

GUIDELINES

ENROLMENT ELIGIBILITY

Responsibility of:	School Support Services	FILE2015/90
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Target Audience:	Corporate and school staff, parents and students	

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Enrolment policy and the associated guidelines.

1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines align with the [Education Act](#) (the Act) and the strategic direction of the Department of Education (the department), and are to be applied by all Northern Territory (NT) government schools when assessing a student's eligibility to enrol.

When an application for enrolment is received by a school it is the principal's responsibility to ensure that the child is eligible to enrol in the school.

1. Children residing in the NT with Australian citizenship or permanent residency:
 - (a) may be enrolled in primary, middle or secondary school if they are of compulsory school age (between 6 and 17 years or age); or
 - (b) may be enrolled in an early childhood program such as preschool or Transition if they are of pre-compulsory school age.
2. Other children, such as children on visas (international students), children expelled by the Minister or mature age student applicants may be considered for enrolment where specific requirements are met as outlined within these guidelines.
3. Some children may be eligible to enrol in:
 - (a) Special Schools and Special Centres (refer to the eligibility criteria outlined in the [Enrolment in Special Schools and Special Centres guidelines](#)).
 - (b) Distance Education Schools (refer to the eligibility criteria outlined in the ([Enrolment in Distance Education Schools guidelines](#))).

The eligibility to enrol in a NT government school is subject to a child's remaining allocation of government school education and the operational capacity of the school they are seeking enrolment in (refer to [Allocation of Government School Education \(26 Semesters\) guidelines](#) and [Enrolment Management and Priority Enrolment Guidelines](#)).

2. DEFINITIONS

Approved education and training is prescribed under the Act as:

- a) Year 11 or 12 of secondary education in the NT or the equivalent in a State or another Territory
- b) an education program or course of study or instruction provided by Charles Darwin University or the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- c) a higher education course accredited under the *Higher Education Act*
- d) an accredited course or approved apprenticeship under the *Northern Territory Employment and Training Act*
- e) other education or training approved by the Chief Executive
- f) other education or training at an institution in a State or another Territory that, if provided in the Territory, would comply with the NT requirements.

Compulsory school age refers to a child that turns six years of age on or before 30 June of the school year until the child completes Year 10 or turns 17 years of age, whichever comes first.

Compulsory participation phase applies to students who have completed Year 10, but have not turned 17, where the student must participate in an eligible option on a full time basis until they turn 17.

Criminal history checks are administered by the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES) through SAFE NT and detail whether a person has a criminal record.

Daily care and control of a child (in regards to the definition of parent) refers to a person who is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in relation to the day-to-day care and control of the child.

Distance education schools deliver education services, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically present in a traditional setting such as a classroom.

Eligible option is participation on a full time basis in one of the following:

- approved education or training; or
- if 15 years or over, paid employment (minimum average of 25 hours per week); or
- a combination of approved education/training and paid employment.

[Student Administration and Management System \(staff access only\)](#) (SAMS G2 and SAMS Classic, hereafter referred to as SAMS) is the standard student administration system used in all NT government schools to manage student enrolment and attendance.

Standard curriculum program is the provision of teaching and learning activities, instructional support and instructional materials for delivery of the following:

- the Early Years Learning Framework
- the Australian Curriculum
- the senior secondary NT Certificate of Education and Training
- Vocational Education and Training.

It also includes any materials, administration, services or facilities provided as part of the standard curriculum program.

Operational capacity is the total number of students that the school facilities and infrastructure can support, taking into consideration all programs offered by the school, while maximising the effective use of teaching, learning and ancillary spaces. It is calculated using a formula and periodically reviewed and agreed to by the principal.

Priority enrolment area is the geographical area surrounding a school that includes residential properties. Children residing within the priority enrolment area have priority of placement within the school over children who live outside the priority enrolment area.

Parent signifies 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 or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition.

Parental responsibility (in regards to the definition of parent) refers to a person who has:

- a) daily care and control of the child, or
 - b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in relation to the long-term care and development of the child, or
 - 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.

Student living independently is a child who is of or above the age of 14 years and not living with a parent. A child is also considered independent, although living with the parent, if the parent is **unable to control** the child's behaviour in relation to enrolment, attendance and participation.

Vetting entity is a central body within the department with the delegated authority to review criminal records submitted by prospective mature age students as part of their enrolment application to determine whether the record shows a conviction for a criminal offence.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Manager International Education will:

- provide timely and accurate advice to schools and parents of prospective international students regarding the requirements of international student enrolment and fees that may apply to international student enrolment.

Regional Directors will:

- work with principals to ensure compliance with the Enrolment policy and the associated guidelines by all schools within their area of responsibility.

