

Auslan Language (formerly known as LOTE) in schools.

Australian Sign Language (Auslan) is recognised as belonging to a group of people who are its owners or custodians. Deaf people are the custodians of their language - Auslan. Consultation with native or native-like and proficient users of Auslan who have ownership of the language is strongly recommended as a special consideration for Auslan programs, to ensure the language is taught in a contextually and culturally correct manner.

DCCQ states that appropriate consultation with relevant Deaf communities are always central to the development of language-specific curricula and the provision of language learning programs in schools.

DCCQ encourage Queensland schools to actively engage and consult appropriately with the local Deaf community in an ethical, respectful and sustainable manner, as this is the cornerstone of respectful Auslan program development and key to a successful Auslan teaching program.

Teaching Auslan without due consideration of and liaison with the Deaf community may result in linguistic and cultural misappropriation and the disenfranchisement of deaf people. Lack of liaison and consultation with Deaf community elders can show school is being disrespectful towards Deaf people and their language of choice, Auslan.

The preference of DCCQ is that:

- A qualified Deaf Auslan Language teacher is employed to teach Auslan.
- A qualified Deaf teacher proficient in Auslan is employed to teach Auslan.
- A Deaf community member with Auslan qualifications and demonstrated skills in working with children is employed under the Permission to Teach Program offered by Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) and is mentored by hearing language teachers in the school/s.
- A hearing CODA (Child of Deaf Adult) who is native-like Auslan user who have Auslan qualifications delivers an Auslan program after consultation with appropriate organisations with a commitment to further study of Auslan linguistics to deliver Auslan program respectfully.
- A team-teaching model is used when a hearing teacher proficient in Auslan holding Auslan qualifications works alongside a Deaf staff member (such as an Auslan Language Model) to deliver an Auslan program.
- A hearing teacher proficient in Auslan and holding Auslan qualifications accompanied by an Auslan native speaking language assistant delivers an Auslan program after consultation with appropriate organisations with a commitment to further study of Auslan linguistics and Deaf Culture to deliver an Auslan program respectfully.

ACARA Auslan Language outlines issues that school need consider:

- the presence of deaf students within the school environment, for whom the provision of an L1 or L2 (see Glossary for definition) Auslan program would be of academic, social, emotional and vocational benefit.
- the proportion of Deaf teachers, mentors, language models and Deaf community members in the region, and available access to them.
- the availability of skilled and appropriate personnel for teaching Auslan, such as qualified Auslan instructors/language teachers, and the capacity to team teach in deaf/hearing teams as needed in a culturally sensitive manner.
- the possibility of excursions to Deaf community events and the development of ongoing relationships with community members (such as Deaf seniors) to support pedagogy and to build and perpetuate mutual understanding and connections for the benefit of students and the community.

- the three-dimensional visual-spatial nature of Auslan means that it is ideally taught in a face-to-face context. ICT will play an important role in providing access to a variety of signers and signed texts, however, particularly for rural and remote learners.
- the range of cross-cultural considerations that need to be addressed when working in and teaching Auslan in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The teaching team should consult the local community about particular topics, local context and relevant cultural considerations, so that offence and embarrassment can be avoided.
- the importance of promoting further research of Auslan and the development, collection and digitisation of quality texts, teaching materials, resources and assessment and reporting tools for teaching purposes.
- the need for investment in the professional development of suitable Auslan teachers to meet future anticipated interest and demand in Auslan programs in schools; and for recognition of the fact that the success of Auslan programs depends on the fundamental premise that suitably skilled and qualified teachers, including native or native-like proficient users of Auslan, have key roles in their development and implementation.
- schools enrolling deaf and hard of hearing students on the same site may wish to consider offering both L1 and L2 Auslan pathways and a blend of the two as needed. Authentic opportunities for deaf, hard of hearing and hearing peers to engage with each other, either face to face or via technology, allows L2 students to practise language in a real-world context. Such practice benefits for hearing students transfer to deaf students by broadening their peer network, increasing communication across the school and over several year levels for the deaf students, and potentially have social, emotional, cultural, psychological, academic and vocational benefits for all students in the program.

(Source : <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/auslan/developing-teaching-and-learning>)

For more guidance that is specific and to connect with the Deaf community, Auslan teachers, contact the state peak body representing the needs and interests of Auslan users in Queensland such as Deaf Cultural Council Queensland.

Deaf people/CODA wanting to teach Auslan Language in Queensland schools

An approved teacher is either a person who holds current provisional or full registration as a teacher in Queensland or a person who is granted permission to teach (PTT) by the Queensland College of Teacher where the employer is unable to find a suitably qualified registered teacher.

A PTT is usually only granted for a short time and in specific subject area.

A registered teacher has met the qualifications, experience, suitability and other professional practice requirements for teacher registration.

