

EnAbleD: workforce strategy 2024-2027

Our goal is to enable workplaces to be inclusive, accessible, safe and supportive where employees with disability can flourish and shine, and where students can see themselves in the people that teach and lead them.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability and their experience due to multiple characteristics.

Message from Director-General

I am pleased to share with you the department's EnAbleD workforce strategy 2024-2027. It builds upon the previous strategy, recognising we need to do more to enable our employees with disability to flourish and have meaningful career pathways.

Listening to our employees with disability and ensuring their voices are heard is of paramount importance to the department. EnAbleD was co-designed by our employees with disability and their allies, building on the previous strategy.

We value our people and are committed to providing all employees with safe, supportive, and accessible workplaces to realise their own potential and that of our students.

Each of us has a part to play – such as by creating inclusive and accessible team cultures, applying inclusive recruitment practices and recognising our unconscious bias. In your everyday work, I encourage all of you to contribute to system change that makes a positive difference.

Together we can support employees with disability to thrive at work.



Michael De'Ath
Director-General
Department of Education

Accomplishments

The EnAbleD workforce strategy 2024-2027 sets out clear and measurable actions on how the department will continue to work towards achieving and sustaining equitable and inclusive workplaces for employees with disability. It builds on the Able – Valuing talent in all abilities workforce strategy 2019–2022.

Achievements from the previous workforce strategy include:

- establishing Able All Abilities Steering Committee – voluntary role in addition to normal duties
- developing a workplace passport – supporting conversations on workplace adjustments
- being an employer of choice at promotional and recruitment events
- developing a 'Thinking ahead 5-year career plan toolkit'
- completing the All Kinds of Minds neurodiversity pilot
- developing training for managers as part of the All Kinds of Minds neurodiversity pilot
- developing and delivering facilitated Able All Abilities awareness sessions for 510 attendees
- developing an Able All Abilities online self-paced learning module with 1,535 completions since launch
- collaborating with the department's Organisational Safety and Wellbeing team to create positive messaging about mental health
- establishing the Able All Abilities online community for employees with disability and allies
- developing and promoting an inclusive communications guide
- achieving 1st out of the 26 Australian national organisations benchmarked for the key area of Innovation in the Australian Network on Disability (AND) Access and Inclusion Index for the All Kinds of Minds neurodiversity pilot
- achieving gold award 2021 for service design for the All Kinds of Minds neurodiversity pilot stage 1
- achieving silver award 2022 for service design for the All Kinds of Minds neurodiversity pilot stage 2.

Inclusion, accessibility and support matter for people with disability

18% of the Australian population has a disability.¹

People aged between 15 and 64 years with disability have both:

- ⬇️ lower labour force participation —→ **53.4%**
- ⬆️ higher unemployment rates —→ **10.3%**²



1 in 5 Queenslanders have a disability³, **23.1%** of Queensland state school students identify as having a disability⁴, yet only **5.2%** of departmental employees have shared their disability in the workforce diversity census⁵.

Progress is being made with non-school-based employees. In the Working for Queensland survey, **12.0%** of employees identify as having a disability⁶.

By contrast, **3.9%** of school-based employees identified as having a disability in the School Opinion Survey⁷.

91.5% of people with disability hold an AO1 to AO8 equivalent annualised salary position, while this is **1.1%** for SES positions⁸.

'You can't be what you can't see' – Marian Wright Edelman.

Students are more likely to be inspired for their future when they have visible role models that teach and lead them.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian Government, 2022.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Government 2018.

³ Queensland Government 2022.

⁴ Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability 2023.

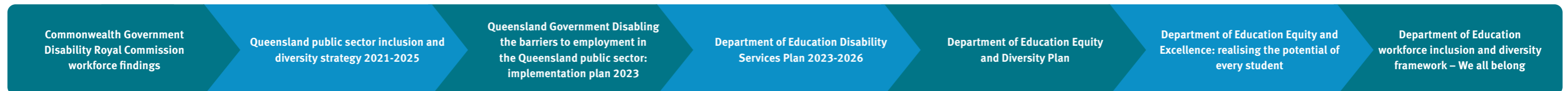
⁵ Workforce Diversity Census, Queensland Department of Education, 2023.

⁶ Working for Queensland Survey, Queensland Government, 2023.

⁷ School Opinion Survey, Queensland Department of Education, 2023.

⁸ Workforce Diversity Census, Queensland Department of Education, 2023.

Workforce strategy 2024–2027 aligns strategically with:



Actions

1 Capability and retention

Raise awareness and build the capability of all employees to create inclusive, welcoming, supportive and safe workplaces for employees with disability.

1.1	Promote and deliver professional development sessions for leaders, employees, HR business partners, schools, and specific teams where an employee identifies as a person with disability (for example, deaf) on reducing stigma of disability, implementing workplace adjustment and supporting employees with disability.	Ongoing Inclusion and Diversity
1.2	Develop and maintain visibility in core professional development programs and tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Mandatory all-staff training (MAST) and Management Foundations courses Maintain visibility of professional development opportunities on Education Futures Institute catalogue Update workplace passport, develop and promote resources and conversation guides on workplace adjustments. 	December 2025 Inclusion and Diversity (lead) Education Futures Institute (support)
1.3	Develop online module in We All Belong learning suite regarding culturally appropriate ways of working with Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees with disability.	December 2024 Inclusion and Diversity
1.4	Build psychological safety capability across the department. Contribute to psychological safety modules from a disability perspective to enable employees with disability to feel safe to share their disability in the workplace.	Ongoing Organisational Safety and Wellbeing (lead), and Inclusion and Diversity (support).
1.5	Create a toolkit for schools, managers and teams providing information on supporting employees with disability including neurodivergent, deaf and hard of hearing, and vision impaired employees.	December 2026 Inclusion and Diversity

Indicators of change

- Increase in completion of facilitated awareness sessions and online self-paced learning module.
- Increase whole-of-department participation at significant disability events.
- Improve workplace experience for deaf and hard of hearing employees, and Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees with a disability.
- Increase in completion of professional development sessions for teachers, deputy principals and principals on how to foster inclusion of employees with disability in the workplace.

