Improving student outcomes through school reviews: A toolkit for principals

2017
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This toolkit aims to support all Queensland state schools through the school review process.

Queensland state schools are great schools and we are working hard to make them even better.

In 2015, we introduced a review system for our schools to give quality, independent feedback about how they are performing and where they can improve. These reviews are part of a bigger plan to ensure every student receives a quality education.

The reviews are tailored according to each school’s needs and context. It’s not one size fits all. Every review aims to celebrate what is going well within each school, and to allow schools to plan the next step on their improvement journey.

The reviews consider school performance using the National School Improvement Tool. The tool is evidence-based, and provides schools with a consistent framework from which to reflect on their school and improvement agenda.

The reviews are not used to compare schools, or to rate the performance of principals, teachers or other school staff. The reviews are genuinely about supporting schools on their continuing journey to greatness, helping them to plan to improve and to deliver better outcomes for students.

This toolkit has been developed to support schools and school leaders through the review process.

We know that our most effective school principals have a clear line of sight from their office to their students’ desks. In this toolkit we show that there is a direct link from the Queensland school improvement strategy to principals, their school leadership teams, staff and students.

I encourage you to use this toolkit to identify these links in your school and draw from it as you continue to take your school forward.

Director-General’s foreword

Director-General
Department of Education and Training
Introduction
The Department of Education and Training is committed to supporting and improving the educational outcomes and achievements of Queensland state school students.

In 2014, the department created the School Improvement Unit (SIU) to conduct four-yearly reviews of Queensland state schools. The reviews started in 2015 and support the internal review processes schools undertake as part of their normal operations (see Chapter 2 for more information).

Approximately a quarter of schools across the state are reviewed by the SIU every year.

The school reviews are an important part of how the department monitors and supports Queensland state schools. They give schools independent feedback about how they are performing. Principals use the findings to work with their school community and assistant regional director to develop clear actions to move the school forward.

The reviews are not used to compare schools, or to rate the performance of principals, teachers or school staff. They are about supporting schools in a differentiated way, with reviews tailored to a school’s context and needs.

For an overview of the review process please see the diagram in Appendix 1.

School Improvement Unit

The SIU is an independent work unit that sits within the Office of the Director-General. It is separate from the delivery arm of Queensland state schools.

The unit is led by an executive director, who reports directly to the Director-General. The unit is staffed by a team of trained reviewers and corporate support staff.

School reviews

All Queensland state schools — including independent public schools, special schools and outdoor and environmental education centres — are reviewed by the SIU at least once every four years.

Schools are generally reviewed in the year that they are due to update their four-year strategic plan. Findings and feedback from the SIU reviews are a valuable input into this process.

The type of review a school receives is determined by the level of support it needs.

Sharing school practice

Annual and interim reports

Part of the SIU’s role is to identify and share review findings and trends from across the state for the benefit of all school communities.

The SIU publishes an annual report, as well as interim reports, throughout the year.

The annual report provides a comprehensive picture of Queensland state school performance each year. A hard copy is provided to every state school principal and other stakeholders.

The interim reports analyse review findings periodically during the year. All reports are available from the School Reviews website – www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.

Case studies

The SIU shares school improvement it identifies from reviews. Some case studies take the form of short online videos and are available from the School Reviews website.

Case studies are also published in the SIU’s annual report.
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Unpacking the reviews
School reviews consider a school’s performance against each of the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool (see Chapter 7), and map out ways to further improve outcomes for students.

The reviews complement the department’s four-year school planning, reviewing and reporting cycle, which schools use to reflect on and inform their practice and operations.

The following table shows how the two processes intersect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School planning, reviewing and reporting cycle</th>
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<td>What</td>
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<td>Develop and publish strategic plan</td>
<td>Engage in school review</td>
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<td>Review and update strategic plan</td>
<td>Share findings from review with community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop annual implementation plan</td>
<td>Incorporate findings from review into strategic plan</td>
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For more information about the school planning, reviewing and reporting cycle, go to: www.education.qld.gov.au/strategic/accountability/performance/sprrf.

School reviews

There are three types of school reviews:
- full school, which is the default review type for Queensland state schools
- priority support for schools identified as needing additional support
- self-determined for schools identified as high performing.

The SIU designates schools for the different types of review by first considering their performance data and then consulting with the school’s regional office. This is called the annual performance assessment. Schools are only designated for review with input from their region.

The SIU also conducts emergent reviews of schools that require immediate support or intervention. These generally fall outside of the four-yearly review cycle.

For more information on the different review types see Chapter 3.

Reviewers

Each SIU-appointed review team usually consists of two to four reviewers.

There are three types of reviewers:
- internal reviewers — experienced principals seconded to the SIU for a term, semester or longer
- external reviewers — independent contractors from the SIU’s pre-qualified panel
- principal peer reviewers — principals trained by the SIU in the use of the National School Improvement Tool.

The number of reviewers and length of review depends upon a range of factors including the size and context of the school.

For more information on the different reviewers see Chapter 4.
Each review involves an analysis of the school’s student performance data and other relevant information. The review team also speaks with staff, students, parents and other members of the school community.

Review process

An internal reviewer chairs each review, is the key contact point for the principal, and contacts the school’s assistant regional director or principal supervisor.

On completion, the review team presents its findings to the principal, and, if requested, briefs the rest of the school’s leadership team and staff.

The findings are detailed in a report, which is provided to the principal, and the assistant regional director, approximately two weeks after the review. Principals share the findings with their school community, including publishing the executive summary or full report to the school’s website.

For more information about the review process see Chapter 6.

After a review

The SIU continues to monitor schools which have had a priority support or emergent review for 12 months via three-monthly check-ins.

The performance of all other schools is monitored as part of the SIU’s annual performance assessment of school data (see Chapter 5 for more information), conducted in Term 4 each year.

Differentiated support

The intention of the reviews is to ensure support and intervention provided by the department is matched to the individual needs of schools.

This differentiated approach also applies to the composition of review teams, with the SIU taking into account a school’s context and type (e.g. large urban high school or small rural primary school) when selecting reviewers.
The different types of reviews
Full school reviews

Full school reviews are conducted by a review team appointed by the SIU. The team comprises of an internal reviewer, external reviewer and a principal peer reviewer.

At the completion of each review, the review team presents its findings and improvement strategies to the principal and leadership team. A written report follows.

The principal discusses the review findings with their assistant regional director and school community, and uses the feedback to update the school’s four-year strategic plan. The executive summary or full report is published on the school’s website.

