

Excursions - policy

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This policy should be read with the Department of Education and Training's (the department) Excursions guidelines and procedures, and the Official travel policy.

1. Policy

This policy outlines responsibilities and procedures that must be adhered to when planning and undertaking school excursions. Excursions must have clear educational outcomes that consider the learning programs and individual needs of students, as well as the educational programs and resources of the school. Activities must be inclusive, with all students appropriately supported to participate.

All excursion documentation must be submitted and approved in accordance with this policy and associated guidelines and procedures prior to any excursion taking place.

Interstate and international excursions may not be considered for approval if documentation is not submitted within the timeframes as set out in the Excursions guidelines and procedures.

The department does not accept responsibility for expenses incurred for excursions unless prior approval for the expenditure has been granted by the appropriate delegate.

Students should be notified when enrolling in a course of study where excursions are an integral part of the course. Alternative educational programs should be available to students unable to participate in an excursion.

1.1. Excursion categories

1.1.1. Category A – local area excursions and regular outings

Local area excursions include recurring excursions and regular outings that involve movement either on foot or requiring transport within the local community, but not involving absence overnight. Category A excursions require principal approval.

1.1.2. Category B – excursions beyond the local area or overnight

Excursions which involve travel beyond the local community, but within the Northern Territory (NT), and overnight accommodation, for example school camps. Category B excursions require principal approval.

1.1.3. Category C – interstate excursions

Interstate excursions require in-principle endorsement from the Senior Director before planning commences. Final approval is required from the Deputy Chief Executive, Schools.

Note that for excursions where NT Government is paying for travel, such as accompanying students interstate in an official capacity, approval is required by the Chief Executive as per the Northern Territory Government Travel Framework.

1.1.4. Category D - international excursions

International excursions involve travel overseas and require in-principle endorsement from the Senior Director before planning commences. Applications for international excursions are then submitted and progressed through the relevant Director School Operations, with endorsement from the Senior Director School Operations and Deputy Chief Executive Schools, and final approval by the Chief Executive.

Applications for excursions by divisions other than the Schools division should be endorsed by the relevant Senior Director, Division Head and Deputy Chief Executive Schools, with final approval by the Chief Executive. All requests for international excursions are to be justified in terms of need, educational benefits and cost prior to seeking approval for travel from the Chief Executive.

2. Business need

Excursions are a valuable teaching and learning experience, providing an opportunity for students to learn from the wider community, building on and reinforcing the school curriculum. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, educational excursions and regular outings should be conducted with consistent processes and awareness of all parties of their responsibilities. This policy and related guidelines seek to clarify the obligations and procedural requirements for preschools and schools, including independent public schools, and particularly principals, teachers and parents.

Where a school operates a preschool service or other education and care service regulated under the National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care, the department is obliged to ensure regulatory requirements are maintained at all times in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (Vic) and Education and Care Services National Regulations.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all excursions arranged by NT Government schools, including preschools and independent public schools, and department coordinated programs such as the Katherine Stronger Smarter Sisters program.

This policy does not apply to:

- third party arranged excursions such as Clontarf and STARS excursions, however:
 - principal approval must be sought in accordance with any third-party organisation's procedures prior to students participating in such excursions
 - prior to approving any such excursion, principals must be satisfied that appropriate risk management strategies are in place to ensure student wellbeing
 - where students are participating in overseas travel as part of an international excursion, the Chief Executive must be notified.
- work experience
- vocational education placements.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. Teacher in charge or authorised department officer

The teacher in charge or authorised department officer, is responsible for:

- following the Excursions guidelines and procedures to prepare all required documentation for the relevant excursion category
- submitting all documents to the principal for endorsement or approval within the required timelines
- identifying and addressing any potential conflicts of interest in consultation with the principal or relevant authorising officer

- considering special care relationships and professional boundaries and how these will be managed during excursion planning
- ensuring that there is an alternative program available for those students not attending the excursion
- working with the principal to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to assist students with additional needs to participate in the excursion activities and overall program
- ensuring that all relevant information about respective responsibilities and obligations is clearly communicated to all accompanying adults
- ensuring that all excursion staff and, where appropriate, students will be familiar with the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion following comprehensive risk assessments
- exercising proper care and supervision throughout the duration of the excursion
- monitoring destination advice level on the [Smartraveller](#) website when a Category D excursion is being planned.

