



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

Special circumstances funding for non-government schools Application Form



Special circumstances funding for non-government schools

Application form

Before completing this application form, applicants should read the following instructions on how to complete an application for funding under the special circumstances program.

Completed applications can be emailed to ComplianceHelpline@education.gov.au or addressed to:

Special circumstances program manager
School Payments and Assurance Branch (Loc C50MA9)
Department of Education and Training
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Enquiries about the program should be directed to the special circumstances program manager on 1800 677 027 or by emailing ComplianceHelpline@education.gov.au.

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Special circumstances funding for non-government schools

Instructions on how to prepare an application

The following instructions are provided to help applicants in preparing an application for funding under the special circumstances program.

Please note:

- The application for special circumstances funding must be made and signed by the approved authority for a non-government school.
- Before assessment can commence, the applicant must provide the department with the complete application and supporting documentation specified in the application form which substantiates the approved authority's circumstance and claims.
- Failure to provide a complete application within three months of initial lodgement will result in the application lapsing. Under this circumstance, the applicant will be advised that the application has lapsed.
- Applicants should note that providing any false or misleading information is a serious offence. Such information includes reports, certificates, statements, acquittals or any other information pursuant to the requirements of this program.

1. Application Requirements

Applicants for special circumstances funding must read and comply with the instructions below to ensure that their application includes all of the information required by the department for assessment. A complete application for special circumstances funding must include a completed and signed application form and all supporting documents.

A. Applicant details

- Details relating to the school, including contact information
- If the listed contact person is not an authorised signatory of the approved authority, an authority to communicate (provided in the application form) with the listed contact person must be signed by an authorised signatory of the approved authority.

B. Amount of special circumstances funding sought

Applicants for special circumstances funding must provide an estimate of the total amount of special circumstances funding being sought. The estimate must:

- itemise all major components and reflect as nearly as possible the anticipated sum required; and
- be accompanied by an explanation which outlines the basis of the estimate and provides a justification for the amount of special circumstances funding sought.

C. Statement addressing the special circumstances criteria

This statement must outline how each of the special circumstances criteria applies specifically to the present circumstance. All four of the following criteria must be addressed by applicants:

i. Unexpected

Description of the nature of the special circumstance that has affected the school and led to the application for special circumstances funding. A circumstance is only considered special where it could not have been reasonably foreseen by a competent approved authority. A competent approved authority is expected to be alert to prevailing regulatory, social, demographic and economic conditions that may affect the school's viability and overall operation.

ii. Severe financial difficulty

Description of how the unexpected special circumstance has, or is likely to result in severe financial difficulty for the approved authority and whether this would:

- require the school to cease a large part of its educational activities; or
- significantly lower the quality of education the school provides during the year.

Severe financial difficulty is only considered to exist where an approved authority is facing the real prospect of having to cease a large part of its educational activities or significantly lower the quality of its education services at the school, to a level where it would be in breach of its obligations under relevant federal/state/territory legislation, regulations and/or policy.

iii. Short term

Explanation of how, with special circumstances funding, the approved authority can overcome its severe financial difficulty and resume satisfactory operations of the school within a two-year time frame or continue operating until, at least, the end of the year.

Applicants for special circumstances funding must provide a five-year business and recovery plan which must detail the steps that the approved authority has taken, and will take, to address the severe financial difficulty and the underlying causes. The plan must cover a minimum five-year period following on from the most recently available audited financial statements. The plan must show that the approved authority is able to recover from its financial difficulty within two years of receiving special circumstances funding and that the school is sustainable in the longer term.

Where the school is likely to close or is in the process of winding down, the approved authority must demonstrate that the educational welfare of the students is likely to suffer severely if they could not stay until the end of the school year, and there is no other educationally adequate alternative school or service available to them.

iv. Special need

Description of the options that the approved authority has considered, implemented or pursued in an attempt to address the current severe financial difficulty. Such options could include, for example:

- rescheduling payment of debts or capital expenditure
- seeking alternative federal/state/territory sources of funding
- seeking alternative sources of funding from commercial entities, sponsors, parents, etc
- other means of income generation such as increased fees or fund-raising activities.

To satisfy this criterion, applicants must demonstrate they have exhausted all options to remedy the financial situation and that there is still a need for financial assistance. This must be supported by documentation. This evidence could include, for example, copies of letters, emails and other correspondence seeking assistance, and responses to that correspondence.

D. Substantiating statement addressing the ‘special need’ criterion

This section is only applicable to an approved authority for more than one non-government school.

