School Enrolment Management Plan (School EMP)

Operational guidelines

**Overview**

The Department is responsible for providing facilities to meet the educational needs of the core curriculum for in-catchment students. The School Enrolment Management Plan (School EMP) procedure assists schools to avoid enrolment spikes from out-of-catchment students, which has historically resulted in the oversupply of infrastructure in some schools and underutilisation in others. The School EMP procedure requires principals at schools with capacity constraints to restrict out-of-catchment students and ensure in-catchment students can enrol at their local state school without requiring additional facilities. Principals must not allow enrolments to exceed the school’s *Student Enrolment Capacity* (SEC), unless enrolment growth is from within the school’s catchment area.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of these Operational Guidelines is to:

* provide additional information to support the implementation of the School EMP procedure; and
* guide the development and completion of School EMPs by schools and regional offices.

1. **IdentifYING Schools TO IMPLEMENT, UPDATE OR RESCIND A School EMP**

The trigger for a school to implement a School EMP is a utilisation rate of 80% or higher (trending upwards). A school’s utilisation rate is calculated by dividing the school’s total enrolment numbers by its SEC, and is expressed as a percentage.

Each year, the School EMP team, within Infrastructure Services Division (ISD), conducts an Annual School EMP Assessment, a state-wide analysis of school enrolment, SEC and utilisation data to identify those schools required to:

* implement a new School EMP (because the schools have reached the 80% utilisation trigger)
* update an existing School EMP (because the schools are still over 80% utilisation, but their SEC has changed over the past 12 months)
* rescind an existing School EMP (because the school’s utilisation rate has dropped to below 70% and is trending downwards).

A list of schools is forwarded to Regional Directors (RDs), with the following additional information for each school:

* Current enrolment (Day 8 data)
* Two years historical enrolments for each school (in order to determine the trend)
* Resident Student Numbers (RSNs) – students who reside in the school’s catchment and attend a state school (i.e. August census data from the previous year)
* Four year projected enrolments from Queensland Government Statistician’s Office (QGSO) SEC/Negotiated SEC

The RD is then responsible for notifying the relevant principals of the need to develop a School EMP or update their existing School EMP within the required deadlines. A summary of the annual School EMP analysis is provided in the table below:

**Annual School EMP analysis – Summary of process and timeframes**

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| **Timeframe** | **Responsible Officer/Unit** | **Action required** |
| 2-4 weeks from receipt of data | ISD | * Receipt of Day 8 data (anticipated mid-late February) * Analysis of enrolments, capacity and utilisation data. * Identify which schools require a new or updated School EMP. * Identify schools required to rescind a School EMP. * Notify the Regions of the schools required to implement or change a School EMP. * The Regions to be notified by the end of the second week in March. |
| Term 2 | Region | * Region reviews and provides feedback to ISD on the list of schools. * Region notifies schools requiring new or changed School EMPs by end of Term 1. * Notify schools required to rescind a School EMP. * Submit requests to DDG ISD, through ISD, for schools to be exempt from implementing a School EMP. |
| Term 2 | Schools | * Complete School EMP template in consultation with the school community. * Submit School EMP documentation to Region for approval. |
| Promptly on receipt | Region/ISD | * Regional Director to approve each School EMP. * ISD to Gazette and publish School EMPs and advise schools accordingly. |

**EXEMPTIONS:**

Where the RD identifies a school should be exempt from implementing a School EMP, an [Exemption Form](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/template-letter-school-emp-requiring-rescindment.docx) must be completed and forwarded to ISD, for submission to the DDG ISD for consideration.

If necessary, the RD may also nominate a school to implement a School EMP, due to unique local circumstances, even though the school’s utilisation rate may not have reached the trigger of 80%.

**Rescindment of existing School EMPs:**

When a school with a School EMP experiences a decrease in utilisation and the RD believes a School EMP is no longer needed, then it is rescinded. The trigger for rescinding a School EMP is a utilisation rate of 70% or lower (trending downwards).

The RD is responsible for advising a school of its requirement to rescind a School EMP, [using the Rescindment Form](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/template-letter-school-emp-requiring-rescindment.docx), outlining the rescindment date and the principal’s obligation to remove any reference to the School EMP from the school’s website and enrolment documents. The School EMP team within ISD will arrange for the School EMP to be removed from the Department’s website. The rescindment of a School EMP will not be advertised in the Government Gazette, as there is no legislative requirement to do so.

