



International school study tours procedure

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Audience

All state schools

Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities and processes for principals, staff and volunteers involved in the planning and delivery of International School Study Tours (ISSTs) to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students and all participants in line with departmental requirements and the whole-of-government [Air Travel Policy](#).

Overview

This procedure outlines the requirements to ensure the safety of students, staff and volunteers participating in an ISSTs and responsibilities and processes for submitting variations to ISSTs once approved.

The OneSchool Excursion Planner must be used for all ISSTs and approved by the Regional Director/Assistant Regional Director. Activities conducted away from schools may increase risks and therefore the standard of care required must reflect the increase in identified risks. Any risks associated with the travel, accommodation, health and/or proposed activities must be identified, managed and have a planned response in case of an emergency.

To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff, schools are required to proactively manage all aspects of the ISST. The school's duty of care to students extends to ISSTs which are part of students' educational programs.

Examples of ISSTs include sports trips, orchestra, choir, language and cultural immersion/student global programs.

For guidance about state school excursions within Australia, refer to the [School excursions procedure](#).

This procedure does not apply to non-departmental (privately organised/operated) study tours offered by an organisation other than the Department of Education (DoE). DoE holds no responsibility for individuals participating in non-departmental study tours.

Responsibilities

Responsible officer:

- ensure the ISST aligns with the school's Annual Implementation or Strategic Plan and seek and receive support from the school Principal prior to undertaking any planning associated with the ISST.
- plan and manage the ISST to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students and volunteers.
- ensure all DoE employees involved in the ISST have read the [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#), [DoE Standard of Practice](#) and teachers, students and volunteers have read and signed the [International School Study Tour Code of Conduct](#) documents.
- ensure all staff and volunteers satisfy Blue Card requirements and comply with the [Student protection procedure](#) and student protection measures.
- ensure risks are identified and managed according to the [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#).
- identify and arrange sufficient adult supervision arrangements and ratios that ensure activity safety (including emergency situations), ensuring at least one supervisor holds a current First Aid Certificate, and can support students with other medical conditions such as asthma, anaphylaxis. Refer to the [Health and wellbeing](#) website for more information.
- identify and arrange sufficient time to consult with parents/carers and the students (considering their age and/or individual circumstances) to discuss individual needs and reasonable adjustments and/or support strategies required to ensure safety and effective participation on the ISST.
- identify any reasonable adjustments, accommodation and staffing needs required, such as accessible venues, facilities, transport and access to trained/specialised student support staff.
- maintain and submit appropriate documentation including approvals, parental consent forms, travel expenses including receipts and relevant permits/permissions in line with the department's [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#).
- ensure all participants hold a valid passport with at least six months validity beyond the intended return date to Australia.
- ensure relevant vaccinations and visas are obtained (including transit visas where they are required), before leaving Australia.
- consult with the relevant divisional contact if travel relates to [Foreign Arrangements](#) i.e. Sister School Arrangements.
- ensure the Business Manager is involved in all financial aspects and complete and forward the [International Travel Report \(ITR\)](#) (DoE employees only) to the Principal to approve within four weeks of the conclusion of the ISST.

Participants (DoE employees)

- comply with the [Code of Conduct](#) for the Queensland Public Service and the [Standard of Practice](#) and sign the [International School Study Tour Code of Conduct](#) documents. Complete appropriate [student protection training](#) (DoE employees only) and keep a record of training completed. Comply with the [Student protection procedure](#).

- provide supervision and support to students at all times during the ISST.
- support the Responsible Officer to complete relevant incident report forms in relation to any incidents that occur during the ISST in accordance with [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#).
- maintain accurate record of travel expenses for reporting purposes including receipts in line with the department's [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#).