Key points
- The most common review type
- For schools not designated for a self-determined or priority support review
- Conducted by a review team from the SIU
- Review team includes a principal peer reviewer

Emergent reviews

The SIU conducts emergent reviews as necessary. These reviews are for schools facing urgent issues or a significant level of community concern.

Emergent reviews are conducted in the same way as priority support reviews, using the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool, with the school monitored by the SIU for 12 months after the review is completed.

Emergent reviews usually occur outside of a school’s four-year review cycle, and are at the request of the Minister, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, State Schools, or regional directors only.
Priority support reviews

Priority support reviews are for schools identified as needing additional support to improve student outcomes. The reviews are about ensuring schools that need extra assistance from the department receive it as a priority.

They are conducted in the same way as full school reviews except that:
- the SIU assigns its more experienced reviewers to priority support reviews
- the SIU continues to monitor and check back in with the school for 12 months after the review to ensure the school is getting the support it needs.

At the end of the review, the review team presents its findings to the principal, leadership team and assistant regional director. A written report follows for the school to consider and respond to with the support of the region.

The principal works with the region to develop an action plan that outlines the key improvement strategies the school will implement, and the support it will receive from the region, over the next 12 months.

The SIU assigns a senior reviewer to case manage the school during this period, checking in every three months. At 12 months, the case manager and another reviewer from the SIU visit the school to report on how effectively the school has implemented the strategies contained in the action plan.

For more information about what happens after a priority support review see Chapter 10.

Key points
- For schools identified as needing additional support
- Conducted by a review team from the SIU

Priority support reviews: conducted by review teams of two internal reviewers from the SIU and an external reviewer. Principal peer reviewers do not participate.

Self-determined reviews

Self-determined reviews give schools identified as high performing the autonomy to organise their own review.

The principal is responsible for organising all elements, including the scope and focus of the review and reviewers. The SIU provides the school with a set amount of funding for the review.

Following the completion of the review, the school publishes the full report or executive summary on its website and discusses the findings with the school community. A copy of the report is also provided to the region and the SIU.

For more information about self-determined reviews, see Chapter 9 and the frequently asked questions in Appendix 8.

Key points
- For schools identified as high performing
- Schools organise the review themselves
- They can choose to engage the SIU
- Schools given set amount of funding
- Review report or executive summary published online

Self-determined reviews: schools can appoint reviewers from outside the state school system, including reviewers from another school system, universities or overseas. They can also engage the SIU to conduct the review.
Comparing the different reviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review type</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Review team</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Final report</th>
<th>Actions after the review</th>
<th>SIU support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full school</td>
<td>Default, what most schools receive</td>
<td>One internal reviewer, one external reviewer and one principal peer reviewer</td>
<td>Two to four days, depending on school size</td>
<td>School publishes executive summary or full report online and shares with community</td>
<td>School works with region to incorporate findings into its four-year strategic plan</td>
<td>SIU continues to monitor school each year as part of the annual performance assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority support</td>
<td>For schools identified as needing additional support</td>
<td>Two internal reviewers and an external reviewer</td>
<td>Two to four days, depending on school size</td>
<td>School publishes executive summary or full report online and shares with community</td>
<td>Region works with school to develop action plan</td>
<td>SIU checks back in with the school every three months for 12 months to monitor progress of action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-determined</td>
<td>For schools identified as high performing</td>
<td>School selects and engages reviewers</td>
<td>School to determine</td>
<td>School publishes executive summary or full report online and shares with community, region and the SIU</td>
<td>School incorporates findings into four-year strategic plan</td>
<td>SIU continues to monitor school each year as part of the annual performance assessment</td>
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School reviewers
The department’s school reviews are conducted by review teams trained and appointed by the SIU.

Each team is tailored to a school’s context and needs, and generally consists of one or two internal reviewers from the SIU, an external reviewer from outside the department, and a principal peer reviewer for full school reviews. Reviews are chaired by an internal reviewer.

The SIU provides training, travel and support for all reviewers.

**Being a school reviewer allows experienced principals to support their colleagues in schools across the state.**

**Internal reviewers**

Internal reviewers are experienced state school principals seconded to the SIU for a period of time, usually a term or semester, to chair reviews on behalf of the SIU.

They are recruited throughout the year. For more information please email SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au.

**External reviewers**

External reviewers are contracted by the SIU from outside the department to join review teams, providing schools with independent feedback.

They come from a range of backgrounds, but usually have strong school improvement experience. They may have been Queensland state school principals, or come from non-state schools, universities, or outside Queensland or the education sector.

Invitations to offer external reviewer services are published on the Queensland Government’s QTenders website – www.hpw.qld.gov.au/qtenders. Interested parties should register their details online.

**Principal peer reviewers**

All Queensland state school principals are invited to be trained as peer reviewers.

By undertaking the training, principals develop a deeper understanding of the review process and how the National School Improvement Tool can be used to support school improvement.

Principals who complete the training can participate in a full school review as a principal peer reviewer. They step out of their school for the duration of the review (including travel).

To find out when training is being offered, contact the regional office or see the training schedule on the School Reviews website – www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.
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Designating and scheduling reviews
Ultimately, it is the level of support a school needs to improve student outcomes that determines the type of review it receives.

**Annual performance assessment**

The SIU analyses a standard set of performance data for all Queensland state schools in Term 4.

Based on their headline indicators, schools in the fourth year of their school planning, reviewing and reporting cycle are designated for one of the three review types.

Other schools that would benefit from a priority support review may also be nominated.

The SIU develops a proposed list of schools for review for the following year. Senior officers from the SIU meet with each regional director and other regional staff, including assistant regional directors, to consider the data and to finalise reviews for the following year.

Schools should be notified of their review type by their region once the review schedule is finalised in mid-Term 4.

Formal notification of review type and other details (including the review dates or term) are sent to schools by the SIU before the end of Term 4.

Very occasionally, a review-type designation is changed by the SIU during a review. This decision is made in consultation with the principal and region, and is based on the feedback of the review team.

**Headline indicators**

Headline indicators are a high-level snapshot of selected school datasets. They provide a common starting point for schools to further investigate other school-based data and evidence, monitor their performance and plan for improved student outcomes.

Headline indicators were developed in consultation with principals, regions and other stakeholders, and are presented in an easy-to-read format.

Two reports are made available to principals, assistant regional directors and regional directors each year: an annual report (usually in April) and an updated interim report (usually in October).

