



Better Behaviour Better Learning  
**Essential Skills** for  
Classroom **Management**

**Core learning component**



**Queensland** Government  
Education Queensland

# Essential Skills in context

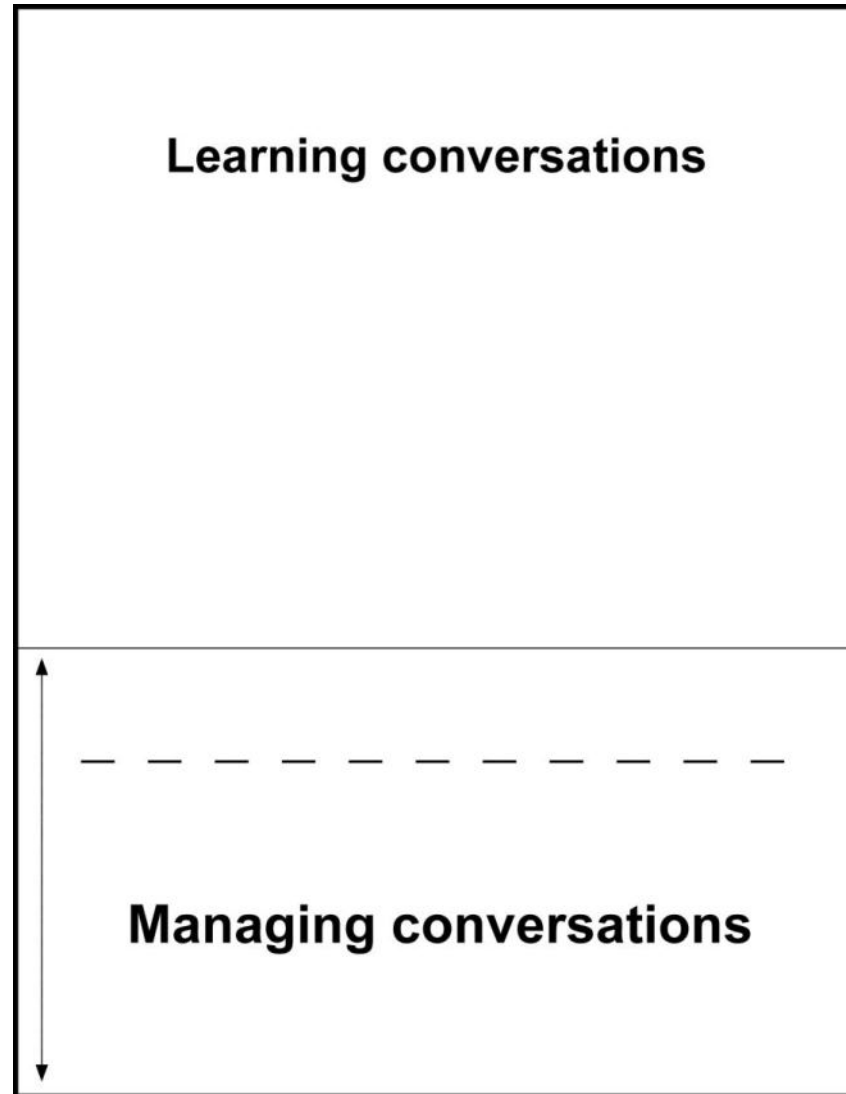
One aspect of the complex task of managing behaviour

## To facilitate effective learning, teachers:

- articulate clear expectations
- provide relevant curriculum and instruction
- nurture positive relationships
- foster student compliance with instructions
- acknowledge appropriate behaviour
- correct inappropriate behaviour
- assess the achievement of outcomes
- report outcomes.

## Core elements for successful learning:

- setting clear expectations
- acknowledgement of appropriate behaviour
- timely correction of inappropriate behaviour.



