

# **VISITS TO NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

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**Implementation document for Overseas Students and Visitors policy**

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## Document history

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07-08-2017	Updated references to the visa subclasses to 500 from 571 due to changes made by Department of Immigration and Border Protection.	Director, Business Systems
6-12-2018	Documents title changed from 'Overseas students and groups on short term programs and visits to NSW government schools' to 'Visits to NSW Government schools'  Updated references to visitor groups – volunteers, interns, teachers on practicums and language assistant teachers	Director, Business Systems

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## 1 Overseas students and visitors

Students enrolling or visiting schools on short-term visits or exchanges must come through one of the following programs within the department.

Program	Definition	Responsibility
Temporary Residents Program	The enrolment of all temporary visa holders with the exception of international students holding visa subclass 500P.  Fees may be payable depending on visa subclass.	Manager, Temporary Residents Program arranges enrolment.  Authority to Enrol (ATE) required for enrolment.
Study Abroad Program	Enrolment of international students holding 500P visas for 1 term up to 1 year.  Full fees are paid.	Team Leader Admissions, DE International arranges enrolment.  ATE required for enrolment.
Secondary Student Exchange Program	Enrolment of students holding 500 visas through registered exchange organisations for 1 term and up to 1 year.  Reciprocal program; no fees paid for schooling.	Principal arranges enrolment in collaboration with registered exchange organisation.  Acceptance Advice for Secondary Exchange Student (AASES) form required for enrolment.
Study Tours	Groups of students and/or adults visiting schools.  Program quoted according to itinerary and approved fees.	Senior Study Tours Officer arranges the tour itinerary and quotations.
Sister Schools	Reciprocal arrangements between schools.	Principal signs agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which includes educational visits as an activity or project.

## 2 DE International services

DE International provides the following services to schools:

- registering agents, student exchange organisations and tour operators who operate inbound trips, including conducting due diligence checks and child protection screening
- responding to enquiries concerning international students, exchange students, temporary residents, study tours, and requests for school links to establish relationships with schools
- preparing fee submissions for approval of programs, collection of fees and disbursement to schools according to program type and visa subclass
- developing study tour programs, including:
  - itineraries based on requests for specific programs, areas of interest and preferred activities
  - quotations based on approved pricing structure
  - identifying and matching schools to deliver the programs
- processing international student applications for enrolment, issuing visa and enrolment documents
- marketing and promotion of the international student and study tours programs

- conducting student surveys and study tour evaluations and providing feedback to schools
- advising on and monitoring secondary student exchanges
- monitoring DE International programs for compliance with relevant federal and state legislation, national guidelines and department policies.

### 3 Temporary Residents Program

Visitor visa holders (visa subclass 600, 601, 602, 651, 944) may enrol at a NSW government school through the Temporary Residents Program subject to the following:

- the application meets specific conditions of enrolment
- the school principal agrees to the enrolment
- the student is living with a parent or a direct relative who is over 21 years of age, of good character, and able to provide appropriate care and supervision of the student. A direct relative is a brother, sister, step-parent, step-brother, step-sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew, step-grandparent, step-aunt, step-uncle, step-niece or step-nephew.

Visitor visa enrolments are restricted to a maximum of 13 weeks study and are subject to payment of the Temporary Residents Program education fees. Schools require an Authority to Enrol (ATE) issued by the Temporary Residents Program prior to enrolling a student.

An administrative fee is disbursed to schools to cover additional administrative costs.

Refer to the department's website for the [Procedures for the enrolment of non-Australian citizens](#) and for [additional information about the Temporary Residents Program](#).

### 4 Study Abroad Program

International students holding student visas 500P or 571P may enrol through the Study Abroad Program for a minimum of one term and a maximum of one year.

Schools receive a request for placement from DE International prior to the student's enrolment.

Schools must not enrol the student without an Authority to Enrol (ATE) issued by DE International.

International students may be counted in the census for resources and 25% of the international student fee is disbursed to schools to cover the costs of compliance.

Refer to the department's website for additional information about [programs for international students in NSW government schools](#).

### 5 Secondary Student Exchange Programs

A secondary student exchange program is a reciprocal program whereby students from other countries enrol in a full-time high school program for a minimum period of one school term and a maximum period of one year. Australian students undertake study in another country under similar conditions.