In addition to addressing the ‘special need’ criterion, the approved authority must explain how it has taken all available steps to meet the unexpected special circumstance and severe financial difficulty. Note that the Minister or his delegate is unlikely to approve any application for special circumstances funding from an approved authority for more than one school unless the approved authority, as a whole, is also facing severe financial difficulty.

E. Financial Viability Questionnaire

Part 1

The department may use and/or disclose this information to obtain further information about the approved authority or any key individuals of the approved authority from the department’s own records and databases, or from the records of the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission, Australian Taxation Office, state and territory government agencies and/or a credit rating agency. The department may also disclose this information for the purposes set out in the Privacy Notice in this form.

Part 2

The purpose of the Financial Viability Questionnaire is to obtain information in order to assess the approved authority’s financial viability and will further assist in identifying whether the criteria for special circumstances funding has been met.

F. Governance and financial management

Applicants for special circumstances funding are required to provide governance and financial management information to the department. The governance and financial management information will assist the department to develop an understanding of the approved authority's and school's governance structures and internal financial management procedures. This information must include:

- a description of the approved authority's and school's governance structure
- membership of the approved authority's board
- eligibility criteria for membership of the approved authority's board and, if different, the school's board.
- how often the board(s) meet
- a description of the board role and responsibilities
- a description of the approved authority's and school's internal financial control mechanisms
- a description of how the school budgets are determined, and
- a description of the procedures in place to monitor the approved authority's and school's financial performance.

G. Approved authority and school financial information

Information and supporting documentation relating to the finances of the approved authority and school will assist the department to assess the validity of the claims in an application, against the special circumstances criteria, and the robustness and feasibility of the approved authority's business and recovery plan.

This documentation must include each of the following (except where it has already been provided):

- a) School fee collection rates for the current year and preceding three years. Applicants must complete the table at item G: Approved authority and school financial information and expand on the reasons for any differences between total possible fees and actual fees collected (for example, unpaid fees, number of students on reduced fees, family discounts etc). Note, if an approved authority has more than one school, this information must be provided for each school.
- b) Summary of loans outstanding and other liabilities. Applicants must complete the table in the application form at Item G, including details of any liabilities to the Australian Tax Office or other government agencies and payment arrangements.
- c) Applicants must provide a list of all current and forecast capital works and associated costs in the application form at Item G. The department will also access its own database to identify any existing Australian Government Capital Grants Program projects.

- d) Two sets of projected financial statements for the next two years for both the approved authority and school:
- i) One set based on receipt of special circumstances funding and another set based on no special circumstances funding being received.
 - ii) Statements should include projected monthly budgets or cash flow statements and must incorporate actual data where this is available. Note, where operations of an approved authority only extend to the school which is the subject of this application, two sets of projected financial statements for the approved authority only will suffice.
- e) Audited financial statements conforming to Australian Accounting Standards for the preceding three years. Audited financial statements must include:
- balance sheet (or statement of financial position)
 - income and expenditure statement (or statement of financial performance)
 - statement of cash flows
 - notes to, and forming part of, the financial statements
 - details of all investments held by the school
 - full disclosure of all related party transactions
 - directors' statement
 - directors' report
 - auditor's report.
- f) interim management style financial statements including a balance sheet and profit-and-loss statement must be provided for the current year. These statements are not required to be audited.
- g) approved authority budget for the current year and preceding three years. Budgets must include breakdowns for curriculum, recurrent funds, capital and maintenance, details of loans and repayments, and be broken down for each school of the approved authority.

H. Staffing and enrolments

This information will assist the department to determine the longer term sustainability of the approved authority and the school by examining staffing levels and trends in pupil enrolments.

- a) Applicants must provide an itemised list of all employees of the approved authority (including the school) including information on annual positions, salaries, fringe benefits and allowances.

This list must not contain the names of employees, but applicants should ensure that they can identify each employee if requested to do so by the department.

- b) Applicants must complete the table at Item [H: Staffing and Enrolments](#) in the application form showing enrolments for the current year and projected enrolments for the next four years. Applicants should expand on any issues affecting enrolments and reasons for any differences in actual and projected enrolment figures. Note, if the approved authority has more than one school, this must be provided for each school.

In addition to reviewing general trends in projected and actual student enrolments to gauge the accuracy of historical enrolment projections and add weight to future projections, the department will use information from its own annual school census to estimate pupil-teacher ratios.

I. Privacy Notice and Signed declaration

Each application must be accompanied by the declaration at Item I: Privacy Notice and Declaration of the application form. It must be signed by an authorised signatory of the approved authority in the presence of another person.

