



Department of
Education

Leisure Activities in Residential Facilities procedures

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These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy.

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These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy.

1. Policy supported

Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy

2. Scope

These procedures apply to:

- Supervisors of student residential colleges and Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture
- College managers of student residential colleges
- Residential managers of Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture
- The Manager Residential Colleges
- Principals of Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture

Guidance

These procedures recognise that the residential facility is a student's home away from home. The spirit of these procedures is to provide a balance between students enjoying a lifestyle similar to one experienced at home while protecting them from risk of harm when under the Department's care.

These procedures do not apply to:

- Low risk everyday leisure activities occurring on site (such as most sports, crafts and gaming). These activities are an accepted part of boarding life, are not subject to these procedures, and do not require specific parental consent. College staff continue to maintain a duty of care to monitor these activities to protect students from risk of harm.
- Clubs and associations. Students who are members of sports clubs, gyms and/or other associations (e.g. cadets) sign out of the college to attend training and games. Supervisors need not be present after students have been handed into the care of these bodies. (For the avoidance of doubt, this includes aquatic clubs e.g. a swimming, surf or yacht club.)

Refer to Appendix A: Leisure Activities Flowchart outlining the steps to plan, prepare, and proceed with leisure activities.

3. Procedures

3.1 Planning leisure activities

Supervisors must:

- propose ideas for leisure activities to their line manager for consideration before planning the activity

Line managers must:

- consider the suitability of proposed leisure activities and
 - endorse planning
 - forbid the activity
- forbid the planning of leisure activities where a venue or other external provider requires waivers, indemnities, disclaimers, or other documents which absolve them from liability
- confirm that external providers/venues have a minimum \$20 million public liability insurance cover
- confirm that Appendix B: Leisure Activity Planning Form is completed for all off-site leisure activities.

Guidance

Endorsement from line managers to plan activities does not need to be documented. The intent is that the effort and resources spent on planning activities are directed toward those that are likely to proceed.

Completion of the Leisure Activity Planning Form addresses risk, supervision and other planning requirements that need to be satisfied to undertake a leisure activity.

A Leisure Activity Planning Form is mandatory for all off-site leisure activities and is encouraged for on-site activities that carry increased risk exposure.

Recurring activities can be authorised through one Leisure Activity Planning Form. Similar activities where risks are broadly the same can also be documented and authorised through one Leisure Activity Planning Form.

Staff should not organise the type of activities that require waivers. Staff should not sign waivers or ask parents/carers to sign them.

Staff should also be aware that waivers, disclaimers or indemnities may be obscured within certain terms and conditions of sale. Some external venues are prepared to give up or amend their waivers to enable students to access their activity and staff can suggest this option to the provider.

To cover their legal liability, external providers/venues must have a minimum \$20 million public liability

insurance cover and, if appropriate, a minimum of \$5 million professional liability insurance cover. Further information on insurance can be requested from Legal services on [Legal advice request](#) (staff only).

3.2 Risk assessment

College managers and Residential managers must:

- confirm that an Appendix C: Template Risk Assessment has been documented when planning a leisure activity
- monitor the assessed risk immediately before and during the leisure activity
- review the risk assessment as part of the post-activity review.

Guidance

A risk assessment involves identifying and assessing risks and then implementing strategies (referred to as 'controls') to treat (i.e. reduce) the risk. The objective is to reduce the level of risk to within a tolerable range.

For further guidance on risk management, refer to the [Risk and Business Continuity Management policy](#).

Risk assessments and monitoring should consider relevant risk factors such as, but not limited to, the:

- environment
- students' capacity
- activities conducted
- equipment
- capabilities of the supervisor/supervisory team
- involvement of external providers
- students' cultural safety.

Documented risk assessments may be undertaken once for recurring and similar leisure activities or individually for one-off activities. A template risk assessment is included in Appendix C: Template Risk Assessment and signed by the college manager or residential manager as evidence it is complete and accurate.

Risk is dynamic and should be constantly monitored before and during leisure activities. Monitoring of risk does not need to be documented. A final check of the assessed risk should be performed before the leisure activity is approved to commence.

As part of the post-activity review (Appendix F), the risk assessment and monitoring should be analysed to determine if they were correct and/or appropriate. This analysis should be used to inform future risk assessments.

3.3 Supervision

3.3.1 General requirements for all activities

College managers and residential managers must:

- determine the level of supervision required from their documented risk assessment
- confirm supervision arrangements for all medium risk activities
- confirm that the supervisory team collectively has the experience, knowledge, and skills to:
 - identify and establish a safe environment for the leisure activity
 - monitor and respond to weather and environmental conditions before and during activities
 - monitor and assess the physical and emotional wellbeing of the students
 - effect a rescue and provide emergency care
- confirm that all members of the supervisory team are aware of their obligations to cancel all or part of the leisure activity if:
 - risks increase beyond the level authorised
 - new risks emerge that are unable to be treated to the level authorised
- confirm that adequate supervision is provided to all students under their duty of care, including non-participants.

