

External providers engaged for teaching and learning - guidelines

Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification: early childhood to year 12 policy statement

The Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS) approved policy sets out the legislative foundation for the provision of school education in the Northern Territory (NT) relating to curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification.

The Department of Education's (the department) Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification: early childhood to year 12 policy, informs department staff, that is school, regional, and corporate staff about the actions they must undertake to be compliant with legislation, the NTBOS policy and the department's strategic direction.

These guidelines provide information on the use of external providers engaged for teaching and learning in all NT Government schools in all contexts – including early childhood learning programs.

Policy

External providers engaged for teaching and learning are an important supplement to the full delivery of curriculum in NT Government schools.

Engagement of external providers must always be on the basis of best value to the school in terms of meeting the needs of learners, the curriculum requirements, the goals of the school's strategic plan and the priorities of the [Education NT Strategy 2021-2025](#). Ensure external providers are only engaged where their services are required and exceed the scope and expertise of educators.

Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and Learning Services, as the policy owner is responsible for:

- communicating and reviewing these guidelines
- providing advice about the engagement of external providers in schools.

School principals, as instructional leaders of their schools, are responsible for:

- implementing these guidelines
- sign-off the External providers: checklist and approval form to signify external providers are:
 - appropriately qualified and experienced
 - meet school induction requirements including the school's values, the Code of conduct for education sites and workplace participants policy and guidelines
 - are aware of responsibilities relating to students, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting and working with children clearance requirements.
- providing adequate school supervision arrangements and ensuring that school staff understand the services being provided and their role in the delivery of the services

- ensuring health and safety requirements including a current working with children card, are met and a risk management plan is in place as appropriate
- consulting with the school representative body about proposed engagement of services
- approving the use of external providers in line with school curriculum and procedure requirements.

Teachers, or initiating staff members are responsible for:

- ensuring the service provided meets the objectives of the policy and documenting clear links between the service and curriculum priorities using the External providers: Checklist and approval form
- seeking principal's approval for the use of an external provider and report on the qualifications and experience of the provider as requested by the principal or as required by school guidelines
- informing the external provider of school values and codes of conduct and, their responsibilities relating to students including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

School representative body members are responsible for:

- providing advice to the principal about proposed engagement of services.

Guidelines

An external provider must only be engaged where there is an identified need for specialist expertise that enhances achievement in a specific learning area. Before engaging a provider, educators must evaluate all requirements of engagement using the External providers engaged for teaching and learning checklist and approval form, available on eLearn.

Services provided should have clear educational purpose, be part of a teaching and learning sequence and contextual to learners' needs. Schools must ensure adequate dialogue with external providers about information to be shared, potential issues and optimising educational outcomes. Clear, open communication before, during and after engagement of a service is important. Learners who will not be participating in a service must have an alternative program provided for them.

Principals should consult with the school representative body generally about proposed engagement of services and, more particularly, where there are fees involved.

These guidelines exclude school excursions and services provided by chaplains, which are addressed in separate guidance information.

Risk assessment and management

Teaching staff must ensure a risk assessment is completed before any engagement of a service. Where a significant risk factor is identified and it is proposed to proceed with engagement of a service, a risk management plan must be developed. The risk management plan must be current and directly relevant to the service and the context in which the service is provided. The risk management plan, along with any documents that would assist in managing the risk, must be provided to the principal.

Risk analysis tools, including a risk rating matrix – which must be used where significant or high-risk activities are identified, is available on the department's Education intranet under Risk management.

Review and feedback

A process to evaluate the external provider's service and its outcomes should be in place. The process should review the implementation and effectiveness of the service, including consultation, communication and collaboration that occurred before, during and after delivery of the service.

All stakeholders involved in the service – including learners, should have the opportunity to provide feedback as part of the evaluation. External providers may request schools evaluate their programs and services. Schools must take care not to be seen as endorsing individual providers or services if providing evaluation or feedback.

Acronyms	Full form
NT	Northern Territory
NTBOS	Northern Territory Board of Studies

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Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1	July 2017	SQIP	New policy approved by School Education Committee
2	October 2020	Operational Policy	Minor amendments to terminology, NTG template update, readability, accessibility and publishing standards modified
3	July 2022	Operational Policy	Minor review aligning to the Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification policy
4	November 2022	Operational Policy	Administrative amendments to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022, including NTG template and minor formatting