

Curriculum Review – Islamic Special Education (ISRE)

Published 2025 by ISRE

RI Curricula are referred to by the Department of Education Qld as RI Program Materials.

Executive Summary

In 2019, the Multi-Faiths RI Peak Body Network commissioned an independent review of common curriculum materials used by Religious Instructors (RI Instructors) in Queensland State Schools. The focus of the review was to assist Principals to be confident that curriculum materials comply with Department of Education Queensland policy requirements. This report is a review of the curriculum materials against 15 policy areas of focus. The review purpose and process are outlined in a separate document on the website www.multifaithsri.org.au.

Outcome:

The Islamic Special Religious Education (ISRE) curriculum was designed for use in New South Wales schools. It is Quran based and offers a yearly program broken down into separate years. The ISRE website <https://www.isre.org.au/resources/> outlines the curriculum plan (in terms) since Term 3 2020. At the time of the review the curriculum outline for 2026 was not available.

The program is divided into several levels suitable for the range of students in a Queensland State primary school. These are Kindergarten, Years 1 & 2, Years 3-6. Each level is accompanied by a workbook/worksheets. These different ability levels can be utilised in individual class levels or can be combined to cater for multi-age classes or in small school situations.

It should be noted that Kindergarten in New South Wales is roughly equivalent to Prep in Queensland. Religious Instruction is not offered to Prep students in Queensland State Schools.

The Islamic Special Religious Education curriculum is compliant with Queensland Department of Education regulations.

On the ISRE website there is a yearly scope. It contains an outline of a yearly program. There are a total of 35 lessons. These lessons are divided into 4 units, which can be covered over the four terms.

Each lesson is supported by a range of resources, including videos and black and white masters. Not all resources were made available to the reviewer. Of the samples provided they obviously have been well considered and are of high quality and designed to assist with the implementation of the lesson and support the aims of the lesson. The student activities provided for each level are engaging and focused on the general ability of each age group.

Some children may struggle with the reading, pronunciation, and writing of some words, which are unfamiliar to them. RI Instructors should liaise with the RI Coordinator and or the class teacher in relation to any specific identified needs of any child. The RI Instructor may need to adjust individual lessons to cater for the individual needs of specific children.

As with all learning situations RI Instructors need to be aware of safety considerations and operational principles guiding the operations of schools. For example, food should not be brought to be shared with the class, due to the possibility of students with food allergies to e.g. eggs, milk, or gluten. As per the “Smart

choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools.” Another consideration that RI Instructors need to be aware of is any dietary requirements of children, e.g. children with diabetes. Details of the Queensland Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy can be obtained from the following link: <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/smart-choices-quick-guide.pdf>

Contained within the curriculum materials is a link to the New South Wales government agencies. The Queensland Department of Education has a comprehensive Religious Instruction Policy at the following link: <https://education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/school-operations/policy-statement>

RI Instructors are required to hold a current Queensland Government issued Working with children (Blue Card). Details on how to apply for a Blue Card are outline in the following link: <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/working-with-children-blue-card-procedure>

RI Instructors need to be aware of the behaviour management principles and processes operating in the schools and classes they visit.

Curriculum details

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The 2025 Islamic Special Religious Education programme is a programme for RI Instructors in Queensland State Schools. It is published by the Islamic Special Education programme based in New South Wales.

The full program with links can be obtain from the following link <https://www.isre.org.au/>. Information for RI Instructors, parents and schools is available under those tabs on the website.

The website provides comprehensive tips for RI Instructors including:

- Classroom management;
- Starting the lesson; and
- Ending the lesson.

All teaching tips are linked back to aspects of the Muslim Faith e.g.

“The Prophet PBUH taught Islam to so many people around him. A companion once said: “I’ve never seen any teacher gentler than the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).” (Abu Dawud 931). We can utilise some of the Prophets’ teachings to help us teach scripture, for example:

- *Maintain direct eye contact with listeners*
- *Repeat the lesson in different ways*
- *Ask questions to spark curiosity and interest*
- *Use questions to elaborate and expand*
- *Speak in a measured tone (appropriate to discussions)*
- *Use daily life examples/illustrations/gestures/visuals or objects to help explain points*
- *Give time between words for listeners to process information*
- *Have an attitude which shows kindness, gentleness, warmth, and care to all students.”*

Scope

Under the tab SCOPE there is a section for Year 1-6. This is the outline of a comprehensive program. It is divided into 3 stages. Stage 1 would be suitable for Years 1 and 2. Stage 2 would be suitable for Years 3 and 4. While Stage 3 would be suitable for Years 5 and 6. Each stage is divided into a number of lessons which suit the length of the Queensland school terms.

The program is accompanied by a link to YouTube videos from @dearMuslimkids, promoted as an Innovative Islamic education to build clarity and conviction. These videos are presented in an appealing and attractive manner for children. There is also a scope document for Kindy, which could also be used for Year 1 as RI for Prep (Kindy) is not taught in Queensland State Schools.

A range of Black and White masters suitable for photocopying is also available for the RI Instructors.

A lesson-by-lesson analysis and details about any areas of concern and recommendations are provided in this report to support RI Instructors in complying with Department of Education policy.

Review Commentary

Strengths

- **The lessons all have suggestions for learning activities that involve students.**
 - a. The activity sheets are black and white masters and engaging for students of different ages and ability levels.
 - b. Activities are suggested for students to engage in craft activities, songs.
 - c. Little writing is required from students in the activities. Most responses require basic mathematics, literary or puzzle solving skills.
 - d. There is no indication that food is shared in the lessons.
 - e. No live animals are required in the presentation of lessons.
 - f. All lessons are planned for an indoor classroom. It is important that RI Instructors liaise with the class teacher, prior to the lesson, as to any arrangements which need to be made to facilitate the lesson.
 - g. Little organisation is required. RI Instructors will need access to the smart screen television (or similar) to project the video. To reduce the possibility of accidents while the children are engaged in movement activities it will be necessary to ensure that the learning space is clear of furniture and teaching resources e.g. blocks, toys, and books. The usual resources that students would have and extensively use in their classrooms such as glue, scissors, pencils, crayons should be freely available.
 - h. A key feature is the application in a multi-age setting or even a small school.
- **Lessons support students to grow in faith and social skills:** Students are encouraged to think about how to grow in a manner which encumbrances the Muslim principles of Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control.

Overall Considerations

- **Lesson Handbook.** While a lesson handbook is not provided for RI Instructors it is important that instructors view the video presentation and become familiar with the individual lesson content prior to the lesson, and of any additional preparation required. Access to the recommended resources is available through scanning the QR code on the base of the Unit Overview page.
- **Lesson Space** As some lessons may involve songs and dance the learning space would need to be cleared of furniture and be large enough for the children to move about when singing. Alternatively, an outdoor learning space could be utilised.

- **Ability of Students.** The RI Instructors should liaise with the classroom teacher on the special needs of any children. Not all children will have the same level of reading and writing skills. There may be some children who have identified special education needs and may need adjustments to the program.

Policy Compliance

The curriculum materials are compliant with the 15 policy areas of focus identified in collaboration with the Department of Education policy advisors, drawn from:

- The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
- The Department of Education's Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment Procedure
- P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework.
- Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework
- Inclusive Education Policy
- Statement of expectations for a disciplined school environment
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- The Code of School Behaviour
- Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities
- Animal Use in Queensland state schools
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- Parent and Community Engagement framework

Overall Comment:

The Islamic Special Education Program is an easy and ready-to-use resource. Its presentation is highly organised and easy to use for RI Instructors. The lessons are appropriate for short lessons with primary school children. All lessons provide opportunities for children to learn about important Islamic concepts through discussions, reflections, and activities.

Reviewer:

Peter Doyle, Retired Department of Education Principal. January 2026

Lesson by Lesson Review

The codes refer to the Infants manual, Lower Primary, and Upper Primary

- Reviewed as compliant.
- Reviewers noted that while these activities are compliant, RI Instructors would need to take additional care with these activities.
- Reviewers indicated that caution should be exercised and that this lesson or part of the lesson may cause compliance concerns.

- Sections of this lesson were not compliant.
- N/A Not applicable.
- * Updates in new edition have addressed the issues raised.

Lesson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		
1. Appropriate age and lesson time																																					
2. Supporting a cooperative arrangement. No leaving of materials																																					
3. No proselytizing or promotion of outside school activities and publications																																					
4. No activities or content that would cause harm to a child (physical, psychological, or emotional well-being)																																					
5. Supports and promotes a safe, supportive, and disciplined learning environment																																					
6. Responds to diverse learning needs – level and age																																					
7a. A safe physical and cyber learning environment - supports wellbeing																																					
7b. Fosters behavioural strengths																																					
7c. Builds positive relationships (peers, staff, parents, community) and promotes positive social interactions																																					
7d, e. Encourages inclusivity, diversity																																					
8. Safe supportive environment, free from bullying, discrimination, harassment																																					
9. Responsive to school behaviour plan, safe supportive and disciplined learning environment																																					
10. Smart choices - healthy food and drink																																					
11. Consistent with Code of School Behaviour																																					
12. Risk - suggests undertaking an assessment and identifies where risk assessment is needed																																					
13. Promotes responsible care and use of animals																																					
14. Does not include activities using items that may cause allergic reactions																																					
15. Supports effective communication between students, parents, communities that is inclusive and valued																																					