The holder of a PTT is not a registered teacher but has met certain knowledge, qualifications, skills or training criteria as well as suitability and other professional practice requirements and has been approved to teach under strict limitations.

To teach Auslan Language at schools, you must be an approved teacher. Section 83 of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* states that a person who is not an approved teacher must not teach in a prescribed school and that a person who is not registered teacher must not supervise, or assess the work of, a teacher or student teacher in a prescribed school.

(https://www.qct.edu.au/pdf/Regulatory_requirements_approved_teachers_PP01.pdf)

There are three ways for Deaf people in Queensland to teach Auslan language at school in 2019 – they are as a fully registered deaf teacher, an Auslan teacher with permit to teach (PTT) or Auslan Language Assistant (ALA).

1. Deaf/CODA Auslan teachers who are provisional or fully registered teacher

Duties:

- Delivering an Auslan language program.
- Assessing student participation in Auslan language.
- Otherwise administering or providing consistent and substantial educational leadership to an Auslan language program.

A deaf person who holds current provisional or full registration as a teacher in Queensland and possess an education qualification such as:

- Bachelor of Education.
- Bachelor of Secondary Education.
- Graduate Diploma in Education.
- Bachelor of Education in teaching Auslan LOTE (up to 2013 by La Trobe University).
- Graduate Diploma in Education (LOTE).

Requirements to teach Auslan Language as a registered teacher:

To teach Auslan language in schools, it is essential that evidence of direct teaching is carried out in Auslan, so you need to provide evidence that you have completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where Auslan or English and Auslan were the languages of instruction. The evidence must show the number of years completed.

- Evidence with letterhead from organisations that confirm you have taught Auslan courses (such as TAFE, Deaf Services, Deaf Australia).
- A reference letter from Deaf Cultural Council Queensland confirming the applicant's membership in the local deaf community and fluency in Auslan.

OR/AND

- Completion of Diploma in Auslan.

2. Deaf/CODA Auslan teachers who are not provisional or fully registered teachers

A deaf person is granted the permission to teach (PTT) by Queensland College of Teachers to teach Auslan Language at school where there is no suitably qualified registered deaf teacher to teach Auslan Language available. PTT is usually only granted for a short time. PTT approval is granted within strict parameters.

Duties

- Delivering an endorsed Auslan language program under the supervision of the registered teacher.
- Organise and conduct set assessments on student participation in Auslan language with an Auslan fluent registered teacher.
- Administering or providing consistent and substantial educational leadership to an Auslan language program with a registered teacher.

Requirements to teach Auslan Language as a PTT Auslan teacher:

To teach Auslan language in schools, it is essential that evidence of direct teaching is carried out in Auslan so you need to provide evidence that you have completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where Auslan or English and Auslan were the languages of instruction. The evidence must show the number of years completed.

- Evidence with letterhead from organisations that confirm you have taught Auslan (such as TAFE, Deaf Services, Deaf Australia).
- A reference letter from Deaf Cultural Council Queensland confirming the applicant's membership in the local deaf community and fluency in Auslan.

OR/AND

- Completion of Diploma in Auslan.

Application process for registration and Permission to teach (PTT)

The Education (Queensland College of Teachers) ACT 2005 confers on the Queensland College of Teachers the power and function of granting registration or PTT. The process for approval involves several important decisions. Applications for registration and PTT undergo a comprehensive eligibility assessment. Applicants for registration and PTT may be granted registration or PTT with or without conditions or may be refused registration or PTT.

According to Queensland College of Teachers, both applicant and employing school have legislative obligations to ensure that teaching duties do not commence unless there is official evidence of the granting of either teacher registration or PTT.

The ongoing nature of the obligations requires the teacher and the employing authority to ensure that the teacher's registration or PTT is maintained while the person is employed as an Auslan language Teacher. DCCQ states that these obligations extend to registered deaf Auslan Language Models or PTT teachers.

Requirements to teach Auslan Language as a PTT teacher:

To teach Auslan language in schools, it is essential that evidence of direct teaching is carried out in Auslan so you need to provide evidence that you have completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where Auslan or English and Auslan were the languages of instruction. The evidence must show the number of years completed.

- Evidence with letterhead from organisations that confirm you have taught Auslan courses (such as TAFE, Deaf Services, Deaf Australia).
- A reference letter from Deaf Cultural Council Queensland confirming the applicant's membership in the local deaf community and fluency in Auslan.

OR/AND

- Completion of Diploma in Auslan.

3. Deaf Auslan Language Assistants (DALA)

A native or native-like Auslan language assistant provides authentic communication opportunities for students and teachers and helps to bring the language and culture to life. The relatively informal relationship between a language assistant and students means that students may be more inclined to take risks with their language use. An effective language assistant is able to:

- develop a positive working relationship with the hearing teacher through planning with them on how and when to best use the deaf language assistant.
- present dialogues with teacher to model turn-taking, questions and responses.
- work with small groups to practice Auslan, to have focused conversations or to produce texts.
- demonstrate or teach activities in Auslan.
- model appropriate gestures and body language with Auslan.
- share cultural knowledge and present their cultural perspective on given topics.
- assist with sign production.
- assist with resource development.
- assist teachers with their Auslan proficiency and cultural knowledge.

