

Policy and Procedure Register updates – Summary of changes to:

User charging procedure

1. Reason for new/updated policy or procedure <i>(select all that apply)</i>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change of policy/procedure requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Audit/review recommendation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change to legislation/delegations	<input type="checkbox"/> Due for review	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<p>The procedure has been updated to align with the government's focus on cost-of-living concerns for parents and carers. It addresses the impact of fees on users, ensuring that decisions on fees and charges are transparent, defensible, equitable and compliant with relevant legislation, policies and procedures.</p>		
2. Summary of changes		
Amended or clarified responsibilities		
For Principals:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the impact of fees on users, including parents and carers. Consider affordability when developing fees, including those for services provided by Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres. Take an active role in determining and managing fees, exploring cost-reduction strategies. Ensure the availability of financial hardship options, such as payment plans and fee waivers. Consult with the P&C and school community regarding school fees, report on fees annually, and ensure that fee revenue is used for its intended purpose. Ensure access to instruction, facilities and administration is not diminished. Address feedback and questions regarding fees and charges. Implement regular reviews and reports on school fees and charges. 		
For Principals of Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider affordability and explore strategies to minimise costs passed on to schools. Ensure transparency and reasonableness in fee decisions, excluding costs covered by government funding. Maintain access to centre services while ensuring fee revenue is used for its intended purpose. 		
For P&C Associations:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider providing financial assistance to schools to reduce fees for parents. 		
For Executive Directors or above:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the impact and affordability of fees on users. Approve non-school fees and charges and centrally administered fees. Ensure fees are transparent, defensible and reasonable, with fee revenue used for intended purpose 		
For Financial Advisory Services:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and support schools and their supervisors in implementing fees and charges. 		
For users:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek payment plans or fee waivers in cases of financial hardship. 		
Amended or clarified processes		
Fee determination		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a structured approach to deciding whether to charge a fee, considering the need of the charge. 		

- Assess the financial impact on users, especially parents and students.
- Allow flexibility in setting fee levels based on various factors, such as cheaper alternatives and the ability to absorb or reduce costs.
- Refer to the School fees matrix for details on prohibited charges for parents/students on school fees.
- Benchmark fees against those of similar providers.

Approval process

- Clarify approval authorities for different types of fees.
- Involve shared decision-making in fee decisions and management.
- Require mandatory endorsement from the P&C for school-based fees.

Communication

- Emphasise clear communication of fee information to users.
- Focus on transparent reporting and the appropriate use of fee revenue.
- Provide information on payment plans, fee exemptions and fee waivers.

Administration

- Strengthen record-keeping, financial reporting and GST compliance.
- Explicitly require the allocation of fee revenue to appropriate cost centres.

Review and reporting

- Regularly monitor fees and charges to ensure alignment with their intended purpose.
- Regarding school-based fees, report annually to the P&C.

3. Impacts to roles and responsibilities

Does the new/updated content change staff roles/responsibilities *in any way*? Yes No

If yes, select the type of change: (*select all that apply*)

Revised responsibilities New/additional responsibilities Removed responsibilities

Position title	Summary of change	Page #
Various	See above	1-3

4. Communication and support for implementation

Consultation has been conducted with various stakeholders, including key educational associations, unions, and departmental representatives. Communication efforts include a letter to principals and training sessions delivered through SBMAQ roadshows and master classes, with additional sessions planned for Term 4, 2024.

For further assistance, please contact:

Financial Business Policy:

FinancialPolicy.Finance@qed.qld.gov.au