Principals

- ensure staff involved in ISSTs are aware of and comply with this procedure and have read the [Code of Conduct](#) for the Queensland Public Service and the [Standard of Practice](#) and prior to approval to travel.
- ensure OneSchool Excursion Planners are complete with relevant documentation prior to endorsement.
- ensure appropriate supervision ratios (minimum of two staff) including the number of supervising male and female adults for the number of participants attending. Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information on Supervision.
- ensure appropriate staff training to support the individual needs of participants with medical conditions and/or disability.
- endorse staff and student participation when participating in an ISST. Where multiple schools are involved all relevant principals must endorse.
- maintain copies of final documents such as flight booking, insurance policy and itinerary in line with the [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#).
- ensure any adults accompanying the ISSTs have completed appropriate student protection training, comply with the department's [Student protection procedure](#), and a record of training is maintained.
- liaise with the relevant child safety service centre for students in out-of-home care, allowing sufficient time for the provision of consent and funding approvals as required.
- consult with the Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association/School Council regarding the conduct of any activity or provision of any good/s or service/s that attract a fee.
- document and disclose fees applicable to ISSTs to the school community annually in line with the [User charging procedure](#).
- review and approve the [International Travel Report \(ITR\)](#) (DoE employees only) within four weeks of the conclusion of the ISST to confirm actual departmental costs.
- ensure DoE employees on the ISSTs do not apply for any form of leave unless the conditions under the [Applying for leave combined with official international travel](#) are met.
- approve any claims for travel related expenses according to [financial delegation](#) (DoE employees only) limits ensuring the appropriate forms are completed and receipts are retained.

Regional Director (RD)/Assistant Regional Director (ARD)

- ensure all relevant staff are aware of and comply with this procedure and the [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#).
- ensure OneSchool Excursion Planners have all the relevant documentation and endorsement prior to final approval.

- approve OneSchool Excursion Planners noting that when more than one school is involved, they must each submit an Excursion Planner and all relevant principals must endorse.
- review and note the [International Travel Report \(ITR\)](#) (DoE employees only) within four weeks of the conclusion of the ISST to confirm actual departmental costs.
- note any claims for travel related expenses ensuring the appropriate forms are completed and receipts are retained.

State Schools Division

- provide advice and support to schools regarding ISSTs.
- perform regular quality assurance of Excursion Planners ensuring all relevant staff are complying with this procedure.
- maintain records of international travel expenditure consistent with Open Data Annual Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government agencies.

Process



International School Study Tours (SSTs) application workflow and approvals

1. Planning

Responsible officer must:

- Determine the suitability of travel
 - Identify whether travel is planned for a country/ies where a [Smartraveller](#) Level 4 'Do not travel' warning is in place – travel cannot occur to these locations.
 - Obtain the minimum number of quotes in line with the [Purchasing and procurement procedure](#).
 - Determine whether the ISST will provide a value for money experience.
 - Ensure students participating are 11 years of age, or in Year 6 (whichever comes first) at the time of the travel.

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding planning.

- Identify and [manage risks](#) for all activities planned to occur as part of the ISST
 - Conduct and document risk assessments for each activity planned to occur, capturing all activities outlined in the itinerary, including accommodation and airfares.

Refer to the [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#) and [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding managing risks.

- Ensure appropriate supervision arrangements
 - Determine the appropriate staff to student ratios (minimum of two DoE staff, excluding teacher aides and volunteers) using the completed risk assessments as a baseline for the minimum supervision requirements.
 - Determine an appropriate gender balance for the group travelling.
 - Ensure at least one supervisor holds a current First Aid certificate and the necessary knowledge to support students with any known medical conditions if required.
 - Ensure supervisors have the necessary knowledge and training to support students with disability if required.
 - Communicate that supervisors must be available to all students overseas at all times, and model and encourage behaviour that upholds the welfare and best interests of students.

Refer to [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding supervision.

- Ensure all SST participants have the necessary travel documentation and vaccinations
 - Valid passport with at least six months validity beyond the intended return date.
 - Any specific visa requirements for the relevant country/ies of travel.
 - Check vaccination/medication requirements for Australia and country/ies of travel.

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding travel documentation and vaccinations and medication.

- Complete and/or arrange all necessary documentation and arrangements required for travel
 - Seek quote for the departments mandatory travel insurance and emergency assistance services with [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#) for all participants travelling on the ISST.
 - Seek parental consent forms and relevant student documentation, such as medical history and medication; and student support plans in OneSchool. Ensure this information is readily available to supervising staff during the ISST.
 - Assess the suitability of destinations, venues, transport and activities including access for students with disability, ensuring reasonable adjustments meet the requirements of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).
 - Relevant signed [Code of Conduct](#) forms for all teachers, students and volunteers.
 - A letter of support must be received from the P&C Association/School Council.
 - Approved COVID Industry Safe Plan (or comparable) for all hotel or similar accommodation types. Homestays are not permitted.
 - Seek and record [Request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour form/s](#) for any student remaining overseas at the completion of the ISST.
 - Use accredited transport and tour operators.
 - Document details of any other schools involved in the ISST if relevant, noting that each school involved is responsible for progressing a separate OneSchool Excursion Planner for approval.

