



New Schools and Campuses Policy

1. Introduction

The Australian and Queensland Governments allocate capital assistance funds to independent schools via grants administered by Queensland Independent Schools Block Grant Authority (QIS BGA) under the Australian Government Capital Grants Program, the State Capital Assistance Scheme and the External Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme. These funds can be used in support of the establishment of new school or campus sites.

The number of school-aged children in Queensland is projected to increase significantly over the next 20 years, therefore, to meet enrolment demand and provide parental choice the Queensland independent school sector must establish new schools and/or campuses of existing schools. This policy is intended to support an Approved Authority to plan for new schools or campuses with the end in mind. It will see new schools and campuses delivered with both a focus on both sound educational planning as well as the achievement of long-term strategic goals.

2. Purpose


QIS BGA recognises that the Queensland independent school sector comprises a diverse range of schools that allow and ensure parents/carers are provided with choice. QIS BGA aims to offer all Approved Authorities a degree of funding certainty and support to encourage the establishment of new independent schools/campuses for the benefit of the Queensland community. Accordingly, this policy strives to deliver a supportive and equitable funding approach for all types of new Queensland independent schools/campuses.

This policy overviews QIS BGA's funding approach and priorities for Approved Authorities, both newly accredited and existing, that are applying for capital funds to establish new school or campus sites. Included within this policy and its accompanying procedure are the parameters to be employed for both the educational and financial assessment of capital grant applications for new schools and new campuses of existing schools.

When commencing the planning for any grant application to be made, the *QIS BGA New Schools and Campuses Policy* should be read in conjunction with the *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*, which can be obtained directly from the QIS BGA General Manager.

3. Definitions

- a) An **Approved Authority** is the entity which is accredited by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB) to operate a school, under the *Queensland Government Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017*.
- (b) The **Development Period** is the duration of time to which the new school funding approach applies, as prescribed in the *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*.

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- (c) **Educational Facilities** means the learning spaces and associated facilities required to operate a new school/campus, as described in the annual *QIS BGA Functional Areas and Construction Costs* publication.
 - (d) **Minimum Viable Project** refers to the identification of at least the basic facilities deemed to meet the identified educational need of a specific school, as described in *QIS BGA Learning Spaces and Places*. A proposed project will be deemed to have met the identified educational need through the assessment of application data provided for the following indicators:
 - projected enrolments and class size policy
 - number of existing learning spaces and associated facilities, if any, and the associated room occupancy rates at the time of application
 - number of additional learning spaces and associated facilities within the design of the project proposed to meet the enrolment needs and educational philosophy, and
 - floor area guidelines for each functional area, as described in the annual *QIS BGA Functional Areas and Construction Rates* publication.
 - (e) **New school** is a newly accredited school, or a school which has applied and is likely to become accredited, governed either by:
 - a separate Board of Directors or
 - a Board of Directors responsible for an existing school.
 - (f) **New campus** is a newly accredited site of an existing school. It is not a temporary Special Assistance School site.
 - (g) **Relevant Entity** means a Minister or a government entity under the Public Service Act 2008, section 24 or the local government for the area in which the school is located.

4. Relevant Documentation and Legislation

- (a) *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)*
- (b) *Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth)*
- (c) *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)*
- (d) *Education (Capital Assistance) Act 1993 (Qld)*
- (e) *Education (Capital Assistance) Regulation 2015 (Qld)*
- (f) *Australian Government Capital Grants Program Guidelines*
- (g) *State Capital Assistance Scheme Guidelines*
- (h) *External Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme Guidelines*
- (i) *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*
- (j) *QIS BGA Learning Places and Spaces*
- (k) *QIS BGA Functional Areas and Construction Costs*

5. Scope

The policy applies to entities seeking to become an Approved Authority or existing Approved Authorities applying for capital assistance to establish a new school/campus under the Australian Government Capital Grants Program, the State Capital Assistance Scheme and the External Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme.

6. Procedure

6.1 CAPITAL GRANTS AVAILABILITY

- (a) Approved Authorities establishing a new school/campus may be eligible to make an application for capital assistance under the following programs:
 - Australian Government Capital Grants Program (CGP)
 - State Capital Assistance Scheme (SCAS)
- (b) A further program administered by QIS BGA, the External Infrastructure Subsidy Scheme (EIS) is also available to support schools with the external development requirements of local and State Governments, as well as other relevant entities as per the Public Service Act 2008. Further information on EIS will be maintained on the QIS BGA website at www.bga.qld.edu.au.
- (c) From time to time, governments may make available targeted capital assistance via other special purpose programs which will be administered by QIS BGA, as required.
- (d) For 20 years from the date of completion of a capital project, the respective Governments retain a right to repayment from Approved Authorities of grants which are more than \$75,000 should they, within the 20 years, sell or otherwise dispose of the facilities or cease to use the facilities for educational use.