1. **COMPLETING THE SCHOOL EMP TEMPLATE**

Once informed of the requirement to develop a School EMP, principals should notify their school community of the changes this will mean for enrolment processes. Communication will generally be with the P&C Association and School Council (where one exists) and the broader student and parent community, as well as neighbouring school principals to identify any impacts the proposed School EMP may have on the geographic cluster of schools.

A [School EMP template](https://ppr.mpe.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/School-enrolment-management-plan-template.docx) must be completed and approved by the principal within two (2) weeks of being notified by the RD. Once complete, the school is required to submit an electronic Word version of the School EMP to the RD for approval, along with a scanned and signed version of the document.

All School EMPs must be completed in the pre-populated template, provided by the Department, to ensure consistency across all state schools. Changes may only be made to certain sections of the template (as indicated with hidden text).

The regional office will inform the school once the School EMP has been gazetted and published. At this time, the school will be advised to publish links on the school’s website to the Department’s [School EMP website](https://education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/enrolment/management-plans) and [EdMap website](http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/maps/edmap/).

* For more information, please refer to the [Flowchart for principals preparing/renewing a School EMP](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/flowchart-principals-preparing-renewing-school-emp.docx).

School EMPs must be reviewed annually and updated to account for any changes to capacity, Programs of Excellence (POEs) offered, or catchment boundary changes.

**RECORDING AN ACCURATE CAPACITY FIGURE IN THE SCHOOL EMP TEMPLATE:**

**Principals will liaise with their Infrastructure Manager or Infrastructure Advisor in the regional office when completing the School EMP template. There may be instances where the SEC provided by regional/central office does not accurately reflect the true capacity of the school. In these scenarios, the school and region should work to resolve the capacity discrepancy through redesignation of classrooms or other strategies.**

* For more information, please refer to the [Flowchart for principals to work through a capacity discrepancy](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/flowchart-principals-capacity-discrepancy.docx)

Any time a school’s capacity changes, due to the delivery or removal of infrastructure, the school’s School EMP must be updated and re-gazetted.

1. **PROCESSING ENROLMENT APPLICATIONS**

The principal is responsible for all enrolment decisions. Out-of-catchment enrolments must be restricted to allow sufficient capacity for in-catchment students in the school, taking into account projected enrolment growth.

**IDENTIFYING STUDENTS LIVING WITHIN CATCHMENT:**

The parent/legal guardian of a prospective student is required to adequately demonstrate that the student’s principal place of residence is within the school’s catchment area at the time of enrolment application. Mandatory proof of residency documents and suitable supplementary documents are listed within the School EMP procedure and the school’s published School EMP document. At the time of enrolment application, the school will use EdMap to determine whether or not the student’s address is within the school’s catchment area.

**IDENTIFYING STUDENTS WHO ARE ENTITLED TO ENROL AS IF IN-CATCHMENT:**

As stated in the School EMP procedure, the following groups of students are entitled to enrol in a school with a School EMP, even though they may reside outside the school’s catchment area:

A School EMP identifies the following groups of students who are entitled to enrol, even though they may reside outside the school’s catchment area:

* Children and young people who are subject to child protection orders that grant guardianship or custody to the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety Services).
* Siblings\*\* of current students at a school who reside outside of the catchment are entitled to enrol at the school, (excluding siblings of out-of-catchment students accepted into Programs of Excellence and siblings of students who were placed at the school as a result of exclusion from another school). Where a state school has both a primary and secondary campus, siblings are only entitled to enrol in the same campus as the currently enrolled student.
* Students whose parent or legal guardian is employed by the school.
* Students who live outside the catchment area and are verified with a disability can enrol at the school to attend the specific disability program if it is the closest program to their home and meets their individualised needs.
* Students whose principal place of residence is further than 55km to their nearest state school are entitled to enrol at any neighbouring school.
* Students who (during school term) reside at the school’s purpose-built boarding facility.
* Students who have been excluded from a school, if approved by the Regional Director.
* Students in remote/regional locations who access a School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS) bus service, provided by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR), to travel to their closest school, as determined by the DTMR bus route.

\*\***Siblings**: To be accepted under the sibling provision, the:

1. applicant must meet the definition of sibling in the School EMP procedure;
2. currently enrolled sibling must not have been enrolled through a POE at the school (i.e. siblings of POE students are not automatically entitled to enrol);
3. currently enrolled sibling must not have been placed at the school as a result of exclusion from another school; and
4. intended enrolment commencement and/or attendance of the sibling must be concurrent with the attendance of current student for the application to be valid. For example, if the applicant will be commencing in 2016, but the current enrolled sibling finishes school in 2015 then the application will not be valid.