2 Leadership and visibility

Lead by example and create visibility of employees with disability, removing barriers to employment and inclusion in the workplace.

2.1	Establish and promote the sunflower lanyard scheme as an option to provide greater support and visibility for employees with non-visible disabilities in the workplace.	December 2024 Inclusion and Diversity (lead), Able Steering Committee and Able Liaison Officers (support)
2.2	Showcase the stories of employees and leaders with disability to reduce stigma and encourage safety for employees sharing their disability in the workplace from schools and offices across all regions.	Ongoing Inclusion and Diversity (lead), employees and leaders with disability (support)
2.3	Continue promoting awareness about the EnAble workforce strategy, EnAble Liaison Officers, and the EnAble steering committee and the role they play in setting the department's strategic direction on inclusion of employees with disability.	Ongoing Inclusion and Diversity (lead), Able Steering Committee and the Able Liaison Officers (support)
2.4	Review and revise the EnAble allies program.	December 2025 Inclusion and Diversity
2.5	Implement the Accessibility Action Plan.	December 2026 Inclusion and Diversity
2.6	Establish a professional network for employees with disability to connect and belong.	December 2026 Inclusion and Diversity

Indicators of change

- Increase the number of employees with disability in leadership positions.
- Increase awareness of available adjustments for employees with disability in the workplace.

Indicators of change for all objectives

- Increase in existing employees identifying as a person with disability.
- Improve employees's sense of inclusion in the workplace.
- Increase in workforce percentage of representation of people with disability.
- Decrease intention of employees with disability to leave.

3 Recruitment and accessibility

Embed inclusive recruitment practices and enhance access to work spaces, information, services and products to enable employees to thrive in the workplace.

3.1	Develop an options paper to consider the feasibility of Auslan interpretation services to support deaf and hard of hearing employees.	December 2025 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (lead), and Inclusion and Diversity (support).
3.2	Provide resources, information and capability development that supports inclusive recruitment, selection and onboarding processes, for all roles in schools and corporate offices.	December 2024 Inclusion and Diversity in collaboration with Recruitment and Employment Review
3.3	Deliver and enhance employment pathways to attract and retain individuals with disability into teaching and non-teaching roles in the department.	December 2026 Inclusion and Diversity in collaboration with Recruitment and Employment Review
3.4	Work towards recognition as an employer of choice for individuals with disability, through targeted sourcing and recruitment initiatives for opportunities across the department.	December 2027 Inclusion and Diversity in collaboration with Engagement and Talent Acquisition
3.5	Transition towards universal design principles for OnePortal, QLearn, policies, procedures and conferencing technology.	December 2026 Information and Technologies
3.6	Review and update the department's reasonable adjustments procedure in line with the Commonwealth Disability Royal Commission recommendations, and changes to the Queensland public sector approach to reasonable adjustments, including adding information on how to make a complaint.	December 2027 Inclusion and Diversity in collaboration with Organisational Safety and Wellbeing
3.7	Explore the development of a bank of accessible teaching resources using alternative formats for employees who are blind or have vision impairment.	December 2025 Inclusion and Diversity (lead), Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (Statewide Services) (support)
3.8	Review, update and promote guides for inclusive communication and accessible workspaces.	December 2025 Inclusion and Diversity

Indicators of change

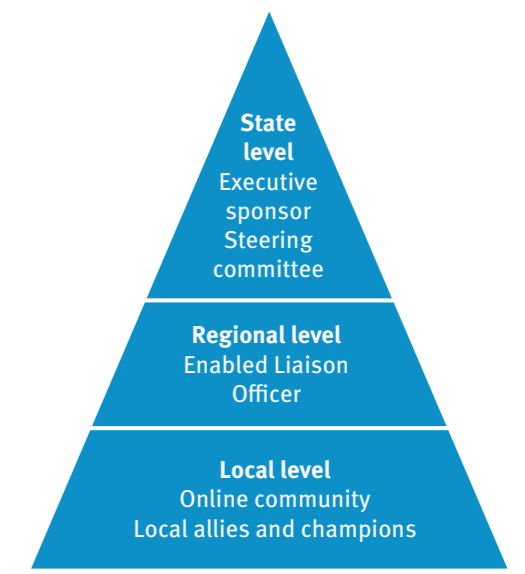
- Improve workplace experience for Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees with a disability.
- Increase the number of people with disability joining the department.

Measuring success

The department has a strategic approach to inclusion for employees with disability, and this is strengthened through its approach to governance and diversity workforce targets. The deliverables of this action plan will be monitored as they progress. Tools that will demonstrate progress of actions include:

- continued benchmarking through a biennial submission to the Australian Network on Disability Access and Inclusion Index
- observing and reporting on progress of the department's diversity target for employees with disability (12% by 2026)
- observing data collected from the annual Working for Queensland survey and School Opinion Survey.

Action at all levels



Legal and policy context

This strategy is underpinned by a policy and legal framework that supports inclusive and diverse workplaces. These include:

- the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of a person having a disability.
- the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their impairment.
- the Queensland Public Sector Act 2022 fosters a respectful and inclusive workplace culture in which all employees feel safe, valued, accepted and supported at work and can participate equally.