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding travel insurance and travel advice.

All supporting documentation must be attached in the Attachments section of the OneSchool Excursion Planner before progressing for approval. Refer to [Responsible officer checklist](#) (DoE employees only).

2. Applying

Responsible officer must:

- Commence the Excursion Planner in OneSchool at least two terms prior to the planned departure and attach all completed mandatory documents:
 - Risk assessment/s.
 - Parental consent forms and relevant student documentation, such as medical history and medication and student support plans.
 - Detailed itinerary (mandatory [template](#) in Word format) (DoE employees only).
 - Estimated costings spreadsheet (mandatory [template](#) in Excel format) (DoE employees only) including airfares, accommodation, travel insurance, passports/visas, meals, tour costs, transport/transfer arrangements, taxes, gifts/school resources for all participants.
 - A letter of support from the P&C Association/School Council.
 - [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#) quote.
 - Hotel or accommodation establishment quote/s, including a copy of the COVID Safe Industry Plan (or similar). Homestays are not permitted.
 - Any other relevant documentation such as tour information, request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour form, multiple schools participating.
- Submit Excursion Planner, ensuring final approval is sought one term (or 10 weeks) in advance
 - Any Excursion Planners submitted less than 10 weeks in advance of the proposed ISST must include a detailed explanation of lateness, reasons the application must be supported/approved and consequences if the application is not approved within the timeframe.

3. Travel endorsement and final approval

Principal must:

- Determine whether ISST is viable and appropriate
- Review all mandatory documentation associated with ISST, submitted by the Responsible Officer:
 - Risk assessment/s.
 - Parental consent forms and relevant student documentation, such as medical history and medication and student support plans.
 - Detailed itinerary (mandatory [template](#) in Word format) (DoE employees only).

- Estimated costings spreadsheet (mandatory [template](#) in Excel format) (DoE employees only) including airfares, accommodation, travel insurance, passports/visas, meals, tour costs, transport/transfer arrangements, taxes, gifts/school resources for all participants.
- A letter of support from the P&C Association/School Council.
- [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#) quote.
- Hotel or accommodation establishment quote/s, including a copy of the COVID Safe Industry Plan (or similar). Homestays are not permitted.
- Any other relevant documentation such as tour information, request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour form, multiple schools participating and where necessary any reasonable adjustments meet the requirements of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).
- Consider any late ISST applications, applying discretion to support or reject late applications
 - Review supporting documentation including a detailed explanation of lateness, reasons the application must be supported/approved and consequences if the application is not approved within the timeframe.
- Determine whether ISST should be endorsed or rejected in OneSchool

Refer to [Principal endorsement checklist](#) (DoE employees only).

Regional Director/Assistant Regional Director must:

- Determine whether ISST is viable and appropriate
- Review all mandatory documentation associated with ISST, submitted by the Responsible Officer:
 - Risk assessments. Ensure all activities in the itinerary, from departure to arrival are documented in a risk assessment which meets your quality expectations.
 - Parental consent forms and relevant student documentation, such as updated medical conditions, prescribed medication and student support plans are attached in the Excursion Planner.
 - Review itinerary (mandatory [template](#) in Word format) (DoE employees only) to ensure all activities are relevant to the excursion and supervision satisfies your expectations at all times.
 - Review costings spreadsheet (mandatory [template](#) in Excel format) (DoE employees only) to ensure value for money and if necessary supporting documentation such as quotes are attached. Costings should cover airfares, accommodation, travel insurance, passports/visas, meals, tour costs, transport/transfer arrangements, taxes, gifts/school resources for all participants.
 - Review letter from the P&C Association/School Council ensuring they provide support for the planned SST.
 - Ensure [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#) quote covers all participants, activities and locations of travel.
 - Ensure hotel or accommodation establishments have a COVID Safe Industry Plan (or similar). Homestays are not permitted.
 - Review relevant supporting documentation such as tour information and request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour form.
 - If multiple schools are participating, ensure an Excursion Planner is completed for each school.