**PRINCIPAL’S PRELIMINARY VIEW AND FINAL VIEW LETTERS:**

Where a principal forms a preliminary view that an application will not succeed, applicants will be notified of the reasons in writing. A [preliminary view letter template](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/principals-letter-ineligible-out-of-catchment.docx) is available on [OnePortal](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/asset-management/enrolment-demand). Applicants may respond to the preliminary view by making a submission to the principal, no later than seven (7) school days after receiving the preliminary view letter. If no submission is received, the principal’s preliminary view will be treated as the final decision and no further notice will be provided.

If a submission is received by the applicant seeking a review of the decision, the principal will consider the submission and make a final decision. A [final decision notice template](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/Principals-final-view-decision-letter.docx), which is available on [OnePortal,](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/asset-management/enrolment-demand) will be provided to the applicant as soon as is practicable.

**Programs of Excellence (PoE):**

All PoEs and the enrolment capacity of each program are required to be listed within a school’s School EMP document. Enrolment places in any PoE must only be offered to out-of-catchment students once the educational needs of all in-catchment students have been met and sufficient capacity has been reserved for future in-catchment growth.

Principals are required to seek approval to deliver a PoE, before one is introduced, by submitting a [Program of Excellence Proposal Form](https://ppr.mpe.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/Proposal-to-develop-a-program-of-excellence.docx) to the RD. In approving a PoE at a school with a School EMP, the RD will consider:

* facility implications
* the distribution of PoEs across a geographical cluster of schools
* the possible impacts on neighbouring schools that are significantly under-utilised.

Where a school is at, or near capacity, with a significant percentage of out-of-catchment enrolments, plans to introduce a PoE may require a lengthy lead-in time.

If a school with a School EMP has an existing PoE or wishes to commence a new PoE and in either case proposes accepting out-of-catchment enrolments, the school must complete a PoE proposal form. RDs have discretionary powers to implement guidelines around the completion of these forms.

In the situation where a school already has a PoE in place and enrolments have reached or exceeded the capacity, a strategy must be implemented to reduce out-of-catchment enrolments to bring the total enrolments back to below the SEC. Strategies for reducing out-of-catchment enrolments may include:

1. an enrolment freeze on all out-of-catchment enrolments, including PoE students
2. a review of PoE offerings/spaces available
3. reducing spaces available for out-of-catchment PoE students.
4. **IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL EMP**

The principal is responsible for ensuring enrolments do not exceed the SEC stated in the School EMP. This includes:

* reserving sufficient capacity for students relocating into the catchment during the year
* reserving capacity for future siblings of out-of-catchment students (excluding siblings of students enrolled through a PoE or placed at a school due to exclusion from another school)
* ensuring the starting cohort enrolment numbers do not increase to the extent that the overall capacity of the school is exceeded, for the life of the cohort. For example, the number of prep enrolments must not exceed the school’s capacity to accommodate this cohort and future in-catchment enrolments in subsequent years.

1. **REQUESTING A NEGOTIATED CATCHMENT AREA**

Due to unique local circumstances, a school may request to amend its catchment boundaries using the [Negotiated Catchment Boundary request form](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/application-form-negotiated-catchment-boundary.docx). This process ensures that any approved negotiated catchment changes can occur at the same time as the annual catchment boundary update conducted by QGSO. [EdMap](https://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/maps/edmap/) will only be updated once per year to account for equidistant catchment changes and any approved negotiated catchment boundaries. Any request for a negotiated catchment boundary must consider the impact on the current and future capacities of all affected schools.

**Key dates for negotiated catchment boundary process:**

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| **Date** | **Responsible Officer/Unit** | **Action Required** |
| February | ISD | * Inform regional offices of the annual equidistant catchment boundary changes (as provided by QGSO) which account for any alterations to road network changes in the preceding 12 months. |
| Before end of April | Schools | * If seeking to negotiate a catchment boundary, a principal must consult with neighbouring schools regarding any such proposal. * Liaise with the regional office regarding proposed negotiated catchment boundary. * Submit an [application form](https://intranet.qed.qld.gov.au/Services/facilities/Forms/Documents/application-form-negotiated-catchment-boundary.docx) for a negotiated catchment boundary. |
| May | Region | * Submit negotiated catchment boundary requests, as approved by the Regional Director, to ISD for processing. |
| End of Term 3 | QGSO/ISD | * Upload revised catchment boundaries (equidistant and negotiated) to go live on the [EdMap website](https://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/maps/edmap/). * For schools with a School EMP, catchments will be effective once live on the EdMap website and published in the Government Gazette (legislative requirement). |