



Patron: Jackie French AM, Australian Children's Laureate 2014-2015, Senior Australian of the year 2015

Specialist Teacher Service

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2025

Speld Qld maintains a register of qualified Specialist Teachers and Tutors who provide individual tutoring for children and adults across Queensland. This may take place either face-to-face in your home, face-to-face in the teacher's home or office, online via live video web conferencing or a combination of both.

1. How do I find a Speld Specialist Teacher?

- i. Current Speld Qld Members can place an enquiry for a Specialist Teacher by logging into the Speld Qld Website and completing the form.
- ii. The Specialist Teacher Co-ordinator will be in contact with you to discuss the student needs and Speld Qld services and will use this gathered information to place an enquiry with teachers.
- iii. The Specialist Teachers will contact you directly, advise of their availability and discuss the terms of ongoing tuition. This may be by email or phone call.

If you have not heard from the Specialist Teachers within a week, please contact tutor@speld.org.au and we will follow up on your behalf. Please be sure to check your email's junk folder to ensure an email was not sent there by mistake.

2. What is the fee for Specialist Intervention Instruction?

Speld Qld does not employ Specialist Teachers but acts as a referral service. Teachers have invested in training, resources and are qualified. They will be delivering a program that has been determined based on the individual needs of the student. The recommended hourly fee for services is between \$80 and \$120 but will be determined by each Specialist Teacher. The Speld Qld Teacher will let you know their terms of service when you contact them. Teachers reserve the right to charge for missed lessons as they have allocated that time slot to a particular student for the whole term.

Note: Speld Qld does not directly employ Specialist Teachers, nor is it involved in the financial arrangements between tutors and families. Our role is to match prospective students with registered tutors and then monitor the student's progress. Please speak with each teacher about their terms and conditions and be in touch with us if you have concerns.



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3. Does Speld Qld have Specialist Teachers for adults with reading, writing and math difficulties?

Yes, Speld Qld has some Teachers trained and experienced in teaching adult's basic literacy and mathematics.

4. How will instruction take place and where?

Please keep an open mind about how and when you access support with the Specialist Teachers. Our teachers are in high demand and their availability is sometimes limited. Sessions during after school hours are popular, and often the first to fill, so you may need to be flexible with days and times. Please also consider optimal learning times and situation for the student. We also have teachers who provide online tuition (see further below).

5. Will the Specialist Teacher come to my house or visit school?

It is important that you keep an open mind and be prepared to be flexible to access Speld Qld Specialist Teacher services.

Some of our Specialist Teachers will travel, and others require families to travel to them or will meet for lessons in a local library.

All schools have different requirements regarding students receiving external support on school premises. Please check with your school directly and liaise with the Specialist Teacher.

6. How does online teaching work?

Online tuition is offered via live video web conferencing and students access the expertise of their Speld Qld Specialist Teacher in a private, one-to-one lesson. Teachers who deliver lessons in this way typically specialise in this model of instruction and do so in multisensory and dynamic ways that achieve comparable results in literacy and mathematics. Online tuition is not just an alternative to face-to-face tuition for rural and regional families, but a viable first choice for many busy working families. Many online instructors record the lessons so that students and parents can watch or revise the lesson to consolidate new skills.



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7. Home requirements for online teaching:

- Laptop or desktop computer with good quality internet access.
- Camera installed on computer.
- Student to be familiar with the keyboard.
- A whiteboard.
- Dark coloured whiteboard markers and eraser.
- It is recommended that parents are available to support students during online tuition sessions should technical difficulties arise.
- Quiet learning environment free from distractions.

8. What if the Specialist Teacher I contacted can't fit us in this term?

This can happen as timetables and availability change regularly. If you are unable to connect with one of the referred teachers, please email tutor@speld.org.au to ask for alternative options. You may also choose to be placed on a waiting list which can be accessed by all Speld Qld Specialist Teachers to contact you directly.

9. What are the qualifications of the Speld Qld Specialist Teachers and Tutors?

Research in literacy and learning span many disciplines including Education, Psychology, Linguistics and Speech Pathology. Speld Qld Specialist Teachers have come to practice specialist interventions from a range of backgrounds and experiences. While many are qualified teachers with Qld Teachers Registration, some are qualified Speech Therapists or Counsellors with specific experience, training and expertise in literacy and mathematics intervention. All are passionate about providing effective high quality, evidence-based, instruction to the people who need it.

Suitability as a Speld Qld Specialist Teacher has been determined through an interview and screening process. Specialist Teachers must have a demonstrated capacity to deliver results through an evidence-based literacy or mathematics program and have the interpersonal skills to create a safe and effective learning environment for the students with whom they are entrusted.

All Specialist Teachers are current Blue Card holders or have a Blue Card exemption because they are registered Qld Teachers.

Speld Qld Specialist Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice regularly, must submit bi-annual reports to Speld Qld on their student progress, and commit to high quality annual professional development to maintain their membership. They also have access to a library of resources and a network of skilled professionals from whom they can draw.



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10. What will the Specialist Teacher do in their sessions?

It is expected that the Specialist Teacher will do some basic testing initially and will then devise an individual support program for the student, with achievable goals that are focused on progress. Progress can then be recorded against the base testing.

More of the same' type of work given at school, and even at times, in support programs at school, may not be the most effective approach for students with learning differences. Most often, a multisensory approach that goes 'back to basics' is required to identify and 'fill in the gap'.

For reading, explicit teaching of phonics, going back to single sounds, then progressing through words with adjacent consonants and digraphs is required, before moving on to more complex code knowledge. Ensuring that students have strong decoding skills is critical, so that they can attack new vocabulary and derive meaning from texts for lifelong spelling, reading and comprehension skill development. For mathematics, instructors will focus on foundation mathematics skills to ensure that students have the base number sense on which to build an understanding of more complex mathematical concepts.

Speld Qld Specialist Teachers will aim to meet the student where they are at, which may be at odds with the level at which school-based homework is being set. Specialist intervention is designed to provide a solid working knowledge of the fundamental skills from which other concepts can be understood and accessed. Speld Qld Specialists design intervention programs in literacy and/or mathematics that address the root cause of difficulties that are impacting a student's capacity to access the curriculum.

There are many evidenced-based Literacy and mathematics programs that your Specialist Teacher may follow. If you have any questions about the program used by your Speld Qld Specialist Teacher or have any concerns at all, please contact the office and speak with one of our Education Advisors.

Speld Qld Specialist Teachers are required to inform Speld Qld when they start and stop working with a student referred to them through us. They must complete a progress report at the end of each semester, which must also be provided to the parents.



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11. Why do I need to join Speld Qld to access the Specialist Teacher Service?

Speld Qld ensures a quality teaching service that adheres to the ethos of the organisation is delivered to each student. The only way that this can be achieved is by both the teacher and the student being members of Speld Qld, and the program implemented is monitored by the Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Services Manager of Speld Qld.

Speld Qld receives many requests for Specialist Teachers and Tutors. Due to the number of enquiries and to continue to provide a quality service, this referral service is limited to members only.

As a Financial Member, both student and Teacher are covered by Public Liability Insurance and membership must be maintained over the course of the tutoring to keep this cover.

12. What if I am not happy with the Specialist Teacher?

In some cases there may be a mismatch between a student and a Specialist Teacher. We encourage you to get back to us at any time if you feel this has happened in your case. We are very keen to make sure that everyone is happy with the professional service provided by Speld Qld.