J. Signed application checklist

Applicants must complete the special circumstances funding application checklist located at Item [J: Special circumstances funding application checklist](#) of the application form. The form must be signed to verify that all required information and supporting documents have been included with the application.

Note: If you are sending a completed special circumstances funding application form to the department, please remove this page and the preceding pages before sending.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FUNDING FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS APPLICATION FORM

A: Applicant details

Name of approved authority

Name of school

Department of Education and Training School Number (AGEID)

Is the school a member of a peak body? If yes, please provide the name of the peak body

Matters relating to the special circumstances funding application can only be discussed with an authorised signatory of the approved authority. If the contact named below is not an authorised signatory, permission must be granted by an authorised signatory of the approved authority for the department to discuss this matter with them (see authorisation below).

Contact person for matters relating to special circumstances funding application

Name

Position

Contact address

Contact phone number

Contact email address

Amount of special circumstances funding requested

\$

I authorise the Department of Education and Training to communicate directly with the person named in the contact above in relation to this special circumstances funding application.

 Signature of authorised signatory

Name of authorised signatory

Position

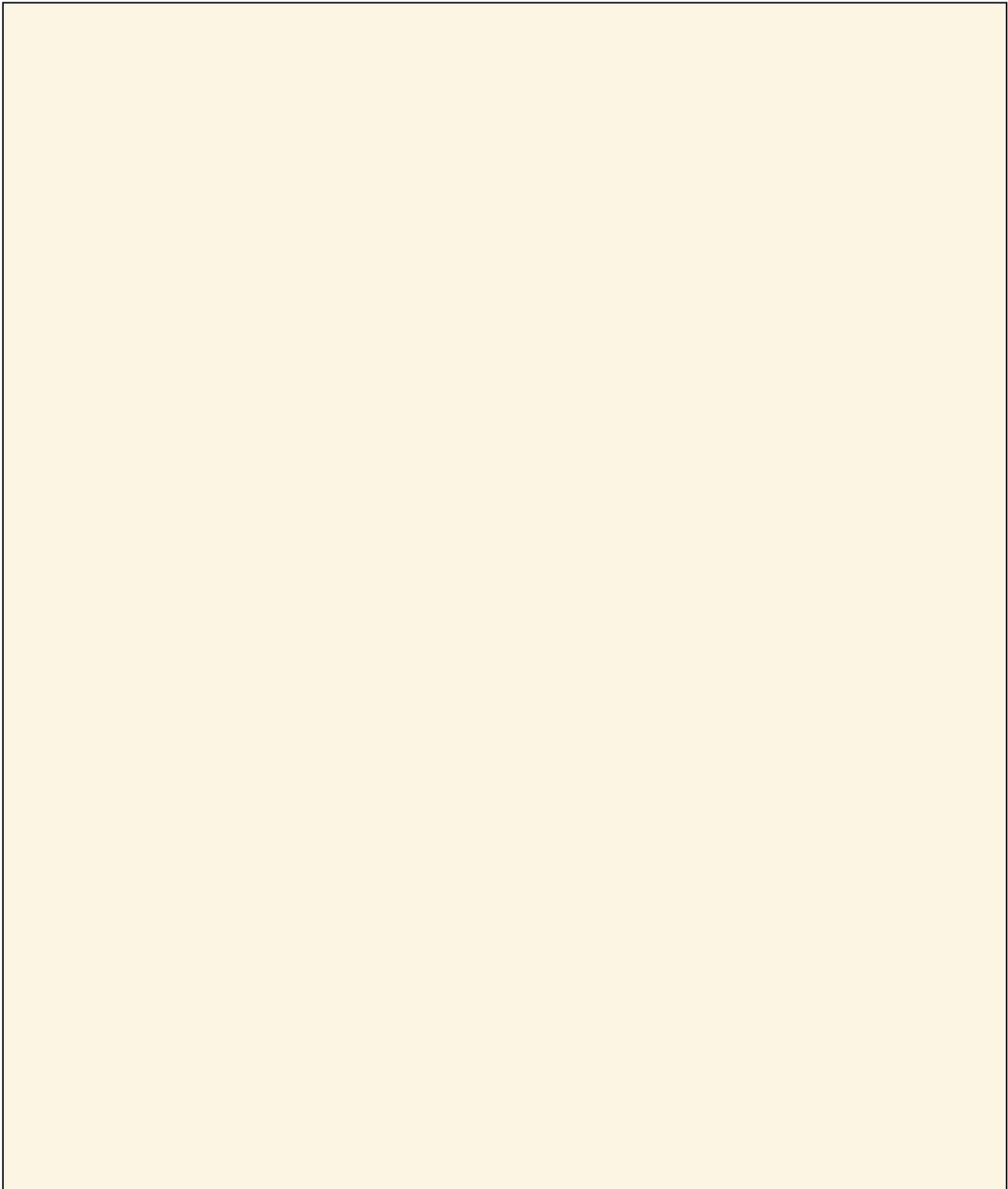
Date

B: Amount of special circumstances funding sought and justification

An estimate must be provided of the total amount of special circumstances funding sought to address the financial difficulty.

