



Procedure

Distance education enrolment fees

Audience

All state schools

Version effective: 01/01/2021
Version: 6.3

Purpose

This procedure outlines fees that are payable for the provision of distance education and addresses the eligibility criteria for fee exemptions, waivers and refunds.

Overview

The department's seven schools of distance education (SDEs) provide educational programs to students with limited choice of educational programs available to them. SDEs also provide a wider subject choice for school-based students who may enrol in only a component of a program of distance education (i.e. individual subject).

Chapter 3 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) (the Act) requires that a fee is payable for the provision of distance education for:

- a student enrolled in a program of distance education at a state school (i.e. a student whose educational program is delivered in-full by an SDE – referred to in this policy as 'home-based students')
- a non-state school student enrolled in a component of a program of distance education.

Fees are not payable for a state school student studying a component of a program of distance education under a [flexible arrangement](#) with an SDE.

Fees are prescribed under section 70 and Schedule 2 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) (the Regulation). The fees increase yearly in line with the Consumer Price Index.

Section 53 of the Act allows for an [exemption from paying a fee](#) for certain students who enrol in a program of distance education. The SDE principal (as a delegate of the Director-General) has the power to determine whether fees are not payable.

The SDE principal may also waive these fees, entirely or partly, if they are satisfied:

- the student would suffer significant educational disadvantage if not able to continue in the program, and payment of the fee would cause financial hardship to the person liable to pay it or
- the waiver is appropriate and reasonable because exceptional circumstances exist in relation to the student.

An application for a refund of part of a fee may be made to the SDE principal where the student is no longer enrolled in a program of distance education at a state school or component of a distance education program. The refund application must be made before the end of Semester 1 of the school year to which the fee relates. Where



the applicant is not satisfied with a decision, they may apply for reconsideration of the decision within 14 days of the being notified of the decision.

Responsibilities

Parents or prospective students (where relevant):

- provide all required enrolment information
- pay applicable distance education fees
- submit applications and supporting documentation for an exemption, waiver, payment plan or refund in relation to distance education fees, where applicable
- provide a suitable learning environment, access to the course materials and appropriate technology, and active on-site support.

SDE principals:

- oversee the enrolment process and determine whether fees are payable
- provide information to students and parents about fees that are payable for distance education and eligibility for exceptions, waivers, payment plans and refunds
- consider [flexible arrangements](#) if proposed
- as delegate of the Director-General under section 54 of the Act, decide whether to fully or partially waive distance education fees
- as delegate of the Director-General under section 71 of the Regulation, decide applications for a refund of part of fees and provide notice of reasons if decision is to refuse application
- administer [debt management processes](#) for fees for distance education that are owed and overdue
- as delegate of the Director-General under section 52(3) of the Act, consider and cancel where appropriate, enrolment of a student for whom the prescribed distance education fee has not been paid
- ensure natural justice in the decision-making process
- manage invoicing and payment processes
- refer home-based students of compulsory school age who have withdrawn or had their enrolment cancelled to the relevant Regional Director, in accordance with the [Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools](#) procedure.

Regional Director:

- as delegate of the Director-General under section 72(2) of the Regulation, reconsider decisions to refuse an application for refund of part of a fee made by principals of SDEs that are not Independent Public Schools (IPS)
- case-manage home-based students who have withdrawn or had their enrolment cancelled.

Assistant Director-General, State Schools:

- as delegate of the Director-General under section 72(2) of the Regulation, reconsider decisions to refuse an application for refund of part of a fee made by IPS SDE principals.

Principals of schools whose students undertake subjects through SDEs:

- approve flexible arrangements and fulfil designated responsibilities in accordance with the [Flexible arrangements for school students](#) procedure
- provide a suitable learning environment, resources and support for students
- where a student is enrolled at a non-state school, submit applications for exemptions, waivers, payment plans and refunds to the SDE principal on behalf of the student and person liable to pay the fee for distance education.

Process**Provision of a distance education program to state school or home-based students****Parents or prospective students:** (where relevant)

- follow the [Flowchart: Process for home-based school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- complete the relevant enrolment form provided by the SDE principal and where appropriate, the [Application for exemption/waiver/payment plan for enrolment in a program of distance education](#) for each student and provide relevant evidence to support application
- pay the fee for distance education, where applicable
- if required, request, negotiate and sign a documented payment plan with the SDE principal
- provide access to necessary course materials and appropriate technology for the student
- provide active on-site support including monitoring regular return of work
- maintain close contact with teachers
- ensure regular attendance by students at scheduled lessons
- pay ongoing telephone/internet conferencing costs
- where appropriate, complete an [Application for refund](#) to request a refund of part of the fee before the end of Semester 1 of the school year, stating the reasons for the application and the date enrolment ceased.

SDE principals:

- follow the [Flowchart: Process for home-based school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- provide the relevant enrolment form, information about fees payable and a copy of [Application for exemption/waiver/payment plan for enrolment in a program of distance education](#) for each student
- invoice parents for applicable regulatory fees
- on receipt of a completed [Application for fee exemption/waiver/payment plan](#):
 - determine eligibility for fee exemptions and [notify parent/student of decision in writing](#), retain associated documentation
 - determine eligibility for a fee waiver, [notify parent/student of decision in writing](#), and retain associated documentation (e.g. medical certificate)
 - negotiate, document and sign any payment plans with parent/student.
- report annual fees requiring recoupment by central office in Term 4 of the school year



