

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TRAVEL / ACTIVITIES POLICY

This policy applies to all international students enrolled in EQI programs living with an EQI approved Homestay Provider.

### RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. ensure EQI has in place arrangements to protect the personal safety and wellbeing of international students enrolled in Queensland Government schools;
2. meet the requirements of Queensland's child protection framework, Migration Act and Regulations and the standards of the ESOS Act regulatory framework outlined in the National Code (established under the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000*);
3. provide guidelines to manage potential risk associated with travel undertaken by international students enrolled in Queensland Government schools.

### KEY PRINCIPLES

1. The safety and well being of international students enrolled in Queensland Government schools is at all times paramount.
2. A Student must obtain approval in accordance with this Policy prior to undertaking any non-routine travel.
3. Schools are to have in place documented school procedures, consistent with this policy, to assess student travel requests.
4. Perceived risks are to be appropriately managed by reference to the appropriateness, potential benefits, and safety of the proposed travel or activity.
5. All travel requests, approvals or non-approvals are to be documented.
6. In assessing a student's request for travel EQI and the School may consider the age and level of maturity of the student. Therefore, supervision and approval requirements for students over 18 years of age may vary from the requirements for younger students.
7. EQI, through the School Principal, retains the final right of approval for all non-routine travel.
8. Students should not book travel, accommodation and/or activities until the relevant approval has been provided.
9. A student breaching this policy may have their enrolment cancelled and be reported to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on the basis that the student's welfare arrangements are unable to be guaranteed.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EQI is responsible for providing support and general welfare for the student for the period stated in the Welfare Letter provided by EQI to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). Together

EQI, schools and homestay providers share responsibility for the welfare of international students enrolled in Queensland Government schools.

EQI arranges for students to be placed with a homestay provider who has an obligation to provide accommodation and meals and exercises general supervision over the student. Parents/guardians of the students also retain responsibility for students while they are studying in Australia.

## OPERATING GUIDELINES

Travel can form one of the following 'types' of travel:

Type 1	Daily Routine Travel
Type 2	Local Overnight Travel
Type 3	Outside Local Area Travel / Holiday Requirements

### Type 1: Daily Routine Travel Requirements

**Routine** travel arrangements for the student during the homestay period, including travel with the homestay family, school staff and travel on public transport includes:

1. to and from school;
2. on school excursions;
3. daytrips;
4. to and from medical and other appointments;
5. to and from routine non-risky social and recreational activities; and
6. to other places and destinations in the ordinary/routine course of domestic arrangements (for example to travel to the shops, the cinema, a friend's house, etc).

Routine travel is covered by the Terms and Conditions for Homestay Providers, Part C of the Homestay Provider Application Form.

### Type 2: Local Overnight Travel Requirements

Students must complete the **Local Overnight Travel Request Form** for travel and activities that are **not routine** travel arrangements and that are within the Local Area. If the student intends to use the proposed arrangements on a regular basis, approval can be provided on an ongoing basis or for a specified period.

Each School will have a defined Local Area which will be notified to the Student and the Student's homestay family at the commencement of the Student's enrolment.

The Student must ensure that the Student's homestay family is aware of the proposed travel arrangements.

Overnight travel requests will only be approved for travel occurring during weekends or school vacation periods with appropriate supervision (as outlined below) and travel comprising low to moderate risk activities which aligns with Departmental risk management strategies. Approval will not be provided for high-risk activities or for travel to high-risk locations.

### Type 3: Outside Local Area Travel/Holiday Requirements

Students must complete the **Outside Local Area Travel /Holiday Travel and Activities Consent Form** for travel and activities outside the defined Local Area, holiday journeys to tourist destinations, and participation in activities considered to be **not routine**. This form is to be lodged with the International Student Coordinator in accordance with the timeframe required in the School's documented procedures. Requests for travel outside the Local Area will only be approved for travel

occurring during weekends or school vacation periods with appropriate supervision (as outlined below).

If the student intends to use these arrangements on a regular basis, additional approval is not required. However it is important the homestay family is aware of the arrangements.

This type of travel includes:

1. any trips outside the local area requiring overnight absence from the homestay provider's home and not covered by Type 1 and Type 2 Travel; and
2. activities such as organised tours.