The estimate must be soundly calculated, itemise all major components and reflect as nearly as possible the anticipated sum required. The estimate must be accompanied by an explanation which outlines the basis of the estimation and provides a justification for the amount sought.

Please limit your response to 1000 words.



C: Statements addressing the special circumstances funding criteria

Provide statements outlining how each of the special circumstances funding criteria applies specifically to the present circumstance. All four criteria must be addressed in this application.

i. Unexpected

A circumstance is only considered unexpected where it could not have been foreseen by a competent approved authority. A competent approved authority is expected to be alert to prevailing social, demographic and economic conditions that may affect the school's viability and overall operation.

Describe the nature of the unexpected special circumstance that has affected the school and led to the application for special circumstances funding.

Please limit your response to 1000 words.

ii. Severe financial difficulty

Severe financial difficulty is only considered to exist where an approved authority is facing the real prospect of having to cease a large part of its educational activities or significantly lower the quality of its education services at the school, to a level where it would be in breach of its obligations under the relevant federal/state/territory legislation, regulations and/or policy.

Detail how the unexpected special circumstance has led to severe financial difficulty and how this impacts on one or both of the following:

- delivery of the curriculum and other educational activities at the school; and
- the quality of its educational services provided at the school.

Please limit your response to 1000 words.

iii. Short term

Detailed explanation of how, with special circumstances funding, the approved authority can overcome its severe financial difficulty and resume satisfactory operations of the school within a two-year time frame, or continue operating at least until the end of the school year.

If the school is likely to close or in the process of winding down, the applicants must demonstrate that the educational welfare of the students is likely to suffer severely if they could not stay until the end of the school year, and there is no other educationally adequate alternative school or service available to them.

Applicants must also provide a five-year business and recovery plan with detailed steps that the approved authority has taken, and will take, to address the severe financial difficulty and the underlying causes.

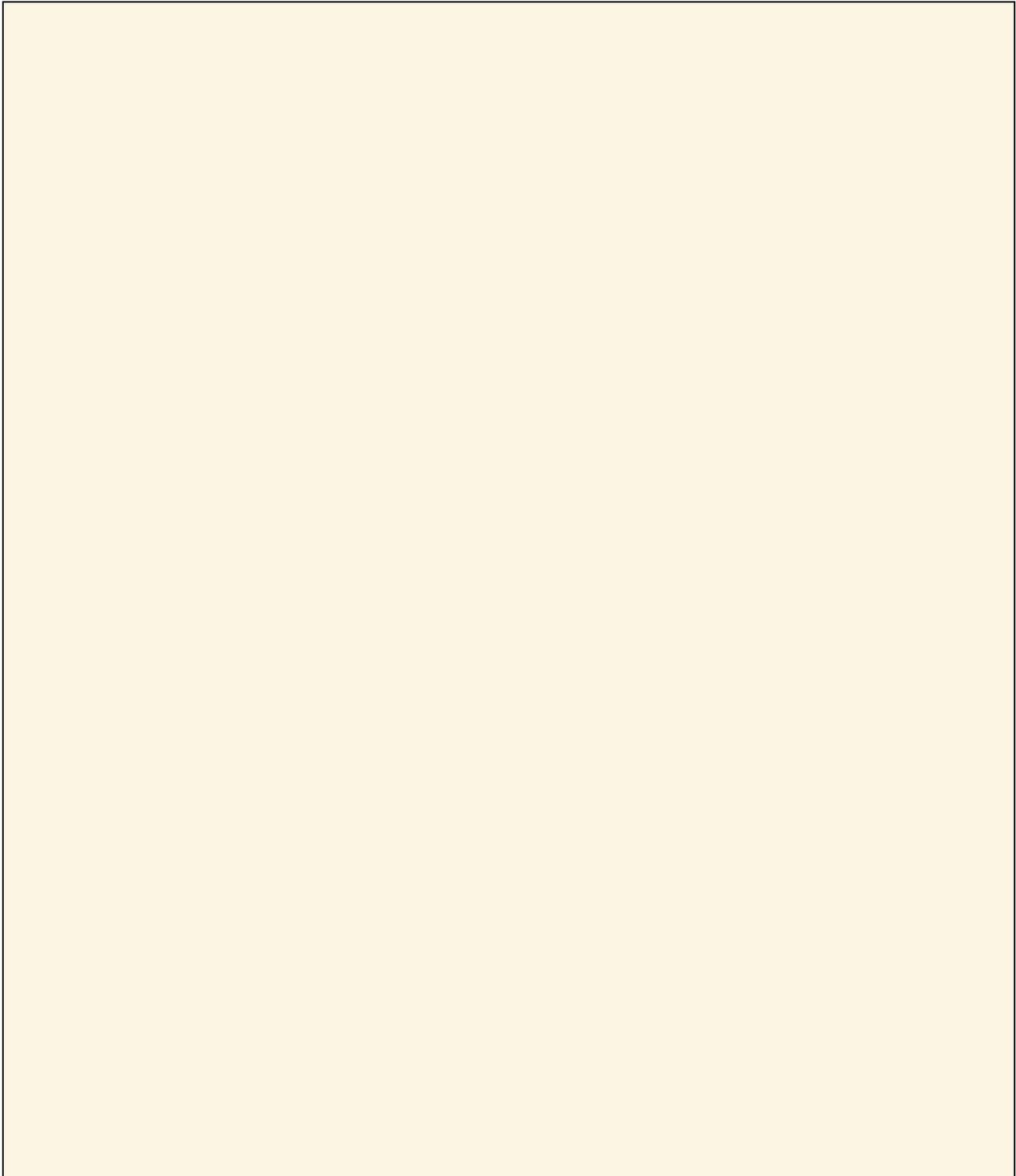
Please limit your response to 1000 words.