The SIU uses the updated interim headline indicators to help identify and designate schools for review for the following year.
Unpacking the headline indicators

Headline indicators are a summary of centrally stored datasets that are already used by schools to monitor their achievement and improvement.

The department consults regularly with stakeholders about the headline indicators and their use. Currently, headline indicators focus on:

- attendance
- literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN)
- English, maths and science (A to E)
- enrolment trends
- behaviour
- school community satisfaction
- Year 12 attainment and post-school destinations (where applicable).

Each indicator is shaded either green, orange or red according to how well the school is tracking against set thresholds and, in the case of literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN), similar Queensland state schools. This allows the department to identify schools which are performing comparably or better than similar schools and those that may need additional support.

Contextual information, including the percentage of Indigenous students, students with disability, Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value and financial information, is also presented.

For more information about the headline indicators, email Strategy and Performance at schools.performance@det.qld.gov.au or see the fact sheet and examples on OnePortal – oneportal.det.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/schoolimprovementunit/Pages/default.aspx.
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Review process
School reviews are an opportunity for all members of the school community, including staff, parents and students, to provide feedback on how the school is teaching and supporting students.

Pre-review

Before visiting a school, the review team looks at the school’s data profile, headline indicators and other information, including the school’s website.

The review chair contacts the principal to discuss the review, including the proposed schedule of meetings and classroom visits.

The review chair also contacts the school’s assistant regional director or principal supervisor to discuss the school’s context and the review.

During the review

Using the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool, reviewers talk with staff, students, parents and community members to gain a deeper understanding of the school, its performance and context. They also look at a school’s performance data and other relevant information.

The principal is kept informed as the review progresses.

Meetings and classroom visits

Meetings and classroom visits are an opportunity for information gathering.

Discussions with staff and other members of the school community allow for feedback to be given on what the school is doing well and where it may need further support. Participation is voluntary.

After the review

The review team presents its findings to the school’s principal and leadership team. The review team may also brief staff.

The assistant regional director or principal supervisor may be invited by the principal to attend the briefings. For priority support reviews, assistant regional directors must attend the exit briefing, in person, where possible, or by phone.

The review team also prepares a report which presents the findings and improvement strategies from the review. Each report is quality assured by the SIU before it is sent to the school, its assistant regional director and regional director. This process takes around two weeks after the review to be completed.

Follow-up support

The assistant regional director works with the school to consider and respond to the findings of the review. This may include addressing improvement strategies in the school’s four-year strategic plan.

For priority support reviews, the assistant regional director helps the school develop and implement an action plan. An action plan template is available on OnePortal – oneportal.data.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/schoolimprovementunit/Pages/default.aspx.

For more information about what happens after a priority support review see Chapter 10.
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Review tool and domains
Unpacking the domains

The following descriptions of the domains have been condensed from the tool.

Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda

The school leadership team has established and is driving a strong improvement agenda, grounded in evidence from research and practice, and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and clear school-wide targets for improvement have been set and communicated to teachers and students, parents and families, with accompanying timelines.

Reviewers consider whether:

• the principal and other school leaders are united, committed to and explicit about their core objective — to improve learning outcomes for all students in the school
• explicit targets for improvement in student achievement levels have been set and communicated to parents, staff and the wider school community
• the objectives are understood by the school community and have been embedded in the school’s activities.

Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data

A high priority is given to the school-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data on student outcomes, including academic, attendance and behavioural outcomes, and student wellbeing data. Data considers school and student performance, evidence of improvement or regression, performance in comparison with similar schools, and measures of growth across school years using data from standardised tests.

Reviewers consider whether:

• the school has developed and is implementing a plan for the systematic collection of student outcome data, including both test data and quality classroom assessments
• explicit targets for improvement in student achievement levels have been set and communicated to parents, staff and the wider school community
• the objectives are understood by the school community and have been embedded in the school’s activities.

Unpacking the tool

Research is revealing the powerful impact that school leadership teams can have in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Effective leaders create cultures of high expectations, provide clarity about what teachers are to teach and students are to learn, establish strong professional learning communities and lead ongoing efforts to improve teaching practice.

(National School Improvement Tool 2012, p. 1)

The National School Improvement Tool recognises the critical roles that principals and their leadership teams play in school communities, and provides a clear road map for improving every school and every student’s results.

The National School Improvement Tool brings together findings from international research into the practices of highly effective schools and school leaders. The tool assists schools to review and reflect on their efforts to improve the quality of classroom teaching and learning. It supports school-wide conversations — including with parents and families, school governing bodies, local communities and students themselves — about aspects of current practice, areas for improvement and evidence that progress is being made.

(National School Improvement Tool 2012, p. 1)

The tool does not describe everything that effective schools do, but focuses on those practices that are most directly related to school-wide improvement and better outcomes for students.

The tool consists of nine interrelated domains, which, taken together, provide a guide for evaluating how a school is performing.
Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning
The school is driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents. There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders, and parents are treated as partners in student learning and wellbeing. The school works to maintain a learning environment that promotes intellectual rigour, and is also safe, respectful, tolerant and inclusive.

Reviewers consider whether:
- the school promotes and maintains an environment reflective of its high expectations that all students will learn successfully
- staff demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning, and work to build mutually respectful relationships across the school community.

One sign of success in this domain is when all students and staff share a sense of belonging, all parents are welcomed and all staff, students and parents speak highly of the school.

Domain 4: Targeted use of school resources
The school applies its resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities, materials) in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students. School-wide policies, practices and programs assist in identifying and addressing student needs. Flexible structures and processes enable the school to respond appropriately to individual learners.

Reviewers consider whether:
- the school has processes to identify and respond to student needs through the allocation of staff and resources
- staff are deployed in ways that best address the learning needs of all students, and that make best use of staff expertise and interests
- the school budget aligns with local and system priorities.

Domain 5: An expert teaching team
The school builds a school-wide, professional team of skilled and capable teachers, including teachers who take an active leadership role beyond the classroom. Strong procedures are in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous improvement that includes classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching arrangements.

Reviewers consider whether:
- the school places priority on attracting, retaining and developing the best teachers
- the leadership team has strategies to assist teachers to develop and share deep understandings of how students learn subjects and content
- the principal and other school leaders lead and model professional learning in the school.

Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery
The school has a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and a clear reference for monitoring learning across the year levels. The plan, within which evidence-based teaching practices are embedded, and to which assessment and reporting procedures are aligned, has been developed collaboratively to provide a shared vision for curriculum practice. This plan is shared with parents and families.

