# Procedure

# International school study tours procedure

**Version:** 1.4 | **Version effective**: 13/12/2023

## Audience

All state schools

## Purpose

The procedure outlines the responsibilities of principals, staff and volunteers involved in the planning and delivery of an ISST, to ensure risks are understood and appropriately managed to maximise the benefits of an international tour and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students and participants.

## Overview

This procedure ensures appropriate controls are in place to mitigate health, safety and wellbeing risks to students, supervising teachers and supervising volunteers in the delivery of an ISST and to ensure alignment with the Department of Education's (the department) requirements and the whole-of-government Air Travel Policy. ISSTs may focus on curriculum activities such as sports, music, language and cultural immersion, global competence, or recreation.

ISSTs present both unique opportunities and risks to students and other participants. Planning an ISST requires a thorough assessment of the risks associated with international travel, accommodation and health, as well as the proposed ISST activities, that must be identified and managed, and preparations made to respond in case of emergency.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the OneSchool Excursion Planner – International School Study Tour (DoE employees only), the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure, and the ISST handbook when planning and approving all ISSTs.

This procedure does not apply to:

- state school excursions within Australia, refer to the School excursions procedure

- non-departmental (privately organised/operated) study tours offered by an organisation other than the department. The department 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

- seek and receive support from the school principal prior to any planning

- adhere to requirements and submit the documentation outlined in this procedure, OnePortal, OneSchool, the ISST handbook and the Responsible officer checklist

- identify and manage risks associated with ISST activities in line with the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure, accommodation risk matrices, ISST handbook and Smartraveller

- ensure all ISST participants have the necessary travel documentation and vaccinations as specified in the ISST handbook

- manage documentation, risk assessments and approval requirements using OneSchool Excursion Planner - International School Study tour functionality at least 20 calendar weeks prior to the planned departure

- submit Excursion Planner, ensuring final approval is sought 10 calendar weeks in advance

- use Exclusion Planner to make any changes including postponement or cancellation.

**Supervising teachers and supervising volunteers:**

- comply with the ISST supervising teacher agreement or the ISST supervising volunteer agreement, and meet ISST and departmental requirements as outlined in the ISST handbook

- 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

- maintain accurate record of travel expenses for reporting purposes in line with the department's Information asset and recordkeeping procedure.

**Principals:**

- consult with the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C)/School Council regarding any proposed ISST

- document and disclose fees applicable to ISST to the school community annually in line with the User charging procedure

- determine whether ISST is viable, safe and appropriate, and review all mandatory documentation associated with ISST, submitted by the Responsible Officer

- ensure appropriate supervision ratios as specified in the ISST handbook

- 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

- ensure any non-DoE supervising volunteers have completed appropriate student protection training, comply with the department's Student protection procedure, and a record of training is maintained

- endorse supervising teachers, supervising volunteers and student participation in an ISST and ensure conditions under the Applying for leave combined with official international travel procedure are met

- ensure supervising teachers and supervising volunteers read and comply with this procedure and ISST handbook

- determine whether ISST should be endorsed or rejected in OneSchool Excursion Planner

- consider and apply discretion to support or reject any late ISST applications

- review and re-endorse or reject variations to the OneSchool Excursion Planner (where multiple schools are involved all relevant principals must endorse)

- seek final approval from the Regional Director (RD)/Executive Director (ED) Regional Operations in OneSchool Excursion Planner

- determine response in the event a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST

- review and approve post ISST International travel report and approve claims for reimbursement as per the ISST handbook and [financial delegation](#) (DoE employees only) limits.

## RD/ED Regional Operations:

- review all mandatory documentation and ensure all requirements associated with ISST are met and endorsed by the principal in OneSchool Excursion Planner noting that when more than one school is involved, they must each submit an Excursion Planner and all relevant principals must endorse

- approve or reject OneSchool Excursion Planner/s

- review and note the International Travel Report (ITR) and any claims for travel-related expenses as per the ISST handbook and [financial delegation](#) (DoE employees only) limits.

## Department of Education International (DE International):

- provide advice and support to schools regarding ISSTs

- perform regular quality assurance of Excursion Planners ensuring staff are complying with this procedure

- maintain records of international travel expenditure consistent with [Open Data Annual Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government agencies](#).