iv Special need

To satisfy this criterion, applicants must demonstrate that they have exhausted all alternative financial remedies and yet there is still a need for special circumstances funding from the Australian Government to address the approved authority's immediate financial difficulties.

Applicants must provide a detailed description of the options that the approved authority has considered, implemented or pursued in an attempt to address the current severe financial difficulty (e.g. rescheduling of debts/capital expenditure, seeking alternative sources of funding from state, territory or Commonwealth entities, sponsors, parents etc., and other means of income generation such as increased fees or fund-raising activities).

Please limit your response to 1000 words.



D: Substantiating statement addressing the ‘special need’ criterion

This section is only applicable to an approved authority for more than one non-government school.

In addition to addressing the ‘special need’ criterion, the approved authority must explain how it has taken all available steps to meet the unexpected special circumstance and severe financial difficulty. Note that the Minister or his delegate is unlikely to approve any application for special circumstances funding from an approved authority for more than one school, unless the approved authority, as a whole, is also facing severe financial difficulty.

Please limit your response to 1000 words.

E: Financial Viability Questionnaire

Financial Viability Questions

The purpose of this section is to obtain information to assess the approved authority’s financial viability and whether the approved authority meets the criteria for special circumstances funding.

Please note that missing, incomplete, inaccurate or illegible details may delay assessment of your application for special circumstances funding. Please ensure you carefully read and complete each question.

PART 1 – Approved authority details

Question 1

Please provide details of the key individuals of the approved authority, including in relation to the operation of the school. An individual is a key individual of an approved authority if the individual:

- a) is an officer of the approved authority within the meaning of section 9 of the *Corporations Act 2001*; or
- b) is responsible for executive decisions of the approved authority; or
- c) is concerned with, or takes part in, the management of the approved authority; or
- d) manages or supervises the provision of school education for the approved authority under an arrangement with the approved authority.

Important Note: All of the requested information is required to ensure that the department obtains accurate information about the correct individual from the databases that it accesses. Missing, incomplete, inaccurate or illegible details that do not allow the department to accurately identify an individual may delay assessment of your application for special circumstances funding.

Key individual 1

Full name (no abbreviations or initials)

Date of birth

Residential address

Position in organisation

Number of years in position of influence in organisation

Key individual 2

Full name (no abbreviations or initials)

Date of birth

Residential address

Position in organisation

Number of years in position of influence in organisation

Key individual 3

Full name (no abbreviations or initials)

Date of birth

Residential address

Position in organisation

Number of years in position of influence in organisation

Put an X in this box if you have attached details on a separate page.

Question 2

How many years has the approved authority been in operation?

