

# Community Language Schools Program Accreditation Guidelines



# Overview

A Community Language School (CLS) is a not-for-profit, after-hours language and culture school, open to all students irrespective of their linguistic background.

The Government of South Australia provides annual funding to support CLS to deliver language and cultural programs. These programs are delivered to South Australian school-aged students outside school hours.

This funding can be used to support language and cultural learning programs and the delivery of South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) language subjects.

CLS must be accredited to receive funding. These Guidelines set out the steps that each CLS must follow, and the documents that must be supplied to become accredited.

CLS provide out-of-school-hours language and cultural tuition that complements language education provided by mainstream schools. CLS focus on supporting students to learn a new language or maintain their mother tongue / heritage language.

While there may be times when schools must deliver online or hybrid learning, the intention of this program is to support only “face-to-face” language and culture learning programs.

All CLS must be a current member of Community Language Schools SA (CLSSA).

All new and existing CLS in South Australia must be accredited with the Government of South Australia. The External Relations directorate, Department for Education (the department) is responsible for granting accreditation on behalf of the Government of South Australia.

These Guidelines for accreditation apply to both new and existing CLS.

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# Definitions

**External Relations** – a directorate that is part of the Department for Education, who manages the Community Language Schools program.

**Regular Attendance** – students must attend the majority of sessions that the CLS operates each term. Students may be absent for classes if an appropriate reason has been provided in writing (or text) to the CLS Administrator or CLS Principal.

**Department for Education** – State Government body that provides a range of integrated education, training, health, and child development services.

**Community Language School (CLS)** – a body that provides out-of-school-hours language and cultural tuition that complements language education provided by mainstream schools with a particular focus on enabling students to learn a new language or maintain their mother tongue / heritage language.

**The Ethnic Schools Association of SA Inc. trading as Community Language Schools SA (CLSSA)** – a not-for-profit, non-government educational association which is incorporated under the South Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1985. CLSSA is the peak member body for each separately incorporated CLS.

**Community use of School Facilities Agreement** – a written agreement between the CLS and the body responsible for the school site. This document must set out the conditions of use and be agreed by each party.

# Eligibility Criteria

Each CLS must meet the following conditions.

## Structure

Be a not-for-profit organisation incorporated under one of the following Acts:

- *Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)*
- *Corporations Act 2001 (Cwth)*
- *Royal Charter or Statute*

## Operations

CLS must be run by a governance committee or a school management committee that includes representatives of parents and caregivers of children attending the community language school, and teachers or instructors of the school. The management committee must have a separate Australian bank account in the name of the CLS authority.

For a CLS to meet the eligibility criteria it must:

- Deliver a language and culture program which operates for a minimum of 36 weeks per year.
- Provide at least 2 hours tuition per week of which 1.5 hours must be formal teaching and learning of the language.
- Have a minimum of 8 students regularly attending, unless otherwise agreed in writing with External Relations.

## Premises

Classes must be held in either mainstream school premises or such other premises that have been approved for education purposes by the relevant local council or an approved community setting.

There is a preference for Community Language Schools to be run from mainstream school premises.

Where schools are run from premises that are not mainstream schools, an independent Work Health Safety (WHS) audit (by a company nominated by CLSSA or DfE) must be undertaken as part of the accreditation process.

Schools must ensure that:

- Premises are kept in good repair and condition including conducting routine maintenance and carrying out any necessary repair or replacement works.
- Outdoor areas of the premises are kept in a neat and tidy state and free from rubbish.
- The premises support student safety, health and well-being.
- Premises have a perimeter fence, adequate heating and cooling and access to appropriate toilet facilities.
- There is sufficient circulation space within the classrooms for student and staff movement.
- Premises must comply with Commonwealth, State and Local governments laws that apply to the built environment, infrastructure, grounds and facilities.

The department may, at its discretion, undertake an independent WHS audit as part of the Maintaining Accreditation process.

## Personnel

All CLS personnel (teachers, parents, school administrators, etc) must have a current [Working With Children Check](#) (WWCC) undertaken through the Department of Human Services (DHS) Screening Unit before they begin to work/volunteer with the school. It is the responsibility of the CLS to ensure that all the relevant working with children checks are kept up to date, each WWCC must be lodged to the CLSSA School Management portal. All personnel must undertake a SA Safe Training short course within the same term they commence with a CLS.

## Curriculum

The curriculum is to be developed to deliver 1.5 hours of formal teaching and learning of language per week. This is required to be reviewed and approved by CLSSA through the submission of your accreditation documents.

If a CLS wishes to make changes to the curriculum after it has achieved accreditation, it will have to be re-assessed by CLSSA to seek approval for the changes.

## Policy and Compliance

All organisations offering services to children or young people must lodge a [child safe environments compliance statement](#) or be a signatory to the CLSSA representative statement lodged with DHS.

CLS must ensure that personnel attend relevant or requisite child safe training every 3 years. New personnel must complete this training before they begin work in a community language school. All existing personnel must already be trained.

## Insurance

Each school must have in place current public liability insurance **for not less than \$20 million** for any one claim.

It is the responsibility of all CLS to provide a safe school environment for all students, instructors, teachers and volunteers.

To support the delivery of a safe environment for all students within the community language schools sector and to assist all schools with their responsibility to provide a duty of care to students, a set of School Policies have been developed by CLSSA and are freely available to each CLS.

**It is mandatory for all member schools to comply with policies in the [CLSSA Policy Manual](#).**

# Accreditation

There are two types of accreditation:

## New School Accreditation

All new CLS ensure that they meet the Eligibility Criteria before making an application for accreditation. Before commencing an application, any prospective CLS must contact the CLSSA on 08 7095 5600 or email [admin@clssa.sa.edu.au](mailto:admin@clssa.sa.edu.au)

## Maintaining Accreditation

To maintain accreditation, CLS will be required to annually review and provide updated documentation, together with a declaration form, stating that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria of accreditation. The declaration form is required to be submitted to CLSSA by **28 February** each year.