6.2 MINIMUM CGP AND SCAS APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW SCHOOL SITES

- (a) The following aspects of planning for the development of a new school/campus should be in place to enable an Approved Authority to prepare a meaningful application for capital assistance:
 - NSSAB accreditation of the site which is the subject of the proposed capital project/s, or evidence that the site is progressing towards accreditation. Note that where the proposed school site is not accredited by the closing date of the annual capital funding round, the following will apply:
 - (i) the NSSAB application for accreditation must be lodged before submitting the QIS BGA application for capital assistance.
 - (ii) contact should be made with the QIS BGA Secretariat to seek further clarification of the implications of applying for capital assistance before accreditation is achieved.
 - where available, evidence of a local government development approval or Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID), such as Council development conditions or MID requirements for the site.
 - a 10-year educational facilities Master Plan, overviewing planning and projections for the commencement year, as well as for the short term and long term with a minimum 10-year horizon, or greater duration if relevant to the school's situation.
 - evidence of site ownership or a minimum 30-year lease on the site, thereby, enabling appropriate coverage of the 20 year contingent liability period.

- a business case (based on a template provided by QIS BGA) which will assist the Approved Authority/school to address the following concepts:
 - (i) Strategic Intent
 - (ii) Governance
 - (iii) School Capability Statement
 - (iv) Educational Philosophy
 - (v) Competitor Analysis
 - (vi) Student Enrolment: 10-year forecast
 - (vii) Staffing: 10-year model
 - (viii) Property Portfolio
 - (ix) 3-way, 10-year Financial Model.
- (b) Dependent on the circumstances related to the proposed new school/campus, QIS BGA may request additional information from the Approved Authority to enable any special consideration required to be validated.

6.3 APPLICATION FRAMEWORK

- (a) The school categories guiding the new schools/campus application and assessment procedures will be as follows:
 - **Type 1:** Mid to large schools
 - **Type 2:** Small schools, and
 - **Type 3:** Schools accredited as Special Assistance Schools, Special Schools or Majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Schools.
- (b) Applications for CGP/SCAS capital assistance for new schools/campuses will be made according to the following structure:
 - the **Initial Application**, i.e., where the assessment will consider the educational and financial needs of the Approved Authority/school for each stage of work during the Development Period.
 - the **Subsequent Applications**, i.e., where the assessment will consider the next stage/s of educational and financial needs of the Approved Authority/school, as well as the achievement of the future performance criteria as communicated to the Approved Authority/school by QIS BGA after the Initial Application process has concluded.
- (c) At each application, the entire site-based development requirements of the new school/campus will be examined according to the following areas:
 - **Internal site infrastructure**
 - **Educational facilities**, i.e., learning spaces and associated facilities
 - **Internal roads and car parks.**
- (d) A regular CGP/SCAS capital assistance application, inclusive of the required supporting documentation must also be submitted. This will enable QIS BGA to assess the following elements of a proposed project:
 - educational facilities, such as new and refurbished buildings, modular buildings as well as furniture and equipment

- professional fees, such as costs related to the engagement of professionals to provide services in relation to the planning and development of the proposed project/s
 - local authority charges, such as costs for development approvals, building applications and/or operational works permits
 - fire and other special services, including but not limited to, hose reels, hydrants, extinguishers, fire ring mains, security systems, telecommunications installations.
- (e) Applications at all stages will be submitted via the capital application process using the Enquire Grant Management System (GMS), within the scheduled application timeframe, as advertised on the QIS BGA website in approximately November of each year for the following round.
- (f) Where the delivery of external infrastructure is a requirement of an approval to develop required by local or State Government or another relevant entity, applications may be made via EIS for:
- infrastructure charges, and/or
 - project work.

The application assessment approach under EIS will not vary based on the category of new school/campus, as it does for CGP and SCAS.

6.4 ASSESSMENT PARAMETERS

- (a) QIS BGA will make an assessment of any application for capital assistance submitted according to the CGP and SCAS guidelines operating at the time of application.
- (b) A recommendation for a capital grant will be based on the application assessment processes of the *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*. The assessment will involve the determination of:
- the Minimum Viable Project to meet an identified educational need (including demographic growth and/or student disadvantage), and
 - the maximum financial contribution an Approved Authority and the school community can make.
- (c) When assessing Subsequent Applications, a determination will be made regarding the school's achievement of the performance criteria, thereby enabling the continuation of the school's classification as a new school/campus for capital funding purposes.
- (d) Where an Approved Authority no longer wishes to, or is no longer able to, apply for capital funds under the *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*, it may apply for capital funding as per the regular CGP/SCAS capital application processes.
- (e) The methodology associated with allocating capital funds to a project that will be recommended for a grant under this policy will be provided via the *New Schools and Campuses Funding Procedure*, which is reviewed annually.
- (f) Assessment of applications submitted by multi-campus schools will give consideration to the resources of both the Approved Authority and the individual school, as deemed necessary to determine the Minimum Viable Project and the maximum contribution able to be made to the proposed project.

- (g) Where a division of an accredited school has occurred, or the acquisition of an accredited (or once accredited) school site has been achieved, as per NSSAB accreditation processes, applications for capital assistance will be assessed as a new school or campus at the discretion of the QIS BGA Board.

7. Responsibilities

- (a) The QIS BGA Board carries responsibility for reviewing and monitoring the policy.
- (b) The General Manager is responsible for the communication and implementation of the policy.
- (c) Employees of QIS BGA are responsible for the escalation of any known breaches to the General Manager.

QIS BGA DOCUMENT CONTROL DETAILS		
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