Requirements to teach Auslan Language as a Deaf Auslan Language Assistant:

To teach Auslan language in schools, it is essential that evidence of direct teaching is carried out in Auslan, so you need to provide evidence that you have completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where Auslan or English and Auslan were the languages of instruction. The evidence must show the number of years completed.

- Evidence with letterhead from organisations that confirm you have taught Auslan courses (such as TAFE, Deaf Services, Deaf Australia).
- A reference letter from Deaf Cultural Council Queensland confirming the applicant's membership in the local deaf community and fluency in Auslan.

OR/AND

- Completion of Diploma in Auslan.

For further information about language assistant, click on below link -

<https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/ff9da39e-bed9-4a64-88fa-a4965bc32372/1/docs/language-assistants.pdf>

Requirements for Deaf Auslan language assistant:

To become a Deaf Auslan Language assistant in schools you need to provide evidence that you have completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where Auslan or English and Auslan were the languages of instruction. The evidence must show the number of years completed.

- Evidence with letterhead from organisations that confirm you have taught Auslan (such as TAFE, Deaf Services, Deaf Australia)
- A reference letter from Deaf Cultural Council Queensland confirming the applicant's membership in the local deaf community and fluency in Auslan

OR/AND

- Completion of Diploma in Auslan

Professional Development for Auslan Language teachers

DCCQ will organise and/or collaborate with organisations to provide professional development workshops to support Auslan language teachers.

DCCQ's Registry of Auslan Language teachers

Registry of Auslan language approved teachers is established so we can connect and/or refer Deaf Auslan teacher to school in area that request Auslan Language to be taught.

Contact us

- if you want to be put on the registry for becoming Auslan Language teacher in your area.
- if you want to find out about the availability of Auslan language teacher in your area.
- referral to deaf community members.
- advice and consultation.
- professional development activities.

Email: info@dccq.org.au

Website: <https://www.dccq.org.au>

Glossary

Terminology	Definition
CODA	Child of Deaf Adults; the term that typically refers to hearing children of deaf parents, who often use a signed language as their first language in their family of origin.
L1 – First Language Learner Pathway	<p>The rationale for providing a L1 pathway is that native signers do not usually have an opportunity to formally study their natural first language in a classroom context. Such exploration and development of their L1 affords these students a more sophisticated understanding of their L1, and scaffolds their acquisition of English as their second/additional language. Formally studying Auslan at school provides L1 learners with powerful recognition of the value and status of their language and helps strengthen their sense of identity. The impact of this is healthier self-esteem, greater resilience, better mental health, an improved concept of self and a greater engagement with language, community and culture. In addition, formal learning of their L1 may give students increased opportunity to develop understanding, knowledge and valuable life skills across the curriculum. The L1 pathway typically caters for deaf students whose native language is Auslan (that is, deaf children of deaf adults, or deaf children from hearing families who use Auslan at home); hearing children with signing deaf parents; and deaf students who are introduced to Auslan at school, for whom it is a highly accessible language and likely to be their future preferred or primary language. This latter group of deaf children might not have access to Auslan at home. Developing a strong L1 via this pathway from Foundation to Year 10 will particularly increase the educational capabilities of deaf children, encourage functional bilingualism in Auslan and English, and will improve learning and future employment opportunities.</p>
L2 – Second Language Learner Pathway	<p>The L2 pathway typically caters for students who are not members of the Deaf community; most often, hearing students learning Auslan as a second or additional language. It may also include deaf or hard of hearing children already fluent in another language, such as a different signed language in the case of a recent immigrant, or spoken English for some deaf and hard of hearing children who have residual hearing or access to speech. These children are being introduced to Auslan for the first time as an additional language to add to their existing linguistic repertoire.</p> <p>Due to a range of complex factors, it is recognised that these two pathways may not be able to meet the complete learning needs of all students. For example, native signers of Auslan who are hearing (such as hearing children from deaf families) may not be adequately accounted for in an L1 pathway, due to the teaching and learning emphasis on the primary target group, deaf children. In addition, a deaf migrant already fluent in a native signed language from another country, such as American Sign Language, may not be entirely suited to an L2 learning pathway for Auslan as so many age-appropriate L1 features and linguistic competencies will already be present in his/her use of another signed language, making a second signed language easier to learn compared to other L2 learners being exposed to learning a signed language for the first time. Congenitally deafblind children, or other students with disability, may also present unique challenges with regard to determining language learning pathways.</p>

Source : <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/auslan/learner-diversity-and-learner-pathways/>