# The Balance Model

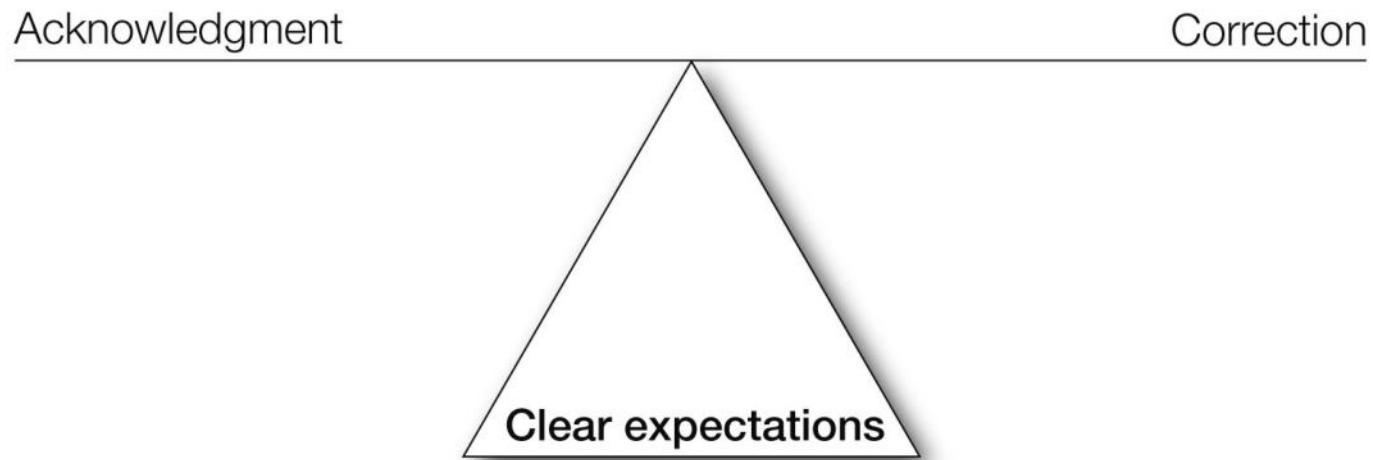
The Balance Model as described by Christine Richmond is made up of three sets of information (Richmond 2002):

1. The strategies teachers use to teach their expectations to students.
2. How teachers acknowledge students when they are behaving appropriately.
3. How teachers correct students when they behave inappropriately.

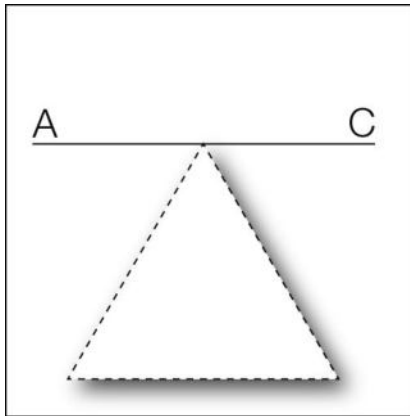
**When a teacher is said to be ‘in balance’ in the classroom, there are:**

1. Clearly articulated expectations to students.
2. An observable evenness (balance) in the use of language, verbal and non-verbal to acknowledge appropriate behaviour and correct inappropriate behaviour.

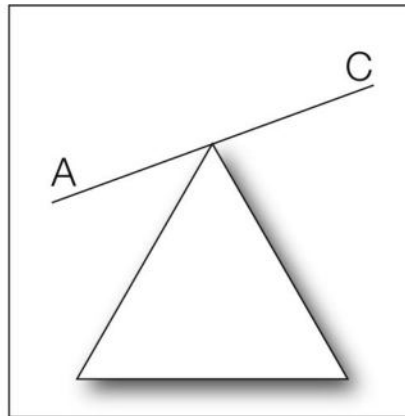
This is represented by The Balance Model of Behaviour Management.