Principals will:

- ensure that all enrolments in the school are administered in compliance with the Enrolment Eligibility and related guidelines
- obtain documentation that provides proof of identity and place of residence to inform enrolment decisions and ensure that documentation is filed in the Student Record Folder
- ensure that the visa class for all international students enrolled in the school is accurately recorded in SAMS

- ensure that prospective parents, and or students, are provided with accurate and timely advice regarding their eligibility to enrol, the 26 semester entitlement, any Enrolment Management Plan requirements, mature age student requirements and other relevant policy or guideline documents as required.

4. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Schools must ensure that they sight the original and obtain a copy of the required supporting documentation and include (on the copy) the name of the person who sighted the document, and the date the document was sighted.

Where an enrolment is accepted, the documentation must be placed on the Student Record Folder (refer to the [Enrolment procedures](#)).

4.1 Proof of identity

For proof of Australian citizenship, permanent residency or visa class, children who were:

- born in Australia must provide a birth certificate or equivalent¹
- not born in Australia must provide a passport and visa or travel documentation issued by the Department of Immigration specifying the visa subclass and expiry.

Where a child's Australian citizenship or permanent residency is not in question, the child's commencement at school is not to be declined or delayed where proof of identity is not available; however, the school should inform the parent/s that:

- i. in the case of a senior secondary student, this will affect the student's ability to obtain a NT Certificate of Education and Training, and
- ii. in the case of a student participating in Vocational Education and Training, this will affect the student's ability to access a Unique Student Identifier and be formally enrolled with a registered training organisation.

4.2 Proof of residential address

Proof of residential address is required to confirm that the child's usual place of residence is in the NT and whether the child resides in the school's priority enrolment area.

A child residing outside of the schools priority enrolment may be enrolled:

- if the school has the operational capacity to accept the enrolment; or
- where the school is on an Enrolment Management Plan, the child meets the enrolment criteria for students residing outside the school's priority enrolment area as outlined in the plan (refer to the [Enrolment Management and Priority Enrolment Guidelines](#)).

Proof of a child's residential address must display the actual residential address of the student (e.g. a parent's driver's licence, rental agreement or a utility bill). A document indicating a post office box is not considered adequate proof of residence.

¹ Equivalent form of proof of identification may include; Medicare Immunisation History Statement, passport or other appropriate documentation issued by a government department.

5. ENROLMENT FEES

5.1 Free Northern Territory government school education

Instruction that forms part of the standard curriculum program including any materials, facilities or administrative services provided as part of the standard curriculum program are free for children who:

- are Australian citizens or permanent residents in Australia; and
- reside in the NT; and
- are enrolled in a NT government school.

School representative bodies may request voluntary contributions or charge for the provision of optional extra education services outside of the standard curriculum program.

5.2 International students

An international student, or a person who intends to become an international student, may apply for enrolment in a Northern Territory government school. Such enrolments must adhere to specific enrolment conditions and visa requirements prior to being approved. Some international student enrolments are subject to enrolment fees.

All schools should liaise with International Education in relation to an application for enrolment from an international student (08 8999 5828 or InternationalServices@nt.gov.au).

Where an international student is accepted for enrolment, the visa number must be recorded in SAMS as outlined in the [International Students Fact Sheet](#).

5.3 Non-residents of the Northern Territory

Distance Education Centres may enrol students whose usual place of residency is not in the NT or who do not reside in Australia.

(a) Australian resident outside of the Northern Territory

A child who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident and is residing interstate, overseas or traveling may be enrolled in a NT Distant Education School with the approval of the Chief Executive (or delegate). Fees may be applied to the enrolment where the Chief Executive (or delegate) considers appropriate. If the applicant is over 18 years of age, they must also comply with the mature age enrolment requirements outlined in section 7 of these guidelines.

(b) Overseas residents

A child who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident and is residing overseas may be enrolled in a NT Distant Education School with the approval of the Chief Executive (or delegate). The child will be enrolled as an international fee paying student and must be under 18 years of age to be eligible for such an enrolment.

For further information refer to the [Enrolment in Distance Education Schools guidelines](#).

6. AGE OF ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The department offers enrolment to children of pre-compulsory school age, compulsory school age and children in the compulsory participation phase. Enrolment of students of compulsory school age and in the compulsory participation phase is mandatory and non-compliance may result in prosecution (refer to the [Enrolment Enforcement guidelines](#)).

Appendix A provides an outline of the pre-compulsory and compulsory phases of schooling and minimum age requirements for entry into programs and year levels.

6.1 Pre-compulsory school age

The department provides a variety of early education programs for students of pre-compulsory school age, with specific age of entry requirements applied to each program.

(a) Families as First Teachers

Families as First Teachers is a pre-compulsory school age program targeting improved developmental outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged children by working with families and children from birth to 3 years of age.

Where the service is available, children from birth to 3 years of age can be enrolled at the school and participate with a parent in the Families as First Teachers program.