This document may require a photo/video of the classes and teaching lesson. This documentation must comply with the CLSSA [Personal Information and Photograph Release Policy](#).

Site visit/s conducted by the External Relations directorate and CLSSA will observe the operations of the school periodically and at least once in each 4-year period.

# Accreditation Process

Accreditation is assessed by the External Relations directorate of the Department for Education. The application will be submitted by CLSSA on behalf of the CLS.

To apply for accreditation, the prospective CLS authority must apply to CLSSA who will submit their application on behalf of the CLS to the Department for Education. This application must include all of the CLS campuses.

If a CLS offers more than 1 language, a separate application must be completed for **each** language as the State Government funding provided is language specific.

The documents required as part of the application are as follows:

- Certificate of incorporation or registration
- School constitution or the governance committee constitution
- Australian business number (ABN)
- Evidence of suitability of premises including a WHS audit if required
- Insurance certificate of currency

- Emergency management plan
- First aid certificates
- Working with children checks or Teachers Registration Board registration (for all instructors, teachers and volunteers, or all students 18+, or committee members)
- Accurately maintain student attendance only via the CLSSA Student Data Capture System
- Teacher/instructor code of conduct
- Student code of conduct
- Management committee guidelines

All documents must:

- be in English, or bilingual with English translation
- be relevant to the application.

To reduce the administrative burden on schools, the External Relations directorate will source the documents required for accreditation from those the school has already supplied to the CLSSA.

As part of maintaining accreditation, a declaration form will be required to be completed by the CLS annually and submitted to CLSSA by 28 February each year. The declaration form is to declare the CLS is maintaining all the standards of the accreditation to be a part of the Community Language Schools program.

## Assessment Process

### Step 1.

The application for accreditation will be assessed by CLSSA and the External Relations directorate.

### Step 2

CLSSA and External Relations directorate will arrange a site visit to observe the operations of the school.

### Step 3

After the site visit is performed an assessment will be made and a recommendation made to the Director, External Relations to accredit. A letter will be sent from the Department to the head of the board or principal/school authority to advise of the outcome.

Once a CLS has received this letter it will be eligible to receive state government funding which will be provided on a bi-annual basis.



# Refusal or Suspension of Accreditation

This section describes the circumstances in which accreditation or re-accreditation may be refused or suspended.

## Behaviour

The department can decide not to accredit an organisation or to suspend an organisation's existing accreditation. It can do this if the organisation, its officer, board member, employee, member, volunteer, subcontractor representative or agent:

- Behaves in a way that the department believes its continued association with the organisation may be detrimental to the reputation of the CLS Program and the department.
- Is not a fit and proper person, having regard to the special nature of working with children in a school setting.
- Has a conviction or findings of guilt for a sexual offence.
- Is convicted of a crime punishable by a term of imprisonment.
- Induces or attempts to induce any student to convert to a particular religion.
- Is critical of or denigrates another religion, religious tradition, religious belief, or religious practice denigrates, offends or instils hatred for other minority group(s), language(s) and culture(s).

## The CLS school no longer offers the language.

A CLS that does not provide a language program for 2 consecutive years will lose its accreditation. The school must apply as a new school to regain accreditation.

## Failure to meet the eligibility requirements

A CLS that does not meet all the Eligibility Criteria outlined in these Guidelines including meeting requirements for minimum numbers of enrolled students, will not be accredited, re-accredited or receive state government funding.

## Failure to complete the required documentation

Accreditation may be refused if the CLS does not:

- Complete and submit the required documentation by the due date.
- Satisfy all the accreditation or maintaining accreditation requirements outlined in these Guidelines.
- Does not provide an annual declaration to CLSSA to confirm the CLS is maintaining its accreditation.

# Roles and responsibilities

## Role of an accredited Community Language School:

All accredited schools will be required to:

- Maintain and comply with all eligibility terms and conditions of accreditation as set out in these Guidelines.
- Comply with the relevant laws in force in South Australia and Australia.
- Ensure mandatory training is up to date.
- Provide an annual declaration to CLSSA to confirm the CLS is maintaining its accreditation.
- Allow the External Relations and CLSSA to monitor CLS processes by assessing submitted reports and conducting site visits. In some cases, the Department may request further information.
- Contact the CLSSA and the External Relations immediately when someone becomes aware of a breach of terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

## Role of Community Language Schools SA:

- Support a CLS to apply for or maintain accreditation.
- Provide training and professional development for the CLS personnel.
- Distribute funding to CLS in accordance with the approved program of funding.
- Assist CLS complete its Working with Children Checks and First Aid Training.
- Support the department with site inspections and site visits.
- Support the CLS with finding a safe and suitable location to operate its CLS classes.
- Support the Department with the bi-annual collection of CLS census data.

## Role of the Department for Education:

- Provide funding to the CLSSA to distribute to CLS.
- Assess and determine applications for accreditation (new and existing schools).
- Provide guidelines for the operation of the program, the calculation and distribution of funding including for those schools that include a SACE component within its program.
- Assist Finance with collecting host school data (number of students using the government school).

## Related legislation

[Associations Incorporation Act 1985 \(SA\)](#)

[Corporations Act 2001 \(Cwth\)](#)

## Related policies

[Community Language Schools - Funding Guidelines](#)

[Community Language Schools - SACE Guidelines](#)

[Community Language Schools - Policies](#)

[Community use of School Facilities Agreement](#)

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**Revised section:** wording under section titled 'Premises' was updated for CLS seeking to operate their CLS from their own site.

## Contact

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