Reviewers consider whether:
- the school has an explicit, coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery which makes clear what and when teachers should teach and students should learn
- the plan is shared with parents, families and the wider community, and feedback is sought on ways to make the school curriculum responsive to local needs
- staff are familiar with and work within the school’s shared curriculum expectations.
Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning

The school places a high priority on classroom teachers identifying and addressing the learning needs of individual students, including high-achieving students. Teachers are encouraged and supported to monitor the progress of individuals, identify learning difficulties and tailor classroom activities to levels of readiness and need.

Reviewers consider whether:

- teaching practices reflect the belief that, although students are at different stages in their learning and may be progressing at different rates, they are capable of learning successfully if motivated and given appropriate learning opportunities and necessary support
- teachers work to ensure that all students — including high-achieving students — are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended by designing classroom activities to meet students’ learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations
- teachers monitor the progress of individual students and adjust their teaching in response to the progress that individuals are making.

Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices

The principal and other school leaders recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning. They take a strong leadership role, encouraging the use of research-based teaching practices in all classrooms to ensure that every student is engaged, challenged and learning successfully. All teachers understand and use effective teaching methods — including explicit instruction — to maximise student learning.

Reviewers consider whether:

- the school leadership team has kept abreast of research on effective teaching practices
- the team has established and communicates clear expectations concerning the use of effective teaching strategies throughout the school
- the school is creating classroom and applied learning environments in which all students are engaged, are challenged, feel safe to take risks and are supported to learn
- the school is setting high expectations for every student’s progress and ambitious targets for improving classroom performances.

Domain 9: School-community partnerships

The school actively seeks ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents and families, other education and training institutions, local businesses and community organisations.

Reviewers consider whether:

- parents and families are recognised as integral members of the school community and partners in their children’s education
- partnerships are established to address student needs and operate by providing access to experiences, support and intellectual or physical resources not available within the school
- all partners are committed to the common purposes and goals of partnership activities
- procedures are in place to ensure effective communication and to monitor and evaluate the intended impacts of the school’s partnerships.
Preparing for a review
Principals are asked to email the following documents to the review chair approximately two weeks before the review:

- current four-year strategic plan
- annual implementation plan
- professional learning plan
- pedagogical framework
- completed community contact list (see Appendix 4)
- proposed program for the review (see example schedules, Appendix 5).

The following documents should be provided to the review team on the first morning of the review:

- master timetable for the school
- school map, including staffroom locations
- staff list and contact details
- electronic copy of completed school context list (see Appendix 3)
- points of contact for matters related to the review.

During the review, the review team may ask to look at other school information and documents, for example, curriculum and data plans, and OneSchool and targeted funding information. Principals should advise the review chair if there is other information they wish to provide.

### Meeting rooms and other requirements

The review team requires a small meeting room or office space to meet and discuss its findings, and to conduct discussions with staff and school community members. Members of the team may also meet and talk with teachers and other staff in and around their classrooms and offices.

Access to computers, school network, printers and photocopiers is requested. The review team also requires a data projector.

### Review schedule

Principals are asked to develop a schedule of meetings with school staff, students and community members. See Appendix 5 for example schedules.

Any schedule negotiated between the principal and the review chair is proposed only, and may change due to the exploratory nature of the review.

### Meetings and discussions

The review team will speak with a wide range of staff, parents, students and the community, with the following meetings and discussions recommended (subject to school size and availability).

#### Staff

- School leadership team (principal and deputies)
- Other school leaders (heads of department, curriculum, special education)
- Administration team (business service manager, receptionist and other administration staff)
- Teachers and teacher aides
- Specialist support staff
- Other school staff

#### School community

- P&C president or school council chair
- Parents and students
- Other community representatives (for example, from feeder schools, local businesses and partnerships, and government)

The review team will generally talk with staff, students and community members individually. All feedback remains confidential.

Principals are asked to complete and return the community contact list (see Appendix 4) to the review chair approximately two weeks before the review.
Discussions with reviewers provide teachers and other school community members with an opportunity to offer feedback on the school.

Communication

To help inform the school community about the review, draft school newsletter and social media items are provided (see Appendix 6). Schools are also encouraged to promote the review dates on their website, school sign and via other communication channels.

Classroom visits

Classroom visits are a valuable part of the review process and should be representative of the variety of classrooms and teaching practices within the school.

Schools generally organise a staff member to accompany reviewers during classroom visits to provide teacher relief so the teacher can talk with a member of the review team.

Reviewers are interested in the classroom atmosphere, presentation and student behaviour. It is not a formal assessment of teacher practice.

It is not mandatory that teachers or other staff speak with reviewers. Staff can decline to participate.
Organising a self-determined review
The principal is responsible for organising and responding to a school’s self-determined review.

Schools identified as high performing are given autonomy and some funding to organise their own review, one that best suits their needs and context.

Schools may engage reviewers of their choosing, consistent with government procurement processes. Alternatively, they may choose reviewers from the SIU’s pre-qualified panel of external reviewers, or engage the SIU to conduct their review.

Funding, to a maximum of $4650, is available towards the cost of the review. The funding is provided by the SIU upon receipt of an invoice and review report. If a school selects the SIU to conduct the review, the funding will be used to cover the cost.

One term’s notice is needed to schedule a review by the SIU. To engage the SIU or to inquire about funding, please email SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au.

Review processes

Schools conducting self-determined reviews are asked to provide the SIU with a review proposal, including the dates and focus of the review, and details of reviewers. A template is available to help principals with this task (see Appendix 7). Please complete and submit before the end of Term 1 in the year that the review is scheduled.

Following the completion of the review, principals are asked to publish the executive summary or full report on the school website and discuss the findings and recommendations with their school community. A copy must also be provided to the SIU and region.

For more information about self-determined reviews please see the examples over the page or the frequently asked questions in Appendix 8. A series of self-determined review videos is available from the School Reviews website – www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.
Self-determined review examples

Example 1: Accreditation agency
School 1 engaged the services of an accreditation agency, and the review formed part of the school’s submission for accreditation. The review focused on the accreditation criteria as well as the school’s use of Investing for Success funding. The school worked with the agency to set the parameters of the review and the composition of the review team. Following the review, the school shared the findings with its school council and used the report as part of its submission for accreditation.

Example 2: University
School 2 engaged researchers from a university to review its strategic vision, teacher professional development, and links with its local community. The review consisted of a preliminary analysis followed by focus groups with staff, students, and parents. The school used the findings as a starting point to explore its use of student data and to discuss its strategic vision with the school community.