Question 3

Does the approved authority have any overdue acquittals for funding received from the department or another Australian Government agency? (Place an x in the relevant box)

No – Go to Question 4

Yes – Please list all overdue acquittals in the table below:

Acquittals table

Name of the Australian Government agency that provided the funding	Name of program or scheme under which funding was provided	Funding received to date	Unacquitted funds	Date overdue acquittal was due

Tick this box if you have attached details on a separate page.

PART 2 – Financial Details

Question 4 – Additional financial details

This list is indicative of the types of information you can supply in support of the approved authority's financial viability. Please place an x in the boxes for those items which you have attached below:

If the approved authority is newly created, financial details for previous entities which have formed the new organisation (must explain what resources mentioned in the financial report the approved authority can call on).

Letter from a financial institution certifying an existing or proposed line of credit.

Business references (attach up to three referees).

Copy of guarantee or cross deed of indemnity provided by an entity such as a holding company or director. (Provide financial statements proving the financial viability of the guarantor).

Other, please describe below:

Question 5 – Supplementary Information

For the purposes of determining the approved authority’s financial viability, please respond to each of the following questions, and if applicable, provide details of all such events relevant to the approved authority over the past five years. Where appropriate, attach details on a separate page.

Has any key individual of the approved authority (listed at question 1) been involved with a business failure (e.g. liquidation, voluntary administration or receivership)?

Has any key individual of the approved authority (listed at question 1) been declared bankrupt?

Has the approved authority, related entities, or key individuals of the approved authority (listed at question 1) been involved in a government investigation?

Has there been any significant change in the financial position of the approved authority since last accounts provided with this questionnaire?

Has any contract been terminated for cause?

Has there been any past, current, pending or finalised litigation against the approved authority or key individuals of the approved authority (listed at question 1)?

Has there been any collection by debt collection agencies on behalf of creditors of the approved authority or key individuals of the approved authority (listed at question 1)?

Incorporated associations must attach a copy of their latest annual meeting minutes.

Question 7

Does the approved authority (listed at question 1) authorise the department to contact its accountant for clarification of any queries regarding its financial statements? (Place an x in the appropriate box)