Supervisors must:

- confirm that first aid equipment is available for the immediate treatment or care of a student or supervisor who is injured or becomes ill during a supervised leisure activity
- cancel all or part of the leisure activity if:
 - risks increase beyond the level authorised
 - new risks emerge that are unable to be treated to the level authorised.

3.3.2 Specific requirements for water-based activities

College managers and residential managers must:

- determine the level of supervision required for all activities in offsite swimming pools patrolled by qualified lifeguards
- confirm that all other water-based activities take place only under the direct supervision

of staff with the appropriate water rescue qualifications.

Guidance

Low risk activities may take place without direct supervision if deemed appropriate in the risk assessment for the activity. For example, following a risk assessment and implementation of appropriate risk mitigation strategies, students might receive approval to walk to the local shops without direct supervision by staff.

The supervision strategy should be both quantitative (the number of staff present) and qualitative (their skills, qualifications, focus and attention). For example, surfing may take place only under the direct supervision of staff able to immediately intervene in the case of incident or emergency. In contrast, supervisors need only be available in the general location but do not need to maintain constant eyesight over students who are shopping in town or at a mall.

Adequate supervision arrangements should also be in place for students who are merely spectators at the activity, or who are remaining at the college.

All Department of Education buses should be fitted with first aid kits in line with School Bus specifications.

For further guidance in determining supervision strategies, refer to the [Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public School Procedures](#).

Water-based activities:

Risk assessments for off-site water activities should consider the presence of suitably qualified lifeguards. For example, following a risk assessment it may be concluded that fewer supervisory staff are necessary when students attend a patrolled swimming pool such as may be found at a recreation centre or municipal pool, than when attending a swimming pool that is not patrolled by lifeguards.

3.4 Informed consent

College managers and Residential managers must:

- provide parents with detailed information about leisure activities, including the location and transport arrangements (where applicable), to enable them to make an informed decision as to their child's participation
- provide an informed consent form to parents for their completion, including the option for parents to decline their consent
- not allow student participation in a leisure activity without a signed informed consent form.

Guidance

A student's participation in a leisure activity is subject to receipt of the signed informed consent form. Parents provide their informed consent in writing using the relevant form for the specific leisure activity. Informed consent can be received annually for recurring activities.

For every leisure activity, parents should be provided with all relevant information.

Annual Informed Consent Form:

Parents complete signed documentation (Appendix D) to confirm that they:

- understand the nature of the leisure activities their child is likely to participate in
- approve their child's participation
- understand they may withdraw their approval at any time
- will provide relevant additional medical information not already held by the college relating to their child.

It is recommended that annual informed consent forms include as many activities as possible so that parents need not be contacted on each and every occasion. Include all recurring activities and those that are expected, planned or which may be considered.

It is best to provide annual informed consent forms to parents at the start of the year so that students can receive the required permissions as soon as practicable upon their admission to the college.

Single Use Informed Consent Form:

Parents complete signed documentation (Appendix E) to confirm that they:

- understand the nature of the leisure activities their child will participate in
- approve their child's participation
- will provide relevant additional medical information not already held by the college relating to their child.

Depending on the nature and specific activities of the leisure activities, further advice and details may need to be included.

Where relevant, college staff should provide details of:

- travel date and times
- venue/s and activities
- transport details
- planned activities
- supervisory team
- costs
- meal arrangements

- any additional information regarding special clothing or item requirements.

3.5 Authorisation to prepare leisure activities

When satisfied with the planning of the leisure activity, college managers and residential managers must:

- authorise preparing of low risk leisure activities
- confirm that authorisation has been obtained for medium risk leisure activities
- not authorise preparing of high risk activities.

When satisfied with the planning of the leisure activity, the Manager Residential Colleges and principals must:

- authorise preparing of medium risk leisure activities
- not authorise preparing of high risk activities.

Guidance

Generally, authorisation to prepare for leisure activities should take place well before the activity is intended to proceed.

Low risk leisure activities can be authorised by college managers and residential managers. Principals can also authorise low risk leisure activities if they choose.

Medium risk activities can only be authorised by the Manager Residential Colleges and principals.

3.6 Approval to proceed with leisure activities

College managers and residential managers must:

- confirm that a final check of the assessed risk has been performed and the level of risk has not increased beyond the level authorised
- provide approval to proceed prior to each occasion a leisure activity takes place
- immediately withdraw approval (i.e. cancel the activity) if:
 - risks increase beyond the level authorised
 - new risks emerge that are unable to be treated to the level authorised.

Guidance

The concept of 'approval' to proceed with a leisure activity is ongoing. In practice, approval is required prior to leaving college grounds; while in transit; upon arrival at the location; and throughout its duration. College staff should be monitoring risk at all times to assess the safety of students.