4.2. Principals

The principal is responsible for:

- authorising an appropriate department officer to be in charge of any excursion undertaken by the school
- identifying and addressing any potential conflicts of interest in consultation with the teacher in charge
- reviewing any special care relationships and professional boundary issues identified by the teacher or authorised department officer in charge
- approving Category A and B excursions
- obtaining approval from the relevant authorising officer for Category C and D excursions, as directed in the Excursions guidelines and procedures
- ensuring that excursion outings are planned and conducted in accordance with this policy and the Excursions guidelines and procedures and that reasonable care is taken to ensure the safety of students and staff. This includes ensuring that volunteers and accompanying adults have completed mandatory reporting training, as outlined in the department's Mandatory reporting guidelines.
- ensuring that all teaching staff, trainers and volunteers adhere to the requirements of this policy and the Excursion guidelines and procedures
- ensuring that any expenditure of school funds required for the excursion is within their financial delegation and approved by the School Representative Body or School Management Council if required.

4.3. Senior Directors

Senior Directors are responsible for:

- in-principle endorsement of Category C and D excursions.

For excursions organised within the Schools division, Senior Directors Education are responsible for:

- notification of any in-principle Category C and D endorsements to the relevant School Operations regional team by email copy when notifying schools.

For excursions organised by divisions other than the Schools division, Senior Directors are responsible for:

- supporting authorised department officers to meet requirements of this policy and the Excursions guidelines and procedures
- endorsing completed excursion application forms for progression to the Division Head, Deputy Chief Executive, Schools (for approval of Category C) and the Chief Executive (for approval of Category D).

4.4. Directors School Operations

Directors School Operations are responsible for the following actions for excursion applications generated through the Schools division:

- supporting principals and Senior Directors Education to meet requirements of this policy and the Excursions guidelines and procedures
- endorsing Category C and D excursions for progression to the Senior Director School Operations.

4.5. Senior Director School Operations

Senior Director School Operations is responsible for:

- endorsing Category C and D excursions organised within the Schools division for progression to the Executive Director, School Support.
- coordinating advice and guidance to other divisions on preparation and planning for excursions, if required.

4.6. Division Heads

Division heads are responsible for:

- endorsing Category C and D excursions organised by divisions other than the Schools division and progressing to the Deputy Chief Executive, Schools.

4.7. Executive Director, School Support

Executive Director School Support is responsible for:

- endorsing Category C and D excursions organised by the Schools division and progressing to the Deputy Chief Executive, Schools.

4.8. Deputy Chief Executive, Schools

The Deputy Chief Executive, Schools is responsible for:

- approving all Category C excursion applications (excluding the exemption below)
- endorsing Category C excursion applications where NT Government is paying for travel
- endorsing Category D excursions and progressing to the Chief Executive.

4.9. Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- approving Category C excursion applications where NT Government is paying for travel
- approving Category D excursions and progressing the ministerial advice to the Minister for Education and Training for noting.

4.10. Secretariat

Secretariat is responsible for:

- providing Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet with notification of any Category D approved travel.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Accompanying adults	Teachers, parents, school representative body employees or any other adult individual who will be participating in the excursion and providing supervision.
Authorised department officer	Any Department of Education and Training officer who has been requested to arrange an excursion in a division other than the Schools division.
Consent	The parent agrees to their child participating in an activity after they have been made aware of the details, risks and associated costs involved.
Excursion	An educational, sporting or cultural trip by students within or outside the NT, under the direction of teachers and activity leaders authorised by the department.
Higher risk or of a significant nature	For the purpose of this policy, excursions that include water-based or outdoor education activities, overnight stays or include travel outside of the local area, are considered to be higher risk or of a significant nature.
Ochre Card	Photo identification proof that an individual has received a Working With Children clearance notice.
Parent	A child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal customary law or tradition. The definition of parent does not include a person standing in place of the parent on a temporary basis.
Parental responsibility	In regard to the definition of parent, refers to a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has daily care and control of the child, or b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in the relation to the long-term care and development of the child, c) has daily care and control of the child and the entitlement and responsibilities at (b) and includes a person who has been given the above responsibilities under another state or territory law.
Principal	For the purpose of excursion approval, includes a teaching principal.
Recurring excursion or regular outing	A walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that the student cohort visits regularly as part of its educational program, where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same on each outing, such as swimming lessons or visiting a local playground.
Teacher in charge	The teacher nominated by the principal to organise the excursion and to have ultimate responsibility and authority while the activity is in progress. In some circumstances a principal may nominate a trainer to be the teacher in charge of Category A or B excursions. For department-coordinated programs the teacher in charge may be a department officer who is not a teacher.
Trainer	An educator or instructor that has at least a Certificate IV in Training and assessing and vocational competencies, or qualifications to the level being trained and assessed.
Travel with students for official purposes	Travel either interstate or overseas by school staff on official business, such as travel to foster sister school relationships or interstate and intrastate events and ceremonies.

