

Student dress code procedure

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions

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1. Why do schools have dress codes?

The purpose of a student dress code is to promote a sense of identity and pride; help to strengthen school community cohesion; enhance student safety, health and wellbeing; and prepare students for the expectations of workplaces.

For example, a school uniform can support safety by allowing students to be easily identified. A requirement for closed-in footwear may prevent injuries when participating in some curriculum activities. School uniform items can also promote student health, for example through incorporating sun safety measures.

2. Do the requirements apply to all schools, including non-state schools?

The Student dress code procedure applies to all Queensland state schools.

Non-state schools make their own decisions about dress codes.

3. How do I find out about a school's dress code?

A school's dress code should be published on its website.

Schools should communicate their dress code to parents and students prior to enrolment at the school. Parents agree to the dress code as part of the enrolment process through the enrolment agreement.

4. Who will schools need to consult when updating uniform requirements?

The procedure requires state school principals to consult with students, school staff, parents and the Parents & Citizens' Association (P&C) when developing and reviewing the school's dress code.

Two [supporting documents](#) are available to support schools with developing and reviewing a dress code, and resolving dress code issues (e.g. non-compliance).

5. What are the financial implications for schools/families?

Principals must consider the affordability of uniforms and the socio-economic circumstances of families when developing or reviewing their school's dress code.

Schools should work with uniform suppliers to find affordable options that suit the school community.

Schools may offer payment plans, modifications or exemptions and/or second-hand uniforms at reduced or no cost.

6. What if a student or parent disagrees with their school's dress code?

Any parents or students who have concerns about a school's dress code should discuss their concerns with the principal and P&C.

7. What if a student requires a modification, reasonable adjustment or exemption to the school's dress code?

Any student who requires a short-term or long-term modification, reasonable adjustment or exemption from their school's dress code can request this from the principal (or their delegate) by following the process outlined in the school's dress code.

8. Under what circumstances might students need a reasonable adjustment or exemption from the dress code?

Dress codes must include processes to seek and grant short-term or long-term modifications, reasonable adjustments or exemptions for individual students or groups of students.

Circumstances for seeking/granting variations may include:

- Religious, ethnicity or cultural practices, traditions or customs (e.g. head coverings (hijab, yarmulke, turban) or aspects of personal presentation (e.g. hair)
- gender diversity (e.g. access to gender neutral and gender diverse uniform options)

- disability (e.g. reasonable adjustments for sensory, physical or other needs such as fabric variation, sensitivities or design feature¹)
- pregnancy
- financial hardship.

9. When were options for girls' shorts and pants made a requirement for school dress codes?

In 2018, a revised Student dress code procedure was released following extensive review and consultation with stakeholders (including P&Cs Qld, school principals' associations, Queensland Teachers' Union and Girls' Uniform Agenda). All state schools were required to offer shorts and pants as uniform options for all students in all uniform categories from 2019.

10. Why are shorts and pants included as part of the school uniform?

Giving all students the option to wear shorts/skorts and pants reflects our modern world.

Shorts and pants options for all students provide opportunities for everyone to participate in the full range of school activities, including sports, play and riding a bike to and from school.

These options provide greater flexibility and choice for all students to wear clothes that they feel comfortable in.

11. Are unisex shorts and pants required or can the school offer different styles for girls and boys?

As per the procedure, "Shorts and pants options in designs suitable to a student's gender identity must be included for all students in all uniform categories". School communities should decide on which shorts and pants styles best suit their students' needs. In some cases, more than one style may be offered, while in other cases, e.g. sports shorts, a unisex option may be suitable.

12. What monitoring occurs to ensure schools follow the Student dress code procedure?

Principals have a legislative and professional obligation to meet the requirements set out in all departmental procedures.

Principals and P&Cs will be advised of the revised procedure and its requirements through a wide range of communication channels, including social media.

P&C Associations and parents play an important role in supporting schools to respond to the needs and expectations of the school community.

13. Can a school require students to be 'clean shaven' as part of their dress code?

Yes. Aspects of personal presentation, such as grooming, may form part of a school's dress code. This decision is made at a local level in consultation with the school community.

¹ [Online service request - Occupational Therapy service](#) (DoE employees only)

14. If a student does not comply with a requirement to be clean shaven, what would be an appropriate response by the school?

In such cases, schools should:

- talk to the student, and parent if necessary, to determine why the student is not clean shaven, e.g. for reasons relating to their culture, religion, health or financial circumstances
- negotiate short or long term exemptions if necessary
- where no acceptable reason is identified, schools can implement appropriate consequences such as detention and/or contact with the parent seeking their support to help their child meet the personal presentation standards.

Schools cannot suspend or exclude a student for not complying with the dress code; nor should schools require students to shave at school.

15. Which legislation is relevant to a student dress code?

Dress codes should reflect health and safety, human rights, anti-discrimination and disability legislation to ensure they do not give rise to unlawful discrimination or non-inclusive practices against students.

Legislation protects students from discrimination on the basis of their race, sex, age, disability, gender identity, sexuality, and religious belief or activity, and protects their human rights to:

- education
- recognition and equality before the law
- freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- freedom of expression
- cultural rights – generally.

16. What do schools need to consider to ensure their dress code complies with all relevant legislation?

Schools should ensure their student dress code:

- is consistent with health and safety standards
- complies with the human rights, anti-discrimination and disability legislation – ensuring that it does not give rise to unlawful discrimination or non-inclusive practices against students
- incorporates strategies to accommodate the individual needs and circumstances of students and strategies for managing non-complying students
- allows for modifications, reasonable adjustments or exemptions that are inclusive and responsive to individual student needs, and
- addresses student non-compliance in ways that ensure students are not disadvantaged, discriminated against or subject to non-inclusive practices (e.g. suspension, exclusion, at risk of having their enrolment cancelled, damage to their academic or external career prospects) because of circumstances beyond the control of the student and/or the student's parent.