

# English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)

## Identifying EAL/D students

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### Transcript of video

This video is available from [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/student-diversity/eald/identifying](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/student-diversity/eald/identifying)

### Who are students with English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)?

Associate Professor Jennifer Alford  
Faculty of Education, QUT

Students who are EAL/D or English as an additional language or dialect can be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who might be new to speaking standard Australian English because they speak a home language or dialect other than English. They might be newly or recently arrived migrants with age-appropriate education. They might be refugee-background students with interrupted schooling and possibly trauma. Or they might be born in Australia and speak a home language at home.

### How can schools identify students requiring support for EAL/D?

Associate Professor Jennifer Alford  
Faculty of Education, QUT

Well, I think the first thing to remember is that we can't measure EAL/D learners on literacy scales that are intended for first language users of English. And that's because language is the building blocks for literacy. So they're not necessarily underperforming if they don't meet age-related benchmarks and learning achievement standards. They might be achieving at levels commensurate with phases of language learning, which is terrific. And teachers need to understand the ACARA EAL/D learning progression or the bandscales in Queensland, and how they work to identify language levels.

Alicia Smith  
Primary EAL/D teacher, Education Queensland

Well, teachers should keep in mind to avoid making assumptions that good conversational language indicates that no support is required. A student may speak with fluency in a face-to-face conversation on a familiar topic, but they

may still need significant support in many other areas.

Associate Professor Jennifer Alford  
Faculty of Education, QUT

Well, the key information I think teachers need to know are the student's age on arrival or their age on their first exposure to English. They also need to know their previous exposure to English teaching or learning English in school. And also they need to know their English level. Are they a beginner? Are they emerging? Are they developing knowledge of English? Or perhaps they're consolidating their English.

Gae Nastasi  
EAL/D Coordinator, Education Queensland

Bandscale levels can be used with other information from the database such as behaviour, previous academic reports, NAPLAN results, previous conversations with family members, non-submission of assessment tasks, and I guess this then we might ask ourselves why are these issues arising? Is it related somehow to language learning?

Megan Huber  
Director of International Students, St Laurence's College

So, when the students are tested, I collate that data and I produce a very user-friendly document that explains all the criterion around reading, writing, speaking, and listening. And underneath that, all the skills and strategies needed for that implementation in the classroom for those teachers. And what's imperative about that document and that data through their English language scores is that it follows them throughout the school year.

Lyndee Bakes  
EAL/D Advisory Visiting Teacher, Education Queensland

So, if the student isn't marked as an EAL/D learner, then there are some other clues you can look for in the classroom. If they're not entering discussions or they're reluctant to answer questions, if they're not following classroom instructions, all these are clues to investigate further.



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