Yes

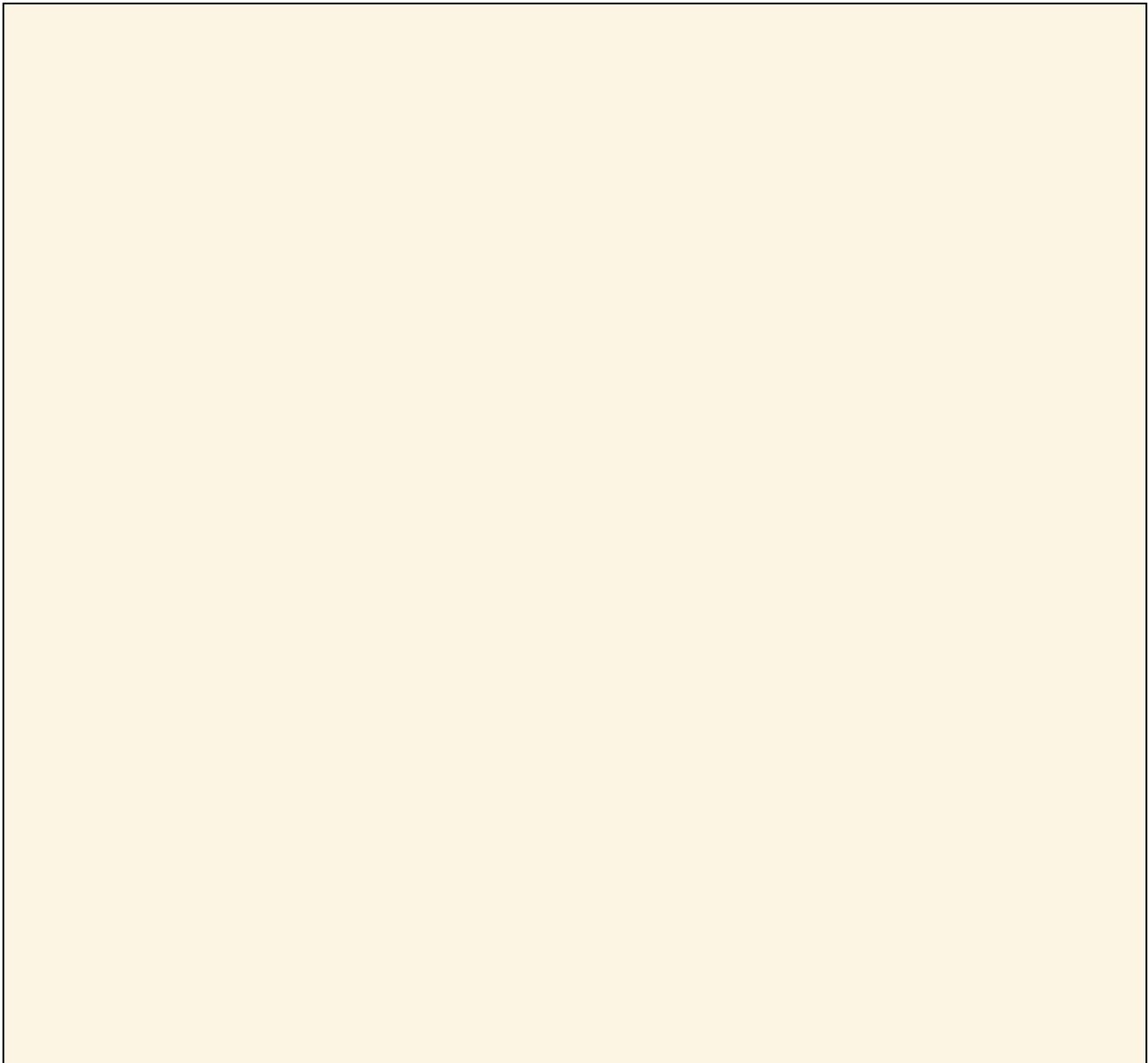
No

F: Description of approved authority and school governance structure and financial management systems

This section will assist the department to develop an understanding of the approved authority's and school's governance structures and internal financial management procedures. It must include:

- a description of the approved authority's and school's governance structure;
- membership of the approved authority and (if different) school board;
- eligibility criteria for membership of the board(s);
- how often the board(s) meets;
- a description of the board role and responsibilities;
- a description of the approved authority's and school's internal financial control mechanisms;
- a description of how the school budgets are determined; and
- a description of the procedures in place to monitor the approved authority's and school's financial performance.

Please limit your response to 1000 words



G: Approved authority and school financial information

Information and supporting documentation relating to the approved authority’s and school’s finances will assist the department to assess the validity of the claims against the special circumstances funding criteria and the robustness and feasibility of the business and recovery plan. This documentation must include each of the following:

i. School fee collection rates

(include a separate table for each school of the approved authority)

Complete the table below for the current year and preceding three years, expanding on the reasons for any differences between total possible fees and actual fees collected (e.g. Unpaid fees, number of students on reduced fees, family discounts etc).

Year	Fee schedule (per term or per annum)	Enrolments multiplied by scheduled fees	Billable fees less discounts	Total fees collected	Discount reasons

Additional comments on the reasons for the difference between potential fees collected and actual fees collected

(Please limit your response to 150 words)

ii. Summary of all loans outstanding and other liabilities

Complete the table below including details of any liabilities to the Australian Taxation Office or other government agencies, and payment arrangements.

Loan Type	First year of loan	Amount borrowed	Amount currently outstanding	Loan term (Years)	Annual repayments	Interest rate (%) (net of any subsidies)	Source of loan e.g. bank (include details of institution), parents, other
Capital							
Recurrent							
Operating/Overdraft							

iii. List of all current and forecast capital works and associated costs

A list of all current and forecast capital work. The department will also access its own database to identify any existing Australian Government Capital Grants Program projects.

iv. Two sets of projected financial statements for the next two years for the approved authority and the school

- One set based on receipt of special circumstances funding and another set based on no special circumstances funding.
- Statements should also include projected monthly budgets or cash flow statements and must incorporate actual data where this is available.

Note, where the approved authority's operations only extend to the school which is the subject of the application, two sets of projected financial statements for the approved authority only will suffice.

v. Audited financial statements conforming to Australian accounting standards for the preceding three years

In accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the statements should comprise:

- balance sheet (or Statement of Financial Position)
- income and expenditure statement (or Statement of Financial Performance)
- statement of cash flows
- notes to and forming part of the financial statements (including details of all investments held by the school)
- full disclosure of all related party transactions
- directors' statement
- directors' report
- auditor's report.

vi. Interim management style financial statements

Interim management style financial statements including a balance sheet and profit and loss statement for the current year. These statements are not required to be audited.

vii. Approved authority budgets

The approved authority budget for the current year and preceding three years. Budgets must include breakdowns for curriculum, recurrent, capital and maintenance, details of loans and repayments, and be broken down for each school of the approved authority.