(b) Preschool (including mobile preschool)

Children who turn 4 years of age on or before 30 June of the school year are eligible to enrol in a regular preschool program at the commencement of the school year.

Children who turn 4 years of age after 30 June of the school year are eligible to enrol in a preschool program after their birthday. This will be dependent on the preschool's capacity to enrol the student and the understanding that the child will access more than 12 months of preschool by re-enrolling the following school year.

(c) Transition

Children who turn 5 years of age on or before 30 June of the school year are eligible to enrol in Transition at the commencement of that school year.

Children who turn 5 years of age after 30 June of the school year are eligible to enrol in Transition from the commencement of the following school year.

(d) Early entry provisions

Provision for early entry into preschool and Transition is limited to:

- gifted students who fall within the exceptionally or profoundly gifted categories (refer to the [Gifted Education policy and guidelines](#))
- children in very remote schools may be enrolled in a preschool program when they turn 3 years of age, provided they will be accompanied by a parent who will remain with them for each session. Children will need to be accompanied until they reach 3 years and 6 months of age.

6.2 Compulsory school age

Children who turn six years of age on or before 30 June of the school year are of compulsory school age and must be enrolled in a school or a Distance Education Centre, unless they are:

- complying with special arrangements or are exempt from enrolling by the Chief Executive; or
- participating in an approved home education program (refer to the [Home Education policy](#)).

Once a student has completed Year 10 the child must participate in an eligible option until they reach 17 years of age. An eligible option is approved education or training or, provided the student is 15 years or over, paid employment or a combination of the two.

7. MATURE AGE ENROLMENT

A person of 18 years of age or older who has not been enrolled in a school for the preceding 12 months must comply with special enrolment conditions. Prior to applying to a school for enrolment, a prospective mature age student should:

- a) discuss their intention to enrol with the principal
- b) if required, submit an Application for Additional Semesters (refer to the [Allocation of Government School Education \(26 Semesters\) guidelines](#))
- c) undertake a criminal history check at their own cost and submit to the vetting entity (refer to the [Criminal History Checks for Prospective Mature Age Students guidelines](#)).

Where enrolment of a mature age student is approved, the principal may cancel the enrolment at any stage where:

- a) the student has not attended school for at least eight weeks without reasonable excuse; or
- b) over a period of at least eight weeks the student has attended for less than 50% of the time in which instruction is being provided; or
- c) in the opinion of the principal, the student is not making satisfactory progress.

International students are not eligible for enrolment in a NT government school, including Distant Education Centres, if they are 18 years of age or older.

8. EXPELLED STUDENTS

Students expelled (refer to the [Expulsion guidelines](#)) from a NT government school can only be re-enrolled in a government school if the Minister reviews and revokes the expulsion. A record of a student's expulsion is noted in the 'Reason for Leaving' field in SAMS.

However, under the Chief Executive's direction a child of compulsory school age who has been expelled, may be enrolled in a Distance Education Centre without having the Minister review and revoke the expulsion.

Penalties apply for parents who do not ensure a child's non-attendance if they are expelled from a NT government school.

9. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

As outlined in the [Disability Standards for Education](#), students with disabilities enrol in schools on the same basis as students without disabilities. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's needs. Refer to the [Students with Disabilities policy and guidelines](#) for more information.

The department operates a number of Special Schools and Special Centres to cater for students with a diagnosed intellectual disability and/or additional complex needs. The [Enrolment in Special Schools and Special Centres guidelines](#) detail the specific eligibility criteria and verification processes that must be applied for a student to be granted enrolment in a Special School or Special Centre.

10. HOME EDUCATION

The department considers that the optimum learning environment for children is through enrolment and attendance at a school, unless there are particular circumstances to warrant home education.

Parents of children who are of compulsory school age who wish to home educate must ensure that, prior to home education commencing, approval is received from the Chief Executive. Refer to the [Home Education policy](#) for more information.

Enrolment with a distance education centre is not home education.

11. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance policy and associated guidelines
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education Regulations
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Security (Administration) Act• Education and Care Services National Regulations

Appendix A

Guide to age of entry and year level requirements

Phase of schooling	Year level/program	Minimum age* (by 30 June of the year of enrolment)
Pre-compulsory school age	FAFT	0-3
	Preschool	4
	Transition	5
Compulsory school age	Year 1	6
	Year 2	7
	Year 3	8
	Year 4	9
	Year 5	10
	Year 6	11
	Year 7	12
	Year 8	13
	Year 9	14
	Year 10	15
Compulsory participation phase	Eligible	Year 11 ..
		16
		17

*The minimum ages outlined are indicative only. Student age will vary slightly depending on individual student circumstances particularly if a student has repeated a year level, or in the case of gifted and talented students, advanced through a year level.