Example 3: Professional learning institute
School 3 engaged reviewers from an institute for principal and teacher professional development. The review was conducted by two experienced educators and focused on the quality of the school’s professional learning culture, with an emphasis on collegial collaboration. The school chose this focus based on the outcomes of its most recent school opinion survey, and used the findings to develop a tailored professional learning framework.

Example 4: Combination approach
School 4 chose a two-pronged approach. It used a pedagogical framework developed by an international accreditation agency to review the effectiveness of its teachers and their teaching practice. This component was conducted by a visiting member of the agency. The school also engaged two external reviewers from the SIU’s accredited list to review its performance against the National School Improvement Tool. The school used the findings of both reviews to develop a strategic vision, with a particular focus on the professional development and support of staff.

Example 5: School Improvement Unit
School 5 engaged the SIU to conduct its review. The SIU consulted with the school to select the review team according to the context of the school and the areas it wished to explore. The review was completed by two internal reviewers from the SIU and an external reviewer from outside the department. They used the National School Improvement Tool, and provided a report with key findings and improvement strategies to support the school’s improvement agenda. The school shared the findings with its school community and used these discussions to strengthen its strategic vision.
After a review
Exit briefings

At the end of each SIU review, the review team meets with the principal and leadership team to brief them on the key findings. This is an opportunity for the leadership team to seek clarification or further information.

The assistant regional director is invited by the principal to attend. Their attendance is mandatory at exit briefings for priority support reviews.

The review team may also present a summary of findings and improvement strategies to other school staff at the principal’s request.

Review reports

The review team drafts a report and submits it to the SIU for quality assurance. The SIU emails the final report to the principal and assistant regional director approximately two weeks after the review.

The report is a detailed analysis of the school’s performance against the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool. The key findings and implementation strategies reflect the items that were discussed at the exit briefing.

Schools share the findings with their school communities, including publishing the executive summary or full report on their websites.

Actions after a self-determined or full school review

The principal works with the school’s leadership team and its assistant regional director to respond to the findings from the review. This includes incorporating any improvement strategies into the school’s updated strategic plan and annual implementation plan.

Principals should use their local consultative committee, or other consultative mechanism, to consider any significant changes to their operations, in particular, any changes that impact on staffing.
Actions after a priority support review

After a priority support review is completed, the principal works with the assistant regional director to develop an action plan. Generally, the action plan is focused on two or three key improvement strategies to be actioned over the next 12 months.

An action plan template is available on OnePortal – oneportal.data.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/schoolimprovementunit/Pages/default.aspx.

A senior reviewer from the SIU is assigned to case manage the school. The case manager works with the principal and assistant regional director, and checks back in with the school every three months for 12 months.

Three-month check-in

The SIU case manager visits the school (or organises a teleconference if the school is in a remote location) and meets with the school leadership team and assistant regional director. This is an opportunity to check back in with the school to ensure that the action planning process is underway.

The case manager, principal and assistant regional director agree on what evidence or data will be used to evaluate progress at the next check-in.

After the visit, the case manager emails feedback to the principal and assistant regional director in preparation for the next check-in. The feedback is mapped against the action plan.

Six-month check-in

The case manager seeks evidence of sufficient momentum against the action plan, particularly whether progress matches agreed expectations, and meets with school staff and students to gauge the progress of agreed actions.

The possibility of a nine-month visit, and what evidence or data will be used to evaluate progress, is discussed.

After the visit, feedback is emailed to the principal and assistant regional director.

Nine-month check-in (optional, as needed)

The case manager is seeking further evidence of progress against the action plan to feed into the 12-month evaluation. Conversations are held with a cross-section of staff. Formal written feedback is provided after the visit.

12-month evaluation

The case manager and a reviewer from the SIU visit the school to evaluate how effectively the school has implemented the improvement strategies from the action plan. They consider a range of evidence, including:

- findings at the previous three-monthly check-ins
- information collected during the 12-month visit, from school discussions, observation and new documentation
- most recent school datasets, including latest headline indicator information
- evidence of regional support, for example, the frequency of visits and level of support provided by the assistant regional director, and provision of additional regional expertise.

An example schedule for the 12-month visit is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning session</th>
<th>Discussion with principal and assistant regional director based on the action plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle session</td>
<td>In-the-field discussions with staff, students and other community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon session</td>
<td>Reflection meetings/s with principal, school leadership team and assistant regional director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The SIU will generally make one of three determinations after the 12-month evaluation:

- The SIU finalises its support of the school if the school is making positive gains (with regional support)
- The SIU identifies additional regional support needed for the school to make the necessary gains
- The SIU recommends the school for a second priority support review. Another program of three-monthly check-ins follows.

The final report, detailing the SIU’s decision and rationale, is emailed to the principal and assistant regional director approximately two weeks after the 12-month evaluation.
Self-reflection
School Improvement Hierarchy

The School Improvement Hierarchy shows how the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool fit together to build effective schools.

The nine domains are interrelated, not silos. They form part of an integrated package and work best when considered together.

The hierarchy helps identify where a school is at on its yearly improvement journey, and provides a model for schools considering the next steps for improvement. Working out what to do next, when and how is a critical step.

The following considerations are taken from the School Improvement Hierarchy Reflection Tool. They are intended as conversation starters, and could be used to:

- structure conversations in a school about the next steps for school improvement
- develop shared understanding about how to lift performance in a school
- develop a deeper understanding of where a school is at on the school improvement journey.

For more information about the School Improvement Hierarchy and the reflection tool go to OnePortal – oneportal.det.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/Stateschooling/Schoolperformance/Pages/default.aspx.
Self-reflection considerations for each domain

Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda

- Key school datasets available for analysis and discussion.
- Apply the learnings from school reviews and the school data profile to collaboratively develop an explicit improvement agenda.
- Identify one to three areas for improvement.
- Develop the annual implementation plan and align with the explicit improvement agenda.
- Ensure the improvement agenda has a sharp and narrow focus and is reflected in classroom practice.
- Regularly review the progress of the improvement agenda strategies and goals with key stakeholders.
- Use the school data profile to highlight the problem of practice and strategies for improvement.
- Establish a process for the identification of current practices that aren’t making a difference and for teachers to share progress of the explicit improvement agenda.
- Develop specific measures, targets and timelines linked to the improvement agenda.
- Agreed roles and responsibilities for all staff members to progress the improvement agenda articulated.
- Actions of the improvement agenda are shared with staff, students, community, P&C and school council, ensuring they are highly visible across the school.
- Minutes and records of data conversations about the improvement agenda outcomes kept.
- Allocation of resources, both human and financial, supports the improvement agenda.
- For example, alignment of the master teacher research project, English as an additional language or dialect coach or literacy coach.
- Information is sourced from a range of professional forums to support the improvement agenda.
- Collaboratively review the improvement agenda for impact, design, scalability and investment (standards of evidence).
- Celebrate progress and achievements of the improvement agenda with staff, students and the community.

Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data

- Data literacy of staff enables analysis of school data profile.
- Develop a school data plan that lists the schedule of data collection and analyses of key datasets.
- Ensure the school data plan complements the explicit improvement agenda and informs the school community:
  - what data is to be collected
  - for what purpose
  - who collects the data
  - when data is to be collected
  - where data is to be recorded
  - how the data will be used to inform teaching and learning.
- The school data team is led by a data-literate person who drives the implementation and communication of the data plan.
- Allocation of time and resources to facilitate data discussions and analyses at year level, cohort and subject meetings.
- Triangulate available data, including academic, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing to monitor performance and inform practice.
- A line of sight that links the data to teacher pedagogy and teaching quality.
- Staff confident to review, interrogate and analyse student data. For example, student relative gain graphs.
- Professional development provided to increase data literacy knowledge of all staff.
- Data walls, class and student records used to capture results and stimulate conversations regarding student achievement and intervention.
- Effective record-keeping processes set up to keep accurate, up-to-date student data profiles, including individual learning goals in OneSchool.
- OneSchool class dashboard used to monitor, review and respond to student data trends.
- Master teacher research study validated with data and aligned with explicit improvement agenda.
- Identify and celebrate improvements in data trends.
Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning

- Shared belief that all students can learn and all teachers can teach.
- School vision and values developed, through consultation.
- Implement an inquiry cycle that includes the review of the effectiveness of school culture in supporting the learning of every student.
- Evidence-based strategies focused on student engagement are embedded in practice.
- Positive relationships between staff and parents are built on trust and support — parents are seen as partners in their child’s learning.
- Strategies implemented for students to actively engage in learning at their instructional level.
- Successful practice shared across classrooms through mentoring programs.
- Actively promote attendance at school and implement, monitor and review student trends.
- Record student attendance in OneSchool and establish a process to inform parents when students are absent.
- Conversations about progress occur with parents and students through interviews and informal discussions.
- The responsible behaviour plan for students is jointly developed with staff and community — endorsed through the P&C and local consultative committee.
- Protocols for incident management, data entry into OneSchool and student referrals for minor, major and positive behaviours enacted consistently.
- Explicit teaching of appropriate student behaviours and expectations.
- Teachers use consistent behaviour management strategies as outlined in the responsible behaviour plan.

Domain 4: Targeted use of school resources

- Align resources (human, facility, financial and technology) with the explicit improvement agenda.
- Frequently review project success based on student performance — realign resources to respond to emerging trends and the improvement agenda.
- School budget reflects the improvement agenda goals, with funding spent on current students, budget reviews each term, provisions created to transparently identify funds held for future activities and the asset provision to reflect planned usage of assets.
- Adequate resources are provided to build organisational capability to support the development of all staff, with clear alignment with the improvement agenda.
- Programs exist to meet the needs of students requiring additional or specialist support.
- Resources allocated to support programs for target students. For example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, English as an additional language or dialect learners, students with disability and students in care.
- Staff capable and confident to maximise learning outcomes for target groups.
- Early Start implemented to monitor the progress of all students and promote decisions about targeted support.
- Planning and resources are targeted to support individual student literacy and numeracy needs — Teachers have detailed knowledge about how to extend and support their students.
- Regional staff, Finance Branch staff and external agencies accessed to provide additional support and expertise.
- Innovative and creative solutions to maximise resources explored.
Domain 5: An expert teaching team

- Lead and model teaching and learning across the school, through the establishment of professional learning communities.
- Support teachers to:
  - take on leadership roles beyond the classroom
  - expand their subject knowledge
  - reflect and measure the impact of their current practice on student performance.
- Establish and implement an agreed mentoring and coaching program to provide guidance regarding quality teaching.
- Peer observation, feedback, differentiated coaching and professional learning communities utilised to improve teaching quality — a culture exists that enhances professional learning.
- Use cycles of inquiry for moderation, planning and review.
- Teachers work collaboratively to build a strong culture of professional sharing.
- Consistent implementation of quality teaching practices.
- Discussions about effective teaching strategies facilitated through professional learning communities.
- Evidence is used to make informed decisions regarding the implementation of new pedagogies and programs (standards of evidence).
- The annual performance review process supports capability development by aligning individual goals with the explicit improvement agenda.
- Staff professional development plans align with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
- Support all staff to develop their leadership capability.
- Professional success of teachers celebrated.

Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

- A curriculum, assessment and reporting plan, based on the Australian Curriculum (P–10), and the Queensland Curriculum (11–12) clarifies what teachers should teach and when.
- Teachers adapt the C2C materials to suit the school and class context.
- Teachers participate in professional development to build their knowledge of standards-based assessment.
- Classroom planning is quality assured and aligns with the whole-school curriculum plan and Australian Curriculum cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities.
- The curriculum plan is shared with parents and the wider community to seek feedback on ways to make the curriculum responsive to local needs.
- Professional learning communities provide opportunities to discuss the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.
- Structures and processes across the school are in place to ensure that teachers can effectively and regularly:
  - participate in planning and curriculum meetings across year levels and subjects
  - conduct moderation to review student work and results across all areas of the school
  - use exemplars, matrices and guides to making judgments when participating in moderation
  - develop individual curriculum plans with the support teacher and parent
  - provide feedback to students regarding how they can improve
  - provide formal reports to parents two times a year regarding student achievement
  - report against achievement standards
  - identify student learning gaps through assessment
  - teach higher order thinking skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An agreed school-wide evidence-based approach to differentiation exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional development is targeted around a whole-school approach to differentiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School and classroom learning environments are inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Case management that supports student attendance and retention, literacy and numeracy achievement and Year 12 attainment for at risk students is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers make curriculum modifications for students within unit, weekly and daily plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diagnostic and achievement data is used to identify the learning needs of all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Data on the progress of individuals, groups and whole cohorts of students is collected and analysed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An identification process exists for gifted and talented students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Targeted programs are provided for identified groups. For example, gifted and talented students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, English as an additional language or dialect learners, refugee students, students with learning difficulties or disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Differentiation expertise is developed and shared to support teaching quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitor individual curriculum plans for students accessing the curriculum outside year-level expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop student learning goals that are aligned with the curriculum and the explicit improvement agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students receive feedback from teachers regarding their learning goals and explore whether their learning needs are being met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Celebrate student progress of personal learning goals.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Implement an agreed research-validated, school-wide pedagogical framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The school leadership team keeps abreast of research on effective teaching practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review the pedagogical framework to ensure it continues to reflect the explicit improvement agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feedback provided to teachers regarding how to implement the pedagogical framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regular feedback to teachers focusing on school-wide pedagogies occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality teaching is researched and modelled to enhance pedagogical practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistency and alignment achieved across year levels in the teaching and learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching programs consistent with school expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regular feedback is provided to students to progress their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional learning and dialogue takes place among all colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation of pedagogical practices that may not be effective occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The teaching of literacy and numeracy is a priority in all curriculum areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships with educational professionals who can support the professional learning of teachers and teacher aides are maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The annual performance review process addresses the school’s pedagogical framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Domain 9: School–community partnerships