- negotiate with parent/student to ensure the full level of service is utilised (e.g. scheduled online, video or teleconference teaching lessons)
- refer to the [Debt management](#) procedure where payment of fees is outstanding
- where reasonable attempts to acquire payment or negotiate a payment plan with the person liable to pay the fees are unsuccessful, issue a [Show cause – intention to cancel enrolment notice](#) to give the person an opportunity to make a submission as to why the student's enrolment at the SDE should not be cancelled
- cancel a student's enrolment where a payable fee has not been paid and no reasonable explanation has been provided by the person liable to pay the fee
- consider an [Application for refund](#) of part of the fee paid for distance education where applicable, decide to refund part of a fee for distance education if satisfied it is appropriate and reasonable to do so, calculate the refund payable in accordance with the [refund look-up table](#), [notify parent/student of decision in writing](#), and retain associated documentation
- where an application for refund of part of fees for distance education is not granted, advise the applicant that they may apply to the Director-General's [delegate](#) within 14 days for a reconsideration of the decision
- inform the Regional Director about home-based students of compulsory school age who have withdrawn or had their enrolment cancelled in accordance with the [Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools](#) procedure, for management of the student's continued enrolment.

Regional Director:

- on receipt of an application to reconsider a (non-IPS) SDE principal's decision to not grant part of a refund of fees for distance education, review the decision made and notify the applicant of the decision
- where the SDE has notified the Regional Director of the withdrawal of a student from a SDE program or cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment of enrolment fees, follow processes for enforcing parental obligation to enrol the student in accordance with [Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools](#).

Assistant Director-General, State Schools:

- on receipt of an application to reconsider an IPS SDE principal's decision to not grant part of a refund of fees for distance education, review the decision made and notify the applicant of the decision.

Provision of a component of distance education to non-state school students

Principals of non-state schools:

- follow the [Flowchart: Process for non-state school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- submit the relevant [SDE enrolment form](#) with fees before Day 8 of the school year or one month before the commencement of Semester 2
- provide a suitable learning environment for the student including access to necessary course materials and appropriate technology
- provide a school study coach for active onsite student support, including monitoring regular return of work and exam supervision
- maintain close contact with SDE teachers through the non-state school study coach

- if relevant, submit a completed [Application for waiver of enrolment fee for non-state school student](#) and provide evidence to support the application under section 54 of the Act
- if relevant, submit a completed [Application for refund](#) before the end of Semester 1, stating the reasons for the application and the date enrolment ceased
- provide written decisions from the SDE principal to the student's parents, advising of the outcomes of a fee waiver or refund application, and retain associated documentation.

Principals of schools of distance education:

- follow the [Flowchart: Process for non-state school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- ensure that information about fees for distance education is provided to the student and parent, including how to apply for a fee waiver
- invoice the non-state schools for applicable fees
- negotiate with non-state schools to ensure the full level of online services can be utilised
- on receipt of a completed [Application for waiver of distance education fees for non-state school student](#), determine the student's eligibility for a fee waiver, [notify parents of the decision in writing](#) and retain associated documentation (e.g. medical certificate)
- refer to the [Debt management](#) procedure where payment of fees is outstanding
- where reasonable attempts to acquire payment or negotiate a payment plan with the person liable to pay the fees are unsuccessful, issue a [Show cause – intention to cancel enrolment notice](#) to give the person an opportunity to make a submission as to why the student's enrolment at the SDE should not be cancelled
- cancel a student's enrolment where a payable fee has not been paid and no reasonable explanation has been provided by the person liable to pay the fee
- on receipt of [Application for refund](#), decide to refund part of a fee for distance education if satisfied it is appropriate and reasonable to do so, calculating the refund payable in accordance with the [refund look-up table](#), [notify parents of the decision in writing](#) and retain associated documentation
- where a refund of part of the fees for distance education is not granted, advise the applicant that they may apply to the Director-General's [delegate](#) within 14 days for a reconsideration of the decision.

Regional Directors:

- on receipt of an application to reconsider a (non-IPS) SDE principal's decision to not grant part of a refund of fees for distance education, review the decision made and notify the applicant of the decision.

Assistant Director-General, State Schools:

- on receipt of an application to reconsider an IPS SDE principal's decision to not grant part of a refund of fees for distance education, review the decision made and notify the applicant of the decision.



Definitions

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|----------------------------|---|
| Home-based students | Students enrolled in an SDE who do not attend a local school although they have access to one (also known as 'by-choice' students). |
| Prospective student | A prospective student is a person who has applied to enrol at a SDE but who has not yet been accepted for enrolment. |

Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) Chapter 3, sections 48-54
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) Sections 70, 71, 72, Schedule 2

Delegations/Authorisations

- [Director-General's Delegations under the Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Director-General's Delegations under the Education \(General Provisions\) Regulations 2017 \(Qld\)](#)

Related policies

- Nil

Related procedures

- [Allocation of state education](#)
- [Debt management](#)
- [Enrolment in state primary, secondary and special schools](#)
- [Flexible arrangements for school students](#)
- [Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools](#)

Guidelines

- Nil

Supporting information/websites

- [Application for exemption/waiver/payment plan for enrolment in a program of distance education](#)
- [Application for refund – home-based and non-state school students](#)
- [Application for waiver of enrolment fee for a non-state school student](#)
- [Flowchart – Process for home-based school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- [Flowchart – Process for non-state school students enrolling in a school of distance education](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Information for students with medical certification](#)
- [Information sheet: Reasons for exemptions](#)
- [Refund look-up table 2021](#)
- [Templates for decision notices on applications for exemption, waivers, refunds and cancellation of enrolment](#)
- [Websites for individual schools of distance education](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact the [relevant school of distance education](#) or the [relevant regional contact](#).

Review date

26/04/2021

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

- 4.0 SMS-PR-004: Distance Education Enrolment Fees
- 5.0 Distance Education Enrolment Fees
- 6.0 Distance education enrolment fees

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