All student exchange programs must be conducted through registered exchange organisations. These can be private organisations or state or private schools but individual schools must first register with the NSW Registration Committee. Find a list of the [registered student exchange organisations](#) on the department's website.

From 1 October 2018, the [National Guidelines for the Operation of International Secondary Student Exchange Programs in Australia \(2018\)](#) apply within NSW.

Principals enrolling an exchange student must ensure that the student exchange program:

- is managed by a registered student exchange organisation
- meets the National Guidelines.

Schools require an Acceptance Advice for Secondary Exchange Student (AASES) form to enrol the student and principals must have agreed to the enrolment prior to the student's arrival.

For further information about student exchange, email [studentexchange@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:studentexchange@det.nsw.edu.au).

## 6 Study tours

Study tours are groups of students or adults who visit schools for periods of half a day and up to one term for educational or cultural purposes.

Students on study tours hold tourist visas and do not enrol in the school. Study tours are commercial arrangements where schools are paid to host visits.

There may be some instances under special agreements or scholarships where groups of students are on long-term study tours for up to six months and hold student visas and are also considered a study tour.

Study tour operators must be registered with DE International as a study tour agent and meet all requirements, including those for child protection and insurance cover.

Study tour programs include teacher professional development tours for visiting groups of teachers, school staff and Ministry officials.

Schools should refer all enquiries and requests for study tours to DE International. DE International guidelines and requirements minimise risks to schools in all aspects of program operation.

With most study tours, 80% of the study tour fees are disbursed to schools.

Organisations or groups such as local councils, Scouts, YMCA, who request visits for their overseas student groups into NSW government schools as part of their international program or short term cultural visits, should be referred to the Study Tours Coordinator.

Refer to the department's website for additional information about [study tours](#).

Visits by overseas groups covered by an existing MOU between the Department and an overseas Ministry or Education Authority are generally not considered study tours under this policy.

## 7 Sister-school agreements

A sister-school relationship is a voluntary agreement between two schools (or two groups or communities of schools) typically separated by distance in respect of geography and/or culture, to engage in cooperative and reciprocal activities for educational benefits of students and staff in the participating schools.

Sister-school relationships are formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which clearly outlines the specific cooperative activities the schools agree to pursue. Examples of activities could include:

- videoconferencing between classes or staff groups

- shared professional learning
- student e-pals
- shared student or class projects on mutually agreed topics
- educational visits between sister schools, involving students and staff. The duration of such visits should be less than three weeks and the intended frequency should be stated in the MOU.

Principals organising a visit to and/or hosting a visit from a sister school are responsible for ensuring:

- appropriate risk management procedures are in place for student and staff health, safety and wellbeing
- appropriate homestay or other accommodation is organised
- compliance with NSW child protection legislation
- appropriate levels of adult supervision
- travel insurance is obtained for all travellers
- transport arrangements are in place
- visits do not exceed three weeks
- compliance with the [Excursions policy and implementation procedures](#).

Where sister-school relationships include visits from the overseas school, the MOU should specify the reciprocal nature of the visits and a commitment to establishing a balanced program of visits and other activities.

Where the sister-school relationship includes mostly hosting the overseas school, then the visit by the overseas group should be arranged as a study tour through DE International.

Individual schools are responsible for any costs associated with sister-school activities and this responsibility should be covered by the MOU. Sister-school relationships must not include commercial gain for any school, student or staff member, exchange of monetary donations or monetary gifts.

Refer to the department's website for a [sample Memorandum of Understanding](#) for establishing a sister-school relationship.

## 8 Other visitors

International volunteers, international interns, international teachers on practicum and language assistant teachers from overseas may express an interest in visiting NSW Government schools.

Principals who wish to host overseas visits by any of these groups must:

- check that the visitor is covered by an MOU signed by the NSW Department of Education and an overseas education department or Ministry
- contact DE International to confirm if the organiser is registered to conduct the activity as an education agent or tour operator if the visit is organised outside the MOU process
- seek approval from the Director Educational Leadership
- advise the visitor that no accreditation with NSW Education Standards Association is required
- seek evidence that the visitor complies with NSW child protection legislation and has a Working with Children Check or its equivalent from their home country
- sight documentation from visitors entering Australia to confirm they are on the appropriate visa and that they comply with the visa requirements under the Department of Home Affairs legislation.