- Ensure community needs are central to the decision-making processes of the school.
- Establish strong, innovative and sustainable partnerships with parents, new families and the wider community. For example, early childhood providers and training organisations.
- Engage with other schools, tertiary institutions, business, employment agencies, support services and sport organisations to expand opportunities for student success.
- Connect with community groups to promote school activities that will enhance student engagement.
- Parents and community members are partners in the education of their children and participate in formal and informal discussions regarding their children.
- Provide opportunities for parent and para-professional helpers to be inducted in the use of teaching strategies that can be used to support their children within the home. For example, running parent workshops in reading strategies.
- Invite parents and community groups to participate in school reviews and strategic planning discussions.
- Share the explicit improvement agenda with parents and community partners and ask for regular feedback regarding the school direction and priorities.
- Active communication and marketing opportunities for the school exist including website, email, text, newsletter, phone calls and electronic notice boards.
- Provide regular updates on the progress of the Investing for Success agreement to parents and the community via the P&C and/or school council.
- Invite parents, community members and business partners to attend and support school events.
- Implement the Parent and Community Engagement Framework.
Appendix 1: Review process diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headline indicators updated (Oct)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysed by SIU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual performance assessment meetings with regions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication to schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of review team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review chair contacts principal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of school data and information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews and classroom visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit briefing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report drafted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIU quality assures report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report sent to principal and assistant regional director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School shares report with community</td>
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<tr>
<td>School responds to review findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (and SIU for priority support review) monitors progress and provides support as needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 2: Review checklist for principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIU website and resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarise yourself with the SIU website (<a href="http://www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au">www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au</a>), particularly the following documents:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SIU toolkit for principals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National School Improvement Tool (consider how the nine domains relate to your school)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform the school community, including parents, students, staff (teaching and non-teaching) and other stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circulate review information to staff (consider providing the link to the SIU website and key resources). Suggest the different ways they could be involved.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote the review in a newsletter, email, social media or other form of communication. Invite input into the review.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss the review with your assistant regional director.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School information and data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximately two weeks before the review, email the following documents and information to your review chair:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• current four-year strategic plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• annual implementation plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• professional learning plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pedagogical framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• completed community contact list (see Appendix 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• proposed program for the review (see example schedules, Appendix 5).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform your review chair if there are other materials you wish to provide.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk with the chair to finalise review arrangements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the start of the review, provide the following information to reviewers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• master timetable</td>
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<tr>
<td>• school map with staffroom locations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• staff list</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• electronic copy of completed school context list (see Appendix 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• points of contact for matters related to the review.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting room</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arrange an office space or small meeting room for the review team to work in, with access to a data projector.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: School context

Please complete and provide an electronic copy to your review chair on the first morning of the review.

- Location:
- Education region:
- Year opened:
- Year levels:
- Enrolment:
- Indigenous enrolment percentage:
- Students with disability enrolment percentage:
- ICSEA value:
- Year principal appointed:
- Full-time equivalent staff:
- Significant partner schools:
- Significant community partnerships:
- Significant school programs:

Appendix 4: School community contact list

Please complete and email to your review chair approximately two weeks before the review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
<th>Email address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;C and/or school council president</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local councillor</td>
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<tr>
<td>State member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous community representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeder school contacts</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others of your choice (for example, local partnerships, community groups or businesses)</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 5: Example review schedules

These are examples only. Please make changes to reflect your school’s context and bell times. Principals are asked to discuss the timetable with their review chair and email the proposed schedule to the chair approximately two weeks before the review.

#### Example primary school timetable

**Day 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Reviewer 1</th>
<th>Reviewer 2</th>
<th>Reviewer 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.30 – 8.30</td>
<td>Review team deliberations and data analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 – 8.45</td>
<td>Initial staff briefing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.45 – 9.15</td>
<td>Discussion with assistant regional director (can be by phone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15 – 10.30</td>
<td>Initial meeting with leadership team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 – 11.00</td>
<td>Morning tea – team discussions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 – 11.30</td>
<td>Deputy principal</td>
<td>Deputy principal</td>
<td>Head of curriculum</td>
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<td>11.30 – 12.00</td>
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<td>Head of special education services</td>
<td>Master teacher</td>
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<td>Guidance officer</td>
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<td>Lunch – team discussions</td>
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<td>Team discussions</td>
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**Day 2**

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<td>7.30 – 8.15</td>
<td>Review team discussions</td>
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<td>Report writing or extra meetings if required</td>
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<td>Team discussions and report writing</td>
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**Day 3**

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<td>Initial staff briefing</td>
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<td>Discussion with assistant regional director (can be by phone)</td>
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<td>Initial meeting with leadership team</td>
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<td>8.15 – 9.05</td>
<td>Cleaner</td>
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<td>Tuckshop convenor</td>
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<td>Check in with principal</td>
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<td>Team discussions and report writing</td>
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### Day 3

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<td>Morning tea – team discussions</td>
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</table>
Our school is scheduled for a school review from <<dates>>.

The reviews do not rate or compare schools, but provide teachers and other staff with independent feedback to help them continue to improve learning outcomes for students.

All schools have a review at least every four years. Key findings from the review will be made available to parents and the community on the school’s website.

The review team would like to hear from our school community and I encourage anyone who is interested to have their say. Your feedback is important and will help us continue to deliver a great education for students.