# Process
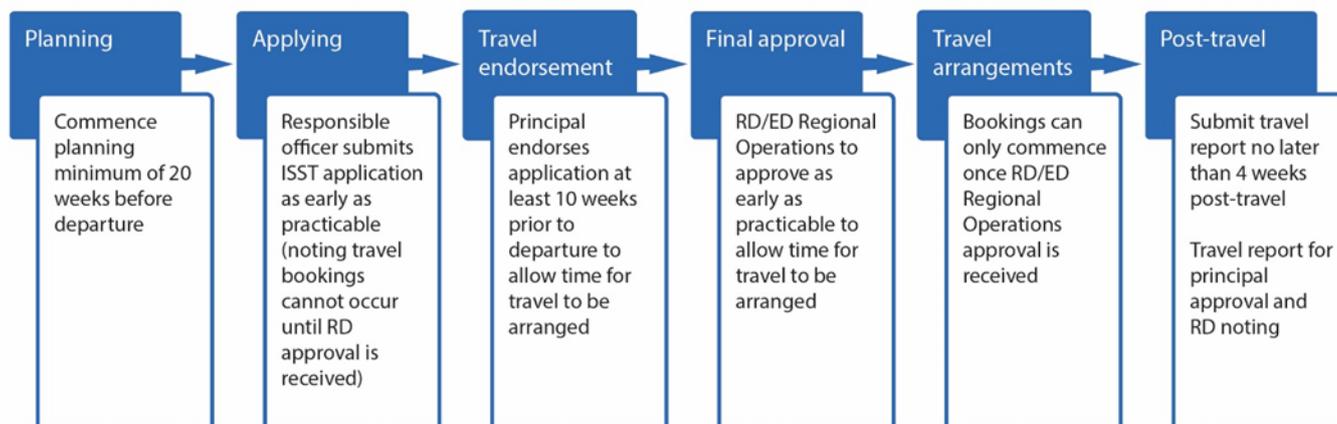


*International School Study Tour (ISST) application workflow and approvals*

## 1. Planning

**Responsible officer:**

- commence planning an ISST in consultation with the principal, where it is considered beneficial and supports the curriculum and/or the student experience

- seek advice and support from DE International if necessary

- meet the planning requirements for an ISST as set out in the [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#), [ISST handbook](#) and the [Responsible officer checklist](#), including but not limited to:

  o determining the suitability of travel

  o identifying and managing risks for all proposed ISST travel and activities, including adherence to relevant [accommodation risk matrices](#) and [Smartraveller](#)

  o determining that all students participating are 10 years of age, or in Year 5 (whichever comes first) at the time of travel and that homestay is only used as an accommodation option for secondary school students, in Year 7 and above, where an approved, reciprocal sister-school (or equivalent) agreement is in place and/or with an accredited homestay provider

  o ensuring appropriate supervision arrangements as specified in the ISST handbook

  o ensuring all ISST participants have the necessary travel documentation and vaccinations

  o issuing the [GoSafe Target Market Determination document](#) to all prospective travellers or parent/guardian prior to the purchase of travel insurance

  o completing all necessary documentation and arrangements for travel

  o ensure the use of cultural or communal bathing facilities (e.g. Japanese onsen) are not included in activities or as part of accommodation

- notify principal of any students in out of home care who may be eligible to participate in the ISST.

**Principal:**

- communicate with the P&C/School Council regarding any proposed ISST

- for any students in out-of-home care eligible for ISST, liaise with the relevant Child Safety Service Centre, allowing sufficient time for the provision of consent and funding approvals.

**Responsible officer:**

- at least 20 calendar weeks prior to the planned ISST departure, commence OneSchool Excursion Planner, Event Type of Excursion Planner – International School Study Tour:
    - providing sufficient time to seek final approval at least 10 calendar weeks in advance.

## 2. Applying

**Responsible officer:**

- confirms all attachments, including mandatory attachments, have been uploaded to the Excursion details section of the Excursion Planner with non-mandatory documentation to be uploaded as "Other". Noting, parental consent forms can be uploaded as a template for Regional Director approval

- completes, ISST risk management and financial details

- seeks advice and support from DE International if necessary

- submits through OneSchool to other appropriate approvers e.g. the Curriculum approver, and/or the Finance approver.

**Curriculum approver:**

- reviews each page of the Excursion Planner, applying the displayed curriculum checklist and confirming that it meets expectations

- endorses the ISST through OneSchool.

**Finance approver:**

- reviews the Finance page of the Excursion Planner, checking all details are correct and that it meets expectations

- endorses the ISST through OneSchool.

**Responsible officer:**

- following endorsement from the Curriculum approver and the Finance approver, the Responsible officer ensures the Excursion Planner progresses to the principal for endorsement as early as practicable (noting that travel arrangements cannot be booked prior to final approval being received). Where the application is submitted for final approval fewer than 10 calendar weeks in advance, the following is required:
    - a detailed explanation of lateness
    - reasons the application should be endorsed
    - consequences if the application is not endorsed.