- In addition, in considering late ISST applications, apply discretion to support or reject late applications
 - Review supporting documentation including a detailed explanation of lateness, reasons the application must be supported/approved and consequences if the application is not approved within the timeframe.

Note: Schools should commence the Excursion Planner in OneSchool at least two terms prior to the planned departure and have sought final approval one term in advance.

- Taking into account all of the above factors, determine whether ISST should be approved or rejected in OneSchool.

Refer to [RD/Assistant Regional Director Approver Checklist](#) (DoE employees only).

Refer to the [International School Study Tours \(SSTs\) application workflow and approval](#) (DoE employees only).

Variations to approved travel

Responsible officer must:

- Seek approval on any variations to the approved Excursion Planner
 - Make necessary changes (such as travel dates and itinerary, participants, Activity Risk Management or countries to be visited).
 - Submit for re-approval. Re-approval from the Principal is required unless there is a country change then Regional Director approval will be required.
- In the event an ISST gets postponed or cancelled, seek cancellation from the Principal.

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding cancelling an approved Excursion Planner.

Principal must:

- Review and re-endorse or reject variations to the Excursion Planner.

Regional Director/Assistant Regional Director must:

- Review and re-approve or reject variations to the Excursion Planner when there is a country change.

4. Travel arrangements – before and during travel

Before travel

Responsible officer must:

- Ensure final approval of ISST is received and documented prior to making any bookings or payments
 - Book accommodation and airfares.
 - Ensure mandatory travel insurance coverage with [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#) is in place for all participants of the ISST.
 - Age or year level check has been actioned if required.

- Record in OneSchool all relevant details of any prescribed medication being taken by students and reasonable adjustments and ensure these details are readily available should they need to be accessed on the ISST
 - Ensure all medications are in original packaging with a doctor's note confirming the prescription and necessity to treat a medical condition.
 - Ensure all relevant details of the student's support strategies and/or reasonable adjustments, that align with the participant's individual needs are recorded in OneSchool. Ensure these details are readily available by all staff on the ISST.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have satisfied [Blue Card](#) requirements and completed student protection training
- Ensure copies of passports, visas, vaccinations and insurance policies are taken and held securely at the school, with parents/carers and with a member of DoE staff on the tour
- Ensure you are contactable
 - Check international roaming charges with relevant mobile phone service provider.
 - Ensure access to Microsoft 365 applications and services by requesting a temporary exemption by logging a request via the Department of Education's [Services Catalogue Online](#). (DoE employees only)
- Submit a revised Excursion Planner for approval where variations to travel are required

During travel

Responsible officer must:

- Contact the Principal immediately in the event a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST.
- Ensure supervisors are available to all students overseas at all times, and model and encourage behaviour that upholds the welfare and best interests of students.
- Ensure any changes to the ISST are reflected in the Excursion Planner.
- Monitor any health warnings issued by the World Health Organisation at <https://www.who.int/> or the Australian Government Department of Health at <https://www.health.gov.au/>.
- Monitor any travel warnings issued by [Smartraveller](#).

Principal must:

- Determine actions required in the event a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST.
 - Conduct and document risk assessment in OneSchool.
 - Review options and consult with their supervisor and the student's parents/carers about the most viable alternative.

Regional Director/Assistant Regional Director must:

- In the event a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST.

- Review options provided by school and if necessary offer high level advice and if necessary provide alternative options.

Note: Schools are not required to seek approval from the RD/ARD in this situation.

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding unexpected return of a student.

5. Post-travel

Responsible officer must:

- Submit an [International Travel Report](#) (DoE employees only) within four weeks of the conclusion of the ISST
- Report any adverse events that occur during the ISST to the Principal
 - Report incidents that may have occurred during the SST in accordance with the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#).
- Review and document processes and practices for future ISSTs, and provide feedback to the Principal as relevant
- Ensure DoE employees are aware of the process for reimbursement for any personal expenses incurred.

For more information about claiming work related expenses please refer to the [International travelling, relieving and living expenses \(Directive 10/11\)](#).

