



# Designing Quality Learning Spaces (DQLS) FAQ

## 1. How will project teams know about the DQLS requirements?

- The *DQLS – Acoustics* and *DQLS – Lighting and Visual Comfort* documents have been published
- In the first quarter of 2021, the School Design team will undertake a national road show and workshops for architects, engineers and project teams
- The DQLS requirements will also be presented to industry professionals in conferences and seminars such as those organised by New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA), the Acoustical Society of NZ and Lighting Council NZ.

## 2. How does this apply to school building projects?

- Compliance with the *DQLS – Acoustics* and *DQLS – Lighting and Visual Comfort* documents will be mandatory for all projects starting the preliminary design phase after 1 January 2021
- These documents provide technical guidance for project managers undertaking school projects and applies to all 'new-build' structures and refurbishments, including school-led projects

## 3. What is a simple building form?

- Simple building forms are recognised as follows:
  - Spaces with windows on one side less than 7m deep
  - Spaces with windows on two opposite sides with a depth less than 14m
  - Window/wall ratio in the range of 30-50%

## 4. What is a simple building form Daylight Calculator Tool?

- This is an Excel tool developed by the Ministry for design teams to use to show compliance with the simple building form daylight requirements
- The Tool is designed based on the Four Step Daylight Design Sequence, it is easy to use and is available on the Ministry's website

## 5. What is an IEQ design report template?

- The Internal Environment Quality (IEQ) design report template is a document that design teams will use to demonstrate compliance with the DQLS mandatory requirements
- The rationale for the IEQ design report template is to ensure consistency in demonstrating compliance with the requirements set out in the DQLS suite
- The intention is that the Design Review Panel (DRP) members will be able to assess design compliance across all DQLS documents by referring to this one IEQ Report
- Using the template, compliance with different requirements can be demonstrated variously at different stages in the design process. While some compliance must be demonstrated at Preliminary Design, other compliance can only be demonstrated at Developed Design
- The IEQ design report should be issued in partial draft at Preliminary Design, and re-issued in full at Developed Design

## 6. What about students with sensory impairments and neurological or behavioural disorders?

- The *DQLS – Acoustics* and *DQLS – Lighting* sets requirements at a level in excess of building code to recognise the influence of acoustics and lighting on learning, particularly for students with sensory, neurological or behavioural disorders
- These documents also provide design guidance for special needs facilities, including both general guidance and guidance for specific learning support needs

**7. Are the standards empirically based and do they incorporate lessons learned from the Ministry's design reviews?**

- Yes, the DQLS suite of documents have been developed based upon lessons learned from Ministry's design reviews, the latest research, current industry trends and responses to a wide range of technical queries
- The documents provide technical requirements that assist architects, designers and engineers in creating quality physical learning environments that are fit for purpose

**8. How does the DQLS requirements apply to refurbishments?**

- As with new building projects, major upgrades require an integrated approach to several aspects of building design and performance. This applies to upgraded spaces with different spatial layouts, occupancy and activity patterns post-completion
- In general terms, lighting, acoustics and indoor air quality and thermal comfort strategies for upgrade projects are much the same as for new buildings because there is generally room for some improvement as part of any upgrade
- If there are significant changes to the layout, occupancy levels, activity types and/or there are significant problems with the existing acoustics, thermal, air quality or lighting provisions, then the DQLS requirements should be followed as far as is reasonably practicable

**9. Do you have a generic email address? If so, what is it? Do you have a person who specifically addresses DQLS technical queries?**

- Yes, email us through [school.design@education.govt.nz](mailto:school.design@education.govt.nz)
- The School Design team is hiring a Principal Advisor, Technical who will be in charge of the 'Helpdesk' to respond to technical queries