6. Related legislation, policy resources and documents

6.1. Legislation

- *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/CARE-AND-PROTECTION-OF-CHILDREN-ACT-2007>
- *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/EDUCATION-AND-CARE-SERVICES-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)* – <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/education-and-care-services-national-law-act-2010/016>
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations* – <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

6.2. Policy

Department policy documents are available on the Policy and advisory library - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies>

- Excursion guidelines and procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#excursions>
- Alcohol consumption on department premises policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#alcohol_consumption
- Mandatory reporting guidelines – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#mandatory_reporting
- Recording and reporting student injuries guidelines and procedures – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#recording_and_reporting
- Risk management policy and guidelines - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4123>
- Safety in school sport policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#school_sport
- School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities policy and procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/swimming-and-water-safety>
- Sexual behaviour in children guidelines – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety#sexual_behaviour
- Working with children clearance notices (Ochre Card) policy – https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/conduct#working_with_children_clearance

The following policy documents are for staff use and accessible on the Policy and advisory library on eLearn and on NTG Central:

- Delegations policy – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/5340>
- NTG overseas travel policy statement - <https://ntgcentral.nt.gov.au/services-and-support/travel-fleet-vehicles/overseas-travel-safety>
- Official travel procedures – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4178>
- Official travel policy - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4178>
- Official vehicle allocation, use and management – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4308>

- Remote travel procedures – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4178>

6.3. Resources

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade travel advice – <https://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/Pages/travel>
- National Quality Framework – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework>
- NT Public Sector Educators' Enterprise Agreement – <https://ocpe.nt.gov.au/employment-conditions-appeals-grievances/current-enterprise-agreements>
- School of Sport Education NT policies - <https://sporteducation.nt.edu.au/forms-and-policies/policies>
- Teacher Registration Board's Managing Professional Boundaries guidelines provide guidance when considering special care relationships and professional boundaries – <https://www.trb.nt.gov.au/system/files/uploads/files/2019/Managing%20Professional%20Boundaries%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Teachers.pdf>
- Teacher Responsibilities Guide – <https://education.nt.gov.au/careers-in-education/teacher-responsibilities-guide>

6.4. Supporting documents

- The following supporting documents are for staff use and are available on the Policy and advisory library on eLearn – <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/4262>
 - Excursions - parent consent form
 - Excursions - planning checklist
 - Excursion application – Category A and B
 - Excursion application – Category C and D
 - Excursions – interstate or international travel - memo for in-principle endorsement

Acronyms	Full form
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
NT	Northern Territory

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1,2,3,4	Details in TRM notes of previous versions	Quality School Systems and Support	Details in TRM notes of previous versions
5	July 2017	Quality School Systems and Support	Minor updates for publishing – spelling and formatting
6	August 2020	Quality School Systems and Support	Amended to meet the Early Childhood and Education Services Regulations. Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to current NTG template • Plain English amendments • Update of titles post realignment
7	April 2021	Quality School Systems and Support	Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning principal and teaching principal role and responsibility • Role clarity for QSSS • Remove requirement of movement requisition for category A and B • Remove requirement of category A and B excursions being submitted to QSSS
8	October 2022	Quality Standards and Regulation – Operational Policy	Administrative amendments to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022, including NTG template and minor formatting
9	July 2023	School Operations	Minor amendments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of link to Teacher Responsibilities Guide • Removal of reference to Movement Requisition

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened language on risk assessment
10	September 2023	School Operations	Amendments: Minor administrative changes. Change of delegation from CE to DCE RS for approval of Category C excursions.
11	December 2024	School Operations	Minor amendments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change branding to Department of Education and Training Strengthened language to clarify delegation for approval of Category D excursions Changes to position titles and divisions following the department's lift and shift Hyperlinks updated
12	March 2025	School Operations	Minor amendments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of the excursion forecast - no longer required by schools.