H: Staffing and Enrolments

This information will assist the department to determine the longer term sustainability of the school by examining staffing levels and trends in pupil enrolments.

i. Employee salaries, fringe benefits and allowances

Itemised list of all employees of the approved authority (including the school of the approved authority) including information on positions, annual salaries, fringe benefits and allowances. This list must not

contain the names of employees, but applicants must ensure that they can identify each employee if requested to do so by the department.

ii. Actual and projected enrolments

Complete the table below showing actual enrolments for the current year along with projected enrolments for the next four years. Note, include separate tables for each school of the approved authority.

Applicants should expand on any issues affecting enrolments and reasons for any differences in actual and projected enrolment figures.

Grade	ACTUAL ENROLMENT FIGURES	PROJECTED ENROLMENT FIGURES			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
Total					

I: Privacy Notice and Declaration

Each application must be accompanied by the declaration at Item I of the application form. The declaration must be signed by an authorised signatory of the approved authority in the presence of another person.

Privacy Notice

The Department of Education and Training complies with the Australian Privacy Principles ('APPs') contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* (the Privacy Act) when handling any personal information. For information on the department's privacy policy, including information on how personal information is handled, how you can access or correct personal information, or how to make a privacy complaint, go to <https://www.education.gov.au/privacy-policy>.

Use and disclosure of personal information

Personal information collected by the department in this application form is used for the purpose of assessing the suitability of an approved authority for special circumstances funding or other funding under the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*. The department may also use this information to obtain further information about the approved authority and/or any individuals named in the application form from the department's own records and databases.

For the purposes of assessing special circumstances funding and other funding under the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*, personal information may be disclosed to the following bodies:

- Other Australian Government agencies such as the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission;
- State or territory agencies such as the school registration authorities;
- Law enforcement agencies;
- Credit reference and assessment organisations; and
- Courts or Tribunals.

The department may also use and disclose personal information collected in this application in accordance with the *Australian Education Act 2013* (see section 125) and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013* (see section 65).

Signed Declaration

I, [full name] of [full address] am currently a [position] of [name of approved authority] and I am authorised to make this declaration on its behalf.

I confirm that:

- I have read the special circumstances funding factsheet that covers applications for special circumstances funding under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, prior to completing this application form;
- the information provided in this application form and all appended documents is complete and correct;
- the approved authority understands that this application for special circumstances funding is not an offer on the part of the Commonwealth nor does it create any obligation on the part of the Commonwealth to make any payments of special circumstances funding;
- the approved authority acknowledges and agrees that the Department of Education and Training is authorised by the approved authority (but not obliged) to act in relation to the contents of the application including its attachments, any declarations and associated material;
- the approved authority will regard all communication with the Department of Education and Training as confidential and not disclose its contents without the Department of Education and Training’s prior written consent; and
- to the best of my knowledge, the privacy notice appearing in Item I of this application form has been drawn to the attention of all those individuals whose personal information has been provided in this application form.

Signature

Acknowledgement

The declaration must be signed by an authorised signatory of the approved authority in the presence of a witness:

I acknowledge that under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

Signature of person making the declaration

Declared at:

On:

in the presence of

Signature of person before whom the declaration is a made

Witness full name

Occupation

Address

J: Special circumstances funding application checklist

Please complete and sign this checklist to verify that all of the required information and supporting documents have been included with your application.

Sections of the application to be completed

Item Description

- A Applicant details
- B Amount of special circumstances funding sought and justification
- C Statements addressing the special circumstances funding criteria
 - i. Unexpected
 - ii. Severe financial difficulty
 - iii. Short term
 - iv. Special need
- D Substantiating statement from approved authority
- E Financial Viability Questionnaire
- F Description of school's governance structure and internal financial management systems
- G School and approved authority financial information
 - i. School fee collection rates
 - ii. Summary of loans outstanding and other liabilities
 - iii. List of all current and forecast capital works and associated costs
- H Staffing and Enrolments
 - i. Employees' salaries, fringe benefits and allowances
 - ii. Actual and projected enrolments
- I Privacy Notices and Signed Declaration
- J Special circumstances funding application checklist

Documents to be attached to the application

- C.iii Business and recovery plan.
- C.iv Documentary evidence supporting claims detailed in special circumstances criterion iv – special need.
- G.iv Two sets of projected financial statements for next two years (with and without special circumstances funding).
- G.v Audited financial statements for preceding three years.
- G.vi Interim management style financial statements for current year.
- G.vii Approved school budgets and approved authority budgets for current year and preceding three years.

I verify that all required information and supporting documents have been included in this application.

Signature of authorised signatory

Date:

Name of authorised signatory:

Position: