trends
- deploy ESL teachers to work alongside classroom/learning area teachers to support ESL students
- identify whole-of-school approaches for instruction which are supportive of ESL students
- establish team teaching structures: classroom teacher with assistant teacher where possible, with allocated times for learning together and planning together
- establish team teaching structures: classroom teacher and ESL teacher where an ESL teacher allocated, with timetabled planning together opportunities
- timetable ESL teachers to move between classrooms according to ESL learning priorities
- develop local processes which:
  - support ESL students' access to the curriculum and Standard Australian English learning progression
  - ensure assessment and monitoring of ESL students occurs once per semester
  - ensure timely and accurate data entry of students' NTCF ESL Levels into SAIS
  - review and evaluate ESL teaching in classrooms.

4.2   Identification of ESL students and their learning needs

In order to identify a student's ESL learning priorities, the student's cultural and linguistic background will also need to be identified. Language background information is obtained through the enrolment process and language background fields are entered into the Student Administration Management System.

Teachers identify students' English language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing using the NTCF ESL Levels. These will be entered into SAIS within six weeks of enrolment. Diagnostic assessment is a crucial starting point for effective teaching of ESL students and schools set up effective placement activities to measure student performance through:

- observations of students following teacher dialogue and class instructions to establish listening skills level
- observations of oral interactions with teacher or other students to establish speaking and listening skills level
- a short reading activity
- analysis of student writing.

Schools will also use information about the student's schooling history and current knowledge of curriculum content to set individual language learning goals informed by the student's year level and age appropriate curriculum.

The ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression provides a broad description of the learner groups across four phases of English language learning: Beginning, Emerging, Developing and Consolidating. This resource supports teachers as they set language learning goals and develop teaching and learning programs, in all learning areas of the curriculum, that address the ESL student's specific learning requirements.

The teacher will use the student's NTCF ESL Levels to identify their ACARA EAL/D Phase using the NT ESL Phases Chart. The identified NTCF ESL Levels and ACARA EAL/D Phase inform the type and the

degree of ESL pedagogy required to enable students to be successful in their academic learning as outlined below.

ACARA EAL/D Phase	Degree of ESL pedagogy required
Beginning English — students with some print literacy in their first language. A subcategory, **Limited Literacy Background**, is included to describe the reading/viewing and writing behaviours typical of students with little or no experience of literacy in any language.	Students with limited oral language competency with Standard Australian English, and limited competency in literacy skills and knowledge in English. Students are new to learning through Standard Australian English and cannot access the full curriculum without intensive, highly scaffolded, systematic and explicit ESL pedagogy.
Emerging English — students who have a growing degree of print literacy and oral language competency with English.	Students with a growing degree of print literacy and oral language competency with Standard Australian English. Students in this Phase cannot access the full curriculum without intensive, highly scaffolded, systematic and explicit ESL pedagogy.
Developing English — students who are further developing their knowledge of print literacy and oral language competency with English.	Students who are further developing their knowledge of print literacy and oral language competency with English. Students can access the age appropriate curriculum as long as systematic and explicit language teaching - ESL pedagogy - is in place.
Consolidating English — students who have a sound knowledge of spoken and written English, including a growing competency with academic language.	Students have a sound knowledge of spoken and written English, including a growing competency with academic Standard Australian English. Students successfully engage with the full curriculum, however, at times may require explicit language and literacy teaching as the literacies of academic subjects vary and concepts and texts increase in complexity.

Consult the [Identification of English as a Second Language Learners](#) flow chart for additional information.

4.3   ESL Pedagogy

ESL pedagogy is the systematic and explicit teaching of the Standard Australian English required for students to achieve success at school. It is teaching that employs approaches and strategies to build students' Standard Australian English language skills and knowledge while teaching the content of the students' age appropriate curriculum. ESL pedagogy acknowledges, uses and plans to teach from two vital pieces of student identity:

- cultural background - how the student sees the world (culture 1) and building a bridge to the target culture of Standard Australian English (culture 2)
- language background - how home language differs linguistically from the target language of Standard Australian English.

Dependent on the schooling context (mainstream, Intensive English or remote), teachers will work with paraprofessionals as a teaching team to achieve quality ESL pedagogy for students as they access the

curriculum in Standard Australian English. The department provides positions such as Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers, Home Language Officers and assistant teachers to some schools to further support ESL students' access to curriculum content through the use of home and local language and cultural world view.

To maximise students' potential for effective learning through inclusive teaching practices, teachers or teaching teams will:
- identify each learning area's Standard Australian English language and literacy demands as follows:
  o content - vocabulary and word meanings, including phonology
  o form - the grammar and rules associated, and
  o pragmatics - the social use of language across all modes: listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- set Standard Australian English language learning goals for students for communication, socio-cultural knowledge, language structures and features and learning-how-to-learn, using the NTCF ESL Levels
- explicitly teach the Standard Australian English language and literacy of each learning areas.

Systematic approaches

A systematic approach to support ESL learners to access the curriculum will include:
- identifying students' level of English proficiency
- utilising students' cultural understandings
- building shared knowledge
- making the procedures and expectations of the learning environment explicit
- teaching in context
- scaffolding and support strategies – sequencing and repetition of controlled, guided and independent tasks
- modified assessments and tasks
- time to acquire, practice and revise language learning.

<div align="right">Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2014</div>

4.4   Assess and monitor student progress

Evidence from quality assessment design captures valuable insight into student learning and the quality of teaching. Schools use a range of measuring tools to assess and monitor student learning and progress:
- systematically devised measures (e.g. NAPLAN, T-9 Net, NTCET, ESL Levels, A-E grades)
- teacher devised measures (e.g. observations, interviews, audio visual recordings, descriptors)
- program devised measures (e.g. PM Benchmark, SENNA)
- standardised measures (e.g. PAT-Reading, SPAT-R, PAT-Maths).

Analysing the performance of students with the above range of measures gives schools a holistic picture of student performance.

For equity of access it may be necessary to fine tune classroom assessment design to effectively cater to the English proficiency of ESL students. For example, allowing a student at the ACARA EAL/D Beginning Phase to demonstrate understanding of a science concept through visual representations, or to demonstrate comprehension of a narrative through sequencing illustrations. Both examples model the assessment of cognition without the Standard Australian English barrier for students in the Beginning Phase.

To support ESL students, teachers and teaching teams will:
- use NTCF ESL Levels to plan, teach and assess the required Standard Australian English, knowledge skills and understanding; and as the basis to ascertain where students are in their learning, where they need to go and how to best get them there
- use the Principles of Assessment to guide assessment design and accessibility for all students

- apply a range of assessment strategies, tasks and opportunities that reflect assessment for, of and as learning
- draw on a range of evidence that provides a comprehensive picture of student achievement in Standard Australian English language learning and learning area achievement and sampled from a range of knowledge, skills and understandings
- use assessment information to inform programming, planning, teaching and learning in the future to set language learning goals for each student
- understand the alignment between NTCF ESL Levels and the ACARA EAL/D Phases.

In line with and in addition to all learning areas as per the [NT Board of Studies Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Guidelines](#) (Transition to Year 9 and Years 10-12), each semester teachers will:

- monitor and assess Standard Australian English language learning using NTCF ESL Levels and record these in SAIS
- monitor the development of Standard Australian English using the ACARA EAL/D Phases to inform and effectively plan for the degree of ESL teaching required.

Quality Assurance Assessment Cycle

The Quality Assurance Assessment Cycle (QAAC) supports a shared understanding of curriculum levels and standards and consistency of teacher judgement. ESL teachers (where available) work together with colleagues to engage in school, regional and system level clarifying and confirming (moderation) each semester (for one-teacher schools, the process will begin at a regional level).