### 3. Travel endorsement by principal

**Principal:**

- review the Excursion Planner in consideration of the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure, ISST handbook and the Principal endorsement checklist (DoE employees only), including:
  - all mandatory and additional documentation attached
  - justification for late ISST applications
  - justification to travel to a destination considered Level 3 by Smartraveller
- seek advice and support from DE International if necessary
- determine whether ISST is viable, safe and appropriate and if it should be endorsed, not endorsed or cancelled in OneSchool:
  - if endorsed, submit the Excursion Planner – International School Study Tour through OneSchool to the RD/ED Regional Operations for final approval
  - if not endorsed, return the Excursion Planner to the Responsible officer through OneSchool to revise and resubmit
  - if cancelled, then the ISST cannot proceed and Excursion Planner is locked.

### 4. Final approval by RD/ED Regional Operations.

**RD/ED Regional Operations:**

- review the Excursion Planner in consideration of ISST handbook and the RD/ED Regional Operations approval checklist (DoE employees only) including:
  - all mandatory and additional documentation attached
  - when more than one school is involved, they must each submit an Excursion Planner and all relevant principals must endorse
  - justification for late ISST applications
  - justification to travel to a destination considered Level 3 by Smartraveller
- determine whether ISST should be approved, not approved or cancelled in OneSchool:
  - if approved, advise the principal that the ISST can proceed
  - if not approved, return the Excursion Planner to the Responsible officer through OneSchool to revise and resubmit
  - if cancelled, advise the principal that the ISST cannot proceed (Excursion Planner automatically locked).

### If variations to approved travel after approval

**Responsible officer:**

- make necessary changes to the Excursion Planner (such as travel dates/postponement and itinerary, participants, activity risk management, countries to be visited, cancellation of ISST)

- submit for re-approval through OneSchool to principal.

**Principal:**

- review and endorse or reject variations to the Excursion Planner
    - where endorsed and there is a country change, submit for re-approval through OneSchool to the RD/ED Regional Operations
    - where endorsed without a country change or rejected, return to the Responsible officer through OneSchool
    - where cancelled advise the Responsible officer that the ISST cannot proceed (Excursion Planner automatically locked).

**RD/ED Regional Operations:**

- review and approve or reject variations to the Excursion Planner when there is a country change
- notify the principal of the decision.

Refer to ISST handbook and for more information regarding cancelling an approved Excursion Planner.

## 5. Travel arrangements - before and during travel

**Responsible officer:**

- once final approval of ISST by the RD/ED Regional Operations is received and documented:
    - book accommodation and flights
    - obtain travel insurance coverage with GoSafe Travel Insurance for all ISST participants. It is mandatory to enter the email address of the individual insured (or parent/guardian) in the designated 'Travellers Details' field of the GoSafe website to ensure the receipt of policy documentation by the insured party
    - confirm all students participating meet minimum age/Year-level at time of travel
    - ensure a completed parental consent form for each student is uploaded to Excursion Planner prior to travel
- ensure supervising teachers and/or Responsible officer (if participant on ISST) are contactable by:
    - arranging for cost-effective international mobile phone service (e.g. local SIM card)
    - ensuring access to Microsoft 365 applications and services by requesting a temporary exemption from location-based access restrictions via the Department of Education's Services Catalogue Online (DoE employees only).
- ensure details of student medication and reasonable adjustments are readily available (for example, in hardcopy or through temporary exemption to be able to access OneSchool while travelling internationally) on the ISST by recording in the Excursion Planner (as part of mandatory documents) all relevant details of:
    - any prescribed medication being taken by students
    - student support strategies and/or reasonable adjustments
- ensure all medications are in original packaging with a doctor's note confirming the prescription and necessity to treat a medical condition

- ensure all supervising 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, with travelling students and with a supervising teacher on the ISST (noting that copies will need to be securely disposed of upon return)

- if variations to travel are required, prior to commencement, submit a revised Excursion Planner for approval

- in the event that a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST, contact the principal immediately

- make arrangements to ensure supervising teachers and supervising volunteers are available to students overseas at all times, and that supervising teachers and supervising volunteers model and encourage behaviour that uphold the welfare and best interests of students

- register for and monitor any travel warnings issued by Smartraveller

- monitor any health warnings issued by the World Health Organisation or the Australian Government's Department of Health

- seek advice and support from DE International if necessary.

**Principal:**

- In the event that a student needs to return to Australia urgently and unexpectedly during the ISST, comply with the ISST handbook.

Note: principals are not required to seek approval from the RD/ED Regional Operations in this situation.

## 6. Post-travel

**Responsible officer:**

- Following principal approval, submit an International Travel Report along with ISST costings template to DE International, within four calendar weeks of the conclusion of the ISST if school funds were used or 'nil' if no school funds were used

- Support supervising teachers and supervising volunteers to report any incidents that occurred during the ISST to the principal and in accordance with appropriate process.