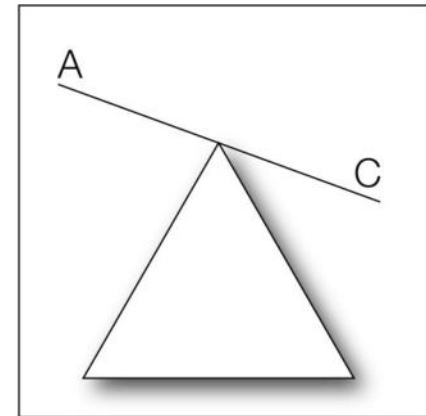
**Figure 1: The Balance Model of Behaviour Management**



**Imbalance 1**  
Unclear expectations,  
represented  
diagrammatically by the  
triangle of dotted lines



**Imbalance 2**  
Too much  
acknowledgement



**Imbalance 3**  
Too much correction

# **Skill 1     Establishing expectations**

**To clearly articulate and demonstrate the boundaries of pro-social behaviour**

It is important to have clear boundaries for social behaviour so that everyone is clear about what is, and is not, regarded as responsible and safe in a particular context.

## **Skill 2     Instruction giving**

### **To give a clear direction about what to do**

1. Clear, short instructions help students understand what you expect them to do.
2. Instructions help students organise what they are required to do.
3. Instructions cue to students that they need to be actively engaged with the curriculum.

## **Skill 3     Waiting and scanning**

**To wait and look at your students for 5–10 seconds after you give an instruction**

1. It gives students time to process the direction.
2. It indicates non-verbally to students that you mean what you say; increasing compliance.
3. You avoid filling all the available time with excess talk which can inadvertently train the class to stop listening to your voice.

## **Skill 4      Cueing with parallel acknowledgment**

**To acknowledge students' on-task behaviour with the intention of prompting others to follow suit**

1. It cues other students to match the behaviour that is being acknowledged.
2. It is an alternative to a redirection, so can help you to avoid nagging or becoming too directive.
3. It contributes to a positive tone in the classroom.

## **Skill 5     Body language encouraging**

**To intentionally use your proximity, body gestures and facial expressions to encourage students to remain on-task**

1. It takes no time to do.
2. It promotes a positive tone in the classroom.
3. Body language is an integral part of communication and strengthens relationships.
4. It promotes on-task behaviour when used intentionally.

## Skill 6 Descriptive encouraging

**To encourage students to become more aware of their competence by describing exactly what you see or hear from them that you want them to repeat more frequently**

1. It describes to students the behaviour that you know will help them to learn. This has a positive training effect.
2. It reinforces the rules.
3. It promotes a positive, supportive learning environment.
4. It focuses on strength and is esteem building.
5. It stimulates students to take risks in terms of behaviour. They become more able to display the courage to tackle difficult work, or practise self-control.
6. It gives students information about their competence.
7. It directs attention to strategies that are useful for problem solving.
8. It strengthens your relationship with students.

## Skill 7 Selective attending

**To intentionally give minimal attention to safe off-task or inappropriate behaviour**

1. It avoids unintentionally reinforcing off-task or disruptive behaviour, decreasing the likelihood that this behaviour will be repeated.
2. It gives you time to think of how to handle the student's behaviour in a way that is productive.
3. It gives you time to attend to other students who are on-task.
4. It sends a message to all students about your expectations.
5. It is a powerful modelling device saying, "I can stay focused on my work despite the disruption."
6. It is a deliberate process used within a discrete timeframe, having a beginning and an end.

## **Skill 8     Redirecting to the learning**

**To respectfully prompt the student who is off-task or disrupting others, initially with a redirection to the learning**

1. Initially, it provides a least intrusive, positive, learning-focused prompt to resume on-task activity; reducing the need for further correction.
2. It puts the responsibility for decision making onto the student.
3. It reinforces the importance of on-task behaviour.
4. When linked with giving a choice, it reinforces to the student or group, information about your expectations and the likely consequences of the choices given.

## Skill 9 Giving a choice

**To respectfully confront the student, who is disrupting others, with the available choices and their logical consequences**

1. It provides the student or group with information about your expectations and the logical consequences of the choice.
2. It puts the responsibility for decision making onto the student.

## Skill 10 Following through

**Resolute, planned action in the face of on-going disruptive behaviour that is seriously disturbing the learning environment or is extended off-task behaviour**

1. It clearly establishes that you mean what you say.
2. It models assertive behaviour in the face of threat.
3. It models morally courageous behaviour.