Principal must:

- Review the International Travel Report
 - Confirm that the use of funds was appropriate and in line with the approved estimated costs.
- Approve the International Travel Report
- Progress International Travel Report to RD/ARD for noting
- Approve claims for reimbursement of personal expenses incurred where deemed reasonable

For more information about claiming work related expenses please refer to the [International travelling, relieving and living expenses \(Directive 10/11\)](#).

Regional Director/Assistant Regional Director must:

- Review the International Travel Report ensuring Principal approval has been given
 - Check that the use of funds was appropriate and in line with estimated costs and any variances are explained.
 - Note any claims for reimbursement of personal expenses incurred for DoE employees only.
- Note the International Travel Report in OneSchool

For more information about claiming work related expenses please refer to the [International travelling, relieving and living expenses \(Directive 10/11\)](#).

State Schools Division must:

- Maintain record of international travel expenditure

Refer to the [International school study tours handbook](#) for more information regarding travel reporting.

Definitions

Term	Definition
International School Study Tours (ISSTs)	An ISST involving international travel for activities including, but not limited to, a curriculum-related activity, language immersion program, sporting exchange/activity or a sister-school arrangement.
Responsible Officer	Lead officer in charge of organising and at times participating in the ISST eg: Business Manager, Head of Department and Language Teacher.
Volunteer	An unpaid worker performing regulated work or activities for the department.
Participants (DoE employee)	Department of Education staff assisting in the supervision of students participating in the ISST.
Supervisor	Adults engaged by the school to instruct, deliver, supervise or otherwise support student safety during a curriculum activity, under the direct supervision of a registered teacher. This includes, but is not limited to: teachers' aides, parents, carers, volunteers, external coaches, referees, instructors or other activity leaders.
Non-departmental study tours	Privately organised/operated study tours and exchange programs offered by an organisation other than DoE. For example, Educational World Travel offers the G'Day USA Cultural Exchange Program, a short-term cultural exchange which offers high school students and staff the opportunity to travel to the USA. DoE holds no responsibility for individuals wishing to participate in these types of programs and travel must occur outside school hours. An Excursion Planner is not required for non-departmental study tours.
Accommodation establishment	Accommodation which can include hostels, lodges, B&Bs, holiday rentals advertised on travel websites such as Airbnb, Stayz, Expedia.
Reasonable adjustments	A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while considering the student's needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students. The need for an adjustment and the nature of an adjustment should be determined in consultation with the student or their associate.

Legislation

- [Financial Accountability Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Industrial Relations Act 2016 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Public Service Act 2008 \(Qld\)](#)
- [International travelling, relieving and living expenses \(Directive 10/11\)](#)
- [Teaching in State Education Award – State 2016](#)
- [Queensland Public Service Officers and Other Employees Award – State 2015](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- [Department of Education delegations](#) (DoE employees only)

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this procedure

- [International school study tours handbook](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Students](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Teachers](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Volunteers](#)
- [Request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour](#)

Other resources

- [Responsible officer checklist](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Principal endorsement checklist](#) (DoE employees only)
- [RD/ARD approver checklist](#) (DoE employees only)
- [International School Study Tours \(SSTs\) application workflow and approvals](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Detailed itinerary \(mandatory template in Word format\)](#) (DoE employees only)
- [SST costings template \(mandatory template in Excel format\)](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Obtaining a Commonwealth Bank of Australia \(CBA\) Travel Money Card \(TMC\)](#)

- [Queensland Governments Queensland Family and Child Commission](#)
- [Smartraveller](#)
- [Australian Passport Office](#)
- [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#)
- [OnePortal students with disability website](#) (DoE employees only)
- [OnePortal human rights website](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Applying for leave combined with official international travel](#)
- [Working with children authority](#)
- [Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure](#)
- [School excursions procedure](#)
- [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#)
- [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#)
- [Managing students' health support needs at school procedure](#)
- [Administration of medications in schools procedure](#)
- [Information asset and recordkeeping procedure](#)
- [Enterprise risk management procedure](#)
- [Whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)
- [DoE Standard of Practice](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Contact

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Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

7.0 School excursions and international school study tours procedure

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education Policy and Procedure Register at <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/international-school-study-tours-procedure> to ensure you have the most current version of this document.



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