

**MEMORANDUM TO  
SECONDARY AND CENTRAL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
SCHOOL EDUCATION DIRECTORS  
REGIONAL DIRECTORS  
INSTITUTE DIRECTORS**

**DN/09/00335**

**ENROLMENT OF ADULTS IN NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

Dear Colleagues

Given a number of requests for clarification of the policy on the enrolment of adults in our secondary and central schools, Implementation Procedures relating to the *Enrolment of Persons 18 Years and over in New South Wales Government Schools* have been produced for your information and guidance.

Our fundamental policy position is that schools provide education and training for children and young people. TAFE NSW provides education and training for adults, along with other technical and further education providers and the adult and community education sector.

There will, however, be some circumstances when it is appropriate for adults to enrol in schools. The *Implementation Procedures* give direction about those circumstances and the procedures which are to be implemented in processing and determining applications to enrol in a NSW Government school by people of 18 years and over.

I expect that the enrolment of adults in secondary and central schools will be relatively rare but will occur when other more age-appropriate options are not available and the Principal can make suitable arrangements for adult education in an essentially child-focussed environment.

Principals seeking advice on the enrolment of adults should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their School Education Director.

Best wishes

Trevor Fletcher  
**DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL SCHOOLS**  
15 September 2009

# OFFICE OF SCHOOLS

## ENROLMENT OF PERSONS 18 YEARS AND OVER IN NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

### IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the policy statement [Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy](#)

#### RATIONALE

- Schools are primarily established to provide education and training for children and young people.
- The education and training of adults is primarily delivered by non-school provision including [Technical and Further Education \(TAFE \)](#) and [Adult and Community Education \(ACE\)](#)
- A child (between the ages of 6 and under 18) **is entitled** to be enrolled at their local designated government school for which they are eligible
- Section 34 of the [Education Act](#), which provides the legislative basis for admission of children to government schools, also states [ at s34 (7)] that *Nothing in this Part prevents the principal of a government school from accepting an application for the enrolment of an adult at that school for the purposes of receiving instruction.*
- Therefore, while not having an entitlement to enrol, a person of 18 years and over may seek to enrol at their local school in certain circumstances.
- In general, a person 18 years or over **may seek** to enrol into a Stage 6 school program in order to complete the Higher School Certificate.
- A school principal, in consultation with a school placement panel, will determine whether a person 18 years or over is accepted to enrol in a NSW government school to undertake a course of study leading to the Higher School Certificate.
- In exceptional circumstances and in the absence of appropriate, accessible alternative education and training provision, a person 18 years or over **may seek** to enrol at a government school to undertake a course of study not leading to the Higher School Certificate but this will require the approval of the Regional Director.

These procedures seek to facilitate enrolment of persons 18 years and over at government schools in circumstances where their enrolment is supported by:

- the need to continue and complete their Stage 6 schooling
- other evidence of need
- willingness to comply with school policies and procedures
- an intention is to achieve certification outcomes.

In general, these procedures are not intended as an avenue for ongoing or extended school attendance beyond schooling age for students not working towards the Higher School Certificate. These Procedures do not apply to adult full fee paying Overseas Students. Such students are enrolled via the Department's [International Students Centre](#).

## EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES PROVISION

In some remote rural areas, the only government facility offering face to face education and training provision is the government school. For a range of reasons, residents may not be able to access TAFE or ACE provision directly or via distance education.

In exceptional circumstances, on the basis of a submission from the school Principal endorsed by the School Education Director, and following consultation with adult education and training providers, the Regional Director may approve the enrolment at a government school of persons of 18 years or over seeking to engage in a course of study other than for the Higher School Certificate.

In these circumstances, other requirements contained in these procedures will still apply.

A member of the NSW Teaching Service with an appointment to a school may not also be enrolled as a student at that school.

## PROCEDURES FOR ENROLMENT OF PERSONS OVER 18 YEARS OF AGE

### Making an Application

The applicant completes an [\*Application to Enrol in a NSW Government School\*](#), signs the *Acknowledgement* and *Declaration of accuracy* and submits the application to the Principal.

In addition, the applicant submits to the principal the following:

- Proof of their age and identity including any previous names
- The names and contact details of two character referees
- A statement that they have no history of behaviour that would indicate they pose a safety risk to others in the school environment
- Evidence of current or recent studies, where applicable

### Processing the Application

Once received, the principal must process the application and issue a written notice of the outcome of the application within 15 working days.

The principal forms a school placement panel to consider the application to enrol and associated documentation.

This panel will be convened by the Principal or Principal's Delegate and will include, at a minimum, the student welfare coordinator or relevant year advisor and a parent of a current student nominated by the school's P&C Association. The panel may be different to the school's placement panel considering the non-local enrolment of children.

The panel will

- interview the applicant and
- make a recommendation to the Principal

## **The Interview**

The purpose of the interview with the school placement panel is to:

- explain to the applicant the nature of the school programs, rules and culture
- establish the applicant's willingness to comply with school policies and procedures
- assess whether the applicant is a suitable person to enrol in terms of
  - (a) their commitment to education and training through schooling
  - (b) their academic readiness to undertake the school program
  - (b) their capacity to integrate successfully in classrooms of children
  - (c) any risk they may pose with regard to safety
- discuss any support the applicant may need to undertake the education program in the school, and if necessary, their willingness to explore this further with relevant departmental support staff such as the school counsellor or other learning support staff
- confirm with the applicant the appropriateness of the referees or request alternative referees
- if relevant, seek agreement from the applicant for the panel to seek information from government agencies, health professionals or other relevant bodies.

## **Planning for Additional Support**

Following the interview and prior to acceptance, the principal and applicant may need to discuss provisions that would be necessary to support the applicant's enrolment in the school. These may include:

- the appointment of a staff member as a contact person and mentor
- a process for monitoring the progress of the student and a regular review of the success of the enrolment
- the development of a "memorandum of understanding" between the principal and the student to be reviewed at the end of the first term of enrolment and then as appropriate. This may include agreed expectations of the student, agreed provisions by the school to assist the student, dates for review and a process for resolving any disagreements.

## **The Assessment**

In coming to a decision, the Principal may take account of

- the recommendation of the panel
- the applicant's response at the support planning meeting
- the referees' reports
- any relevant information on the applicant held by the Department while being mindful of the limited utility of dated information
- relevant information from government agencies, health professionals or other relevant bodies with regard to potential risks to health and safety in the school

## **Informing the Applicant of the Outcome of the Application**

Written notice of the outcome of the application must be issued within 15 working days of receipt.

An unsuccessful applicant is to be provided with information including:

- reason for declining the application
- alternative options for furthering his or her education, including TAFE NSW
- contact numbers for relevant advice and support
- the process for an internal review of the decision

Internal reviews of enrolment decisions are dealt with under the *Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines*. This document can be accessed on the Department's intranet at <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/aboutus/epac/index.htm>.

## **Termination of an Adult Enrolment**

A Principal may terminate an adult enrolment on the grounds of

- (a) lack of commitment to education and training through schooling
- (b) lack of academic readiness to undertake the school program
- (c) demonstrated incapacity to integrate successfully in classrooms of children
- (d) demonstrated risk to the welfare, health or safety of staff or students including the adult student
- (e) proof that documentation submitted as part of the application to enrol was false or misleading

## **Further Information**

Adult community members should discuss their proposed enrolment with the Principal.

Principals seeking further advice should, in the first instance, consult with their School Education Director. Information is also available from the Director, School and Regional Policy in the Office of Schools (02) 9561 8514