The final check of the assessed risk before the leisure activity is approved to commence does not need to be documented.

College managers and residential managers may nominate an alternative staff member (or members) to approve leisure activities for situations where they may be unavailable.

3.7 Post-activity review

College managers and residential managers must:

- conduct and document a post activity review whenever a notifiable incident takes place during a leisure activity
- where applicable, confirm the post activity review is used to inform the documented risk assessment next time the leisure activity is planned.

Guidance

College managers and residential managers conduct a post-activity review (Appendix F) to determine:

- if the planning was adequate and if the documented risk assessment was correct and appropriate
- how the incident was handled
- what to do differently next time.

To facilitate continuous improvement, post-activity reviews are encouraged following all off-site leisure activities.

Notifiable incidents directly impact on the health and wellbeing of students and/or staff and should also be recorded in the Online Incident Notification System (OINS).

3.8 Recordkeeping

College managers and residential managers must maintain a leisure activities file which contains the following information and is available for review:

- Documented authorisation (Appendix B)
- Documented risk assessment (Appendix C)
- Informed consent forms (Appendix D or Appendix E)

- Post-activity review (where applicable) (Appendix F)

Guidance

The leisure activities file may be electronic or hard copy.

Where documented risk assessments and informed consent forms have been completed for recurring leisure activities, they need only be recorded in the file once per year. They do not need to be copied each time a leisure activity proceeds.

A record of students' whereabouts should be accurately maintained at all times in REACH.

4. Definitions

Approval

Allowing specific students to participate in an authorised leisure activity on a specific date and time.

Authorisation

Endorsing a leisure activity to be considered for preparing and approval. It is dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a Leisure Activity Planning Form.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is when Aboriginal people are in environments and relationships where their:

- cultural identity is valued, not challenged or denied
- presence is welcomed and respected
- experiences are believed and validated
- knowledge and skills are recognised and supported
- advice is listened to and acted upon
- they do not experience racism in any form

Cultural safety can only be determined by Aboriginal people themselves.

High risk

Risk is unacceptable and unable to be reduced to a reasonable level.

High risk activities must not take place.

Leisure activity

An activity that is recreational in nature. An activity undertaken for fun, fitness, entertainment or enjoyment that is not necessarily connected to the school curriculum.

Low risk

Risk is generally acceptable with the current controls in place.

Low risk activities may take place without direct supervision if deemed appropriate in the risk assessment for the activity.

Medium risk

Risk is generally acceptable with the additional controls in place to reduce risk.

Medium risk activities must be supervised.

Supervisor

Supervisor is a collective term that includes:

- Senior boarding supervisors of student residential colleges
- Aboriginal boarding supervisors of student residential colleges
- Boarding supervisors of student residential colleges
- Residential supervisors of Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture

It can also include College managers of student residential colleges and Residential managers of Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture when they are undertaking supervising duties.

Swimming pool

A controlled, indoor or outdoor, still water environment contained within an artificial structure, monitored for water quality.

5. Related documents

Relevant legislation or authority

School Education Act 1999 (WA)

School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)

School Education (Student Residential Colleges) Regulations 2017 (WA)

Related Department policies and procedures

Duty of Care for Public School Students policy

Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public School procedures

Risk and Business Continuity Management policy

Working with Children Checks in Department of Education Sites policy

Other documents

Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework

Code of Conduct and Standards (staff only)

Local Area Excursions

Local Area Excursions with Overnight Stay

Swimming and Water Based Activities

6. Contact information

Policy manager:

Residential Colleges

Telephone: (08) 9264 4425

Policy contact:

Manager Residential Colleges

Telephone: (08) 9264 4425

7. History of changes

Effective date	1 February 2024
Last update date Procedure version no.	1.0
Notes	These new procedures support the Duty of Care for Public School Students policy. Signed by the Director General on 14 December 2023 D23/1353332
Effective date	1 February 2024
Last update date	22 December 2025
Procedure version no.	1.1
Notes	Minor changes to links and changes as per style guide. Approval D25/1233601

8. Appendices

Appendix A: [Leisure Activities Flowchart](#) (PDF file - 63.1kB)

Appendix B: [Template Leisure Activity Planning Form](#) (DOCX file - 74.6kB)

Appendix C: [Template Risk Assessment](#) (DOCX file - 121.4kB)

Appendix D: [Template Informed Consent Form \(Annual\)](#) (DOCX file - 82.1kB)

Appendix E: [Template Informed Consent Form - Single Use](#) (DOCX file - 71.4kB)

Appendix F: [Template Post-Activity Review](#) (DOCX file - 66.7kB)

9. More information

Supporting content

Policy

[Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy](#)

Procedure review date

1 February 2027

Procedure last updated

23 December 2025