Feedback can be provided to the review team by phone or in person. All feedback is confidential.

Please contact the school office if you are interested in speaking to a reviewer. Alternatively, you can register your interest by emailing SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au. More information about the review process is available from the Department of Education and Training website: www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.

### Social media items

**Facebook**: We’re having a school review from <<dates>>. Community feedback is welcome, so have your say and support our school. Feedback is confidential. Please contact the school office if you are interested in speaking to a reviewer. Alternatively, you can register your interest by emailing SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au. More information about the review process is available from the Department of Education and Training website: www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.

**Twitter**: We’re having a school review from <<dates>>. Contact the office to have your say. More details online: www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.

### Example small school timetable

#### Day 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.30 – 8.30</td>
<td>Review team deliberations and data analysis</td>
<td>Review team deliberations and data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.30 – 8.45</td>
<td>Initial staff briefing</td>
<td>Initial staff briefing</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.45 – 9.15</td>
<td>Discussion with assistant regional director (can be by phone)</td>
<td>Discussion with assistant regional director (can be by phone)</td>
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<td>9.15 – 10.30</td>
<td>Initial meeting with leadership team</td>
<td>Initial meeting with leadership team</td>
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<td>10.30 – 11.00</td>
<td>Morning tea – team discussions</td>
<td>Morning tea – team discussions</td>
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<td>Support teacher, literacy and numeracy</td>
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<td>12.30 – 1.00</td>
<td>Teacher aides</td>
<td>Office staff</td>
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<td>Lunch – team discussions</td>
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<td>P&amp;C/parents</td>
<td>Student group</td>
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<td>Feeder high school</td>
<td>Early childhood centre</td>
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<td>Local member</td>
<td>Community representative</td>
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<td>Team discussions</td>
<td>Check in with principal</td>
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<td>Staff briefing</td>
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<td>Final check in with principal</td>
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Appendix 8: Frequently asked questions

About the SIU

What is the SIU?
Established in 2014, the SIU monitors and supports the performance of Queensland state schools and conducts school reviews.

Where is the SIU located?
Floor 8 of Education House in Brisbane.

How is it staffed?
An executive director leads a team of experienced state school principals and support staff.

Who does the executive director report to?
The Director-General.

How does the SIU engage with stakeholders?
The SIU regularly consults with stakeholders. A formal advisory group, established in 2014, meets once a term and includes representatives from the Queensland Teachers’ Union, principal associations and P&Cs Qld.

Frequency and timing of reviews

When did the reviews start?
In February 2015, following trials in 2014.

How often are schools reviewed?
At least once every four years.

When are schools reviewed?
Most schools receive a review in the year they are due to update their four-year strategic plan.

Can schools request a review outside of the four-year cycle?
Yes, at the discretion of the SIU and in consultation with the region. Requests should be made through the assistant regional director or principal supervisor.

Appendix 7: Self-determined review proposal

Self-determined review proposal for <<insert school name>>

Who will be conducting the review?

What is the specific focus of the review?

Proposed dates

Projected costs

Other comments and considerations (e.g. why this type of review?)

Please email your proposal to SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au.
After a review is completed

What happens after a review?

On the final day of the review, the review team presents its findings to the principal and other school staff (at principal's request). This is referred to as the exit briefing.

The school’s assistant regional director or principal supervisor is invited by the principal to attend the briefing. For priority support reviews their attendance is mandatory.

Is a review report produced?

Yes. The review team prepares a report detailing its findings and improvement strategies. The SIU quality assures the report before it is sent to the principal and assistant regional director.

What do schools do with the report?

Schools share the findings with their school community and incorporate any improvement strategies into their four-year strategic plan. Schools are required to publish the executive summary or full report on their website.

What happens after a priority support review?

Schools work with their assistant regional director to develop and implement an action plan. The SIU checks back in with the school and region at three, six, nine (if necessary) and 12 months to monitor progress.

For more information see Chapter 10.

Self-determined and emergent reviews

What is a self-determined review?

Self-determined reviews give schools identified as high performing the autonomy to organise their own review. The principal sets the scope and focus of the review, selects and engages reviewers, and discusses the school’s review proposal with the SIU.

Can schools engage the SIU for a self-determined review?

Yes. Schools can engage internal and external reviewers from the SIU.

Email SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au for more information.

What is an emergent review?

Emergent reviews are conducted by the SIU in response to urgent or emerging issues or significant level of community concern. Emergent reviews usually occur outside of a school’s four-year review cycle, and are at the request of the Minister, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, State Schools, or regional directors only. They progress as priority support reviews including an additional year of monitoring and support.
Timing and funding for self-determined reviews

When can a school schedule its self-determined review?
The timing of a self-determined review is set by the school. However, schools are encouraged to align their review with the updating of their four-year strategic plan.

What funding is available for a self-determined review?
Funding of up to $4650 is available. The school is paid by the SIU on receipt of an invoice and review report. Email SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au for more information.

Mandatory requirements for self-determined reviews

Do schools need to submit a review proposal to the SIU?
Yes. A template is available (Appendix 7). The SIU has a responsibility to ensure the suitability, quality and value for money of all school reviews.

Do schools need to provide a copy of their review report to the SIU?
Yes. The report contributes to the department’s research base and helps the SIU identify effective practice for sharing with other school communities.

Who else needs a copy of the review proposal and report?
The school should provide its assistant regional director or principal supervisor with the review proposal and final report.

What happens after a self-determined review?
The school publishes the executive summary or full report to its website and discusses the findings with the school community.

Choosing reviewers for self-determined reviews

Can schools engage external reviewers from outside the department?
Yes. However, they must ensure that any negotiations or contracts comply with government procurement processes. Contact the SIU or the Procurement Branch for more information.

Can a school engage external reviewers from the SIU’s pre-qualified panel?
Yes. By doing so, the review will comply with government procurement processes. Visit OnePortal to see a list of accredited external reviewers – oneportal.det.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/schoolimprovementunit/Pages/Externalschoolreviewers.aspx.

Can a school engage the SIU to conduct its self-determined review?
Yes. The SIU welcomes the opportunity to support your school’s improvement agenda. Email SIUMB@det.qld.gov.au for more information.

Other questions about self-determined reviews

Does the review need to align with the National School Improvement Tool?
No. However, schools are encouraged to use the tool if it suits their purposes.

Is it possible to find out what other schools are doing?
Yes. The SIU has published a series of short online videos to showcase what other schools have done. Visit the School Reviews website for more information – www.schoolreviews.eq.edu.au.