Approval will not be provided for travel involving high risk activities as outlined below.

### SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

Approval for travel and activities will generally be conducted at a school level, with the School Principal responsible for ensuring that there are documented school procedures in place to assess student requests.

The rationale for School Based Management of travel and activities is that the School Principal and Staff are best positioned to evaluate the appropriateness and degree of risk associated with activities and travel in their local area.

School Principals may delegate to an appropriate School staff member, such as the International Student Coordinator, responsibility for and management of the School's travel approval processes and procedures for international students (including in relation to approving travel requests).

Schools are required to identify common travel and activities within their local area and establish a list of low/high risk activities to assist the approval process.

In assessing a student's request for travel, School Principals and EQI will take into account the views expressed by the Homestay Provider and the Student's Parents/Guardian in relation to the appropriateness of the proposed travel and/or activities. However, approval will not automatically be provided to proposed travel or activities simply because consent to the travel and/or activities has been provided by the Homestay Provider and/or the Student's Parents.

In assessing a student's request for travel, School Principals may also consider: the age and level of maturity of the student. Therefore, supervision and approval requirements for students over 18 years of age may vary from the requirements for younger students. In these cases, Principals will exercise their discretion in seeking parent/homestay approval.

### SUPERVISION

Travel requests will only be approved for students under 18 years of age where the student will be supervised by an adult (21 years or older) who holds a "blue card" issued by the Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian or equivalent (other than where the student is traveling in the company of a parent or another person approved under the *Migration Regulations 1994* or to or from their home country).

Travel with the Student's natural parents/guardian or the host family (with natural parents' approval) is generally considered appropriate and would not normally require the level of detail in the Type 3 form with regard to the itinerary etc. However, Students must still notify the School Principal of the proposed travel arrangements so that the School Principal can assess the level of detail required.

Other categories of supervised travel which are generally considered appropriate are travel with the Student's sibling 21 years or older; and travel with an EQI/Agent arranged tour where appropriate supervision and activities for under 18 year olds has been confirmed.

### HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES

EQI will not approve travel to high risk destinations or areas, or participation by Students in extreme sports and high risk activities. High risk activities include but are not limited to: abseiling, bungee jumping, caving, canyoning, hang gliding, jet skiing, motorcycling, parachuting, parasailing, racing (other than on foot), rock and/or mountain climbing, shark-cage diving, sky diving, white water rafting, ocean yachting and any activity that is not covered by the Overseas Students Health Cover.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

When undertaking a risk assessment to approve the application, School Principals can determine whether to obtain the consent of the student's parent/s / guardian(s) and the homestay provider **in the first instance** or approve the application and then send a courtesy letter to the parent advising that their student will be undertaking this activity with the School's approval.

School Principals can exercise discretion in assessing a student's application when considering the student's age and level of maturity, and whether or not parental/homestay approval is required.

Ultimately the decision to approve the travel rests with the School Principal. Situations may occur whereby the Parent has consented to their student undertaking an activity, however, the activities may be considered by the Principal as high risk or inappropriate and in these circumstances, permission will not be granted.

### CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS POLICY

In accordance with Migration Regulations and Visa Condition 8532, students under 18 years of age are accepted into our program on the condition that EQI, through an approved homestay provider, maintain arrangements for their general welfare, as outlined in the Welfare Letter. Students must uphold their Visa Conditions while studying and living in Australia or their Visa may be cancelled and the Student required to leave Australia.

If an application for travel/activity is not approved, the Student **must not** proceed with the proposed travel/activity.

If a student breaches this policy, the School Principal may, in the first instance, report the Student to EQI and advise that the School is no longer able to guarantee the welfare arrangements of the student.

This may lead to EQI initiating a process to cancel the student's enrolment in the program and report the Student to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on the basis that the student's welfare arrangements are unable to be guaranteed.

If a student intends traveling to his or her home country during the holidays, it is their responsibility to check school term and course dates with the International Student Coordinator at the school **prior to** booking flights.

For further information in relation to student travel enquiries please contact Education Queensland International, your nearest International Student Centre or your host school.