**Supervising teachers and supervising volunteers:**

- complete relevant incident report forms to any incidents that occur during the ISST:

  o for student-related incidents, follow school-based process

  o for staff-related incidents, Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure

  o for staff/student protection incidents, Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure.

**Responsible officer:**

- review and document processes and practices for future ISST and provide feedback to the principal as necessary

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- ensure supervisors who are paid DoE employees are aware of the process for reimbursement for any personal expenses incurred in line with the International travelling, relieving and living expenses (Directive 10/11).

**Supervising teachers and supervising volunteers who are paid DoE employees:**

- submit requests to the principal for reimbursement for any personal expenses incurred in line with the International travelling, relieving and living expenses (Directive 10/11).

**Principal:**

- review the International Travel Report and ISST costing template, confirming the use of any school funds

- approve the International Travel Report and progress to RD/ED Regional Operations for noting, and to DE International

- approve claims for reimbursement of personal expenses incurred by paid DoE employees, where deemed reasonable, and in line with the International travelling, relieving and living expenses (Directive 10/11).

- document and disclose fees applicable to ISST to the school community annually in line with the User charging procedure.

**RD/ED Regional Operations:**

- following principal approval, note the International Travel Report, specifically the use of any school funds.

**DE International:**

- perform regular quality assurance of Excursion Planners ensuring staff are complying with this procedure

- using International Travel Reports, maintain record of international travel expenditure in line with the ISST handbook post-travel section.

## Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|------|-----------|
| **Curriculum approver** | If ISST is curriculum focused, a nominated curriculum approver reviews the Excursion Planner and confirms that it meets expectations. |
| **Finance approver** | If payment is required, the nominated finance approver reviews the Finance page of the Excursion Planner, checking all details are correct and that it meets expectations. |
| **International School Study Tour (ISST)** | Department-sanctioned international school trips undertaken by Queensland state school students, for example, related to: sports, music, language and cultural immersion, global competence, or recreation. |
| **Paid DoE employees** | For the purposes of this procedure, includes supervising teachers and some supervising volunteers such as teacher aides. |
| **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 |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| | 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 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. |
| **Responsible officer** | School staff member who is in charge of organising the ISST. The Responsible officer may also participate in ISST in a supervisory role. |
| **Supervising teacher** | Teacher employed by the school who instructs, delivers, supervises or otherwise supports student safety during the ISST. A supervising teacher has Queensland College of Teachers registration number and legal duty of care for students. |
| **Supervising volunteer** | For the purposes of this procedure, may include, school-employed teacher aides, parents or carers of a school student, or adult sibling of school student. Supervising volunteers assist supervising teachers to instruct, deliver, supervise or otherwise support student safety during ISST.<br><br>All volunteers require a Blue Card except parents (with ongoing and not temporary parental responsibility) of child in the school. |

## Legislation

- *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (Qld)

- *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (Qld)

- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Qld)

- *Public Sector Act 2022* (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

- ISST student participant agreement

- ISST supervising teacher agreement

- ISST supervising volunteer agreement

- Request for student to remain overseas at conclusion of tour

- ISST accommodation risk matrices

- ISST prohibited activities in homestay

## Other resources

**Planners, checklists and templates**

- OneSchool Excursion Planner – International School Study Tours (DoE employees only)

- Responsible officer checklist (DoE employees only)

- Principal endorsement checklist (DoE employees only)

- RD/ED Regional Operations approver checklist (DoE employees only)

- International School Study Tours (ISSTs) application workflow and approvals (DoE employees only)

- Detailed itinerary (mandatory template in Word format) (DoE employees only)

- ISST costings template (mandatory template in Excel format) (DoE employees only)

**Policies and procedures**

- Administration of medications in schools procedure

- Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure

- Applying for leave combined with official international travel procedure

- Enterprise risk management framework

- Enterprise risk management policy

- Foreign arrangements - Commonwealth notifications and approvals procedure

- Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure

- Information asset and recordkeeping procedure

- Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure

- Managing students' health support needs at school procedure

- School excursions procedure

- Working with children authority procedure

- Whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy

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**Other resources**

- [DEi Strategic Plan 2019–2024](#)

- [Australian Passport Office](#)

- [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)

- [DoE Standard of Practice](#)

- [GoSafe Travel Insurance](#)

- [Obtaining a Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) Travel Money Card (TMC)](#)

- [OnePortal students with disability website](#) (DoE employees only)

- [OnePortal human rights website](#) (DoE employees only)

- [Queensland Government's Queensland Family and Child Commission](#)

- [Smartraveller](#)

- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

## Contact

International Travel Unit
DE International
Phone: (07) 3513 5748
Email: [international.travel@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:international.travel@qed.qld.gov.au)

## Review date

17/06/2025

## Superseded versions

*Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.*

7.0 School excursions and international school study tours

1.0 International school study tours

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