The QAAC cycle assists teachers to:

- plan using curriculum achievement standards
- plan using the NTCF ESL Levels required in the delivery of that curriculum
- clarify and confirm NTCF ESL Levels (aligned to ACARA EAL/D Phases)
- support consistency and integrity of teacher judgement
- review and improve assessment practices that contribute to improving student learning
- promote a collaborative professional learning community within the school.

Professional learning resources and materials to support teachers to use the Quality Assurance Assessment Cycle process can be accessed from [Learning Links](#).

4.5   Report student progress

Teachers will provide ESL students with A to E grades in subjects in line with the [NT Board of Studies Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Guidelines](#) (Transition to Year 9 and Years 10-12). Teachers will report student progress in Standard Australian English learning development to parents using the ACARA EAL/D Phases and will include a specific comment on the students' progress in Standard Australian English language acquisition.

Teachers and support staff will:

- have regular formal and informal opportunities to discuss progress with parents
- provide ESL students with A to E or equivalent five point scale reports for English, Mathematics and other learning areas that they have studied
- determine the students' ACARA EAL/D Phases of learning using the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression
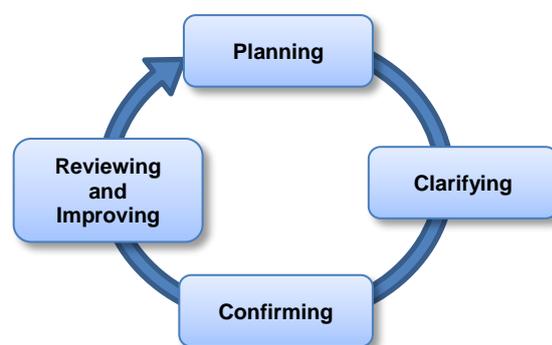
- include a specific Standard Australian English language learning comment on the students' progress in the report to parents of ESL students
- enlist the services of interpreters and translators when reporting to parents of ESL students where required.

Systemic ESL student data in ACARA EAL/D Phases and NTCF ESL Levels can be accessed through the Business Intelligence Centre (staff access only).

4.6   Managing student transition from Intensive English units to mainstream classes

This transitioning information is relevant only for schools implementing Intensive English classes for students newly arrived in Australia.

Students are eligible to remain in Intensive English classes for a period of one year. If insufficient English language progress has been made, look for developmental causes other than ESL learning needs. Consult the Identification of English as a Second Language Learners flow chart for additional information.

Transition from Intensive English classes to mainstream classes requires students to be working well within the following NTCF ESL Levels if they are to succeed with the curriculum demands in mainstream classes:
- Primary NTCF ESL Level 3 Reading and Listening
- Secondary NTCF ESL Level 4 Reading and Listening.

NB – reading and listening are receptive language skills, usually developed in advance of the productive language skills of writing and speaking.

Transition to mainstream classes within the same school is recommended to be a gradual process into certain learning areas for students once they are working within the levels above. Schools will establish a transition plan which is implemented systematically and reviewed every year. Further information is located in the Transitioning from Intensive English Instruction to mainstream learning contexts fact sheets.

Schools with Intensive English classes provide ESL support in these mainstream classes for newly transitioned students. ESL support can be in the form of ESL training for the mainstream teacher or team teaching (the class teacher and ESL teacher, where available, together responsible for the class) in order to meet the needs of the newly exited Intensive English students.

4.7   Performance Review

The department's key focus in the implementation of these guidelines is the maximisation of ESL students' learning outcomes. As per point 4.1 of these guidelines, the expected outcomes will be outlined and monitored as part of school-wide planning and performance review processes.

Teachers, or teaching teams, also work to achieve continuous improvement at the classroom and student levels. Specific ESL learning needs and progress goals can be identified, monitored and reviewed within an individual student plan where relevant.

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[i] Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment Capability Framework – Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D Learners (2013)

[ii] Paraphrased from Christine Edwards-Groves http://www.myread.org/explicit.htm (2014)