



Department of
Education

Student Drivers on Public Schools with Farms procedures

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Version: 2.1

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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 all site managers and Department employees in public schools with farms where student drivers operate government owned light commercial vehicles and machinery.

3. Procedures

3.1 Management of student drivers

The site manager must verify that the authorised staff follow the Train, assess and supervise student drivers (staff only).

3.2 Student eligibility requirements

The site manager must confirm:

- Students must be at least 15 years old and in Year 10
- A completed and signed Student driver consent form is received prior to undertaking the driving program
- Students do not have any medical or physical conditions that impair their driving ability (e.g., the site manager may request medical evidence from parents/carers)).
- Students participate in a structured driver training program as per the Train, assess and supervise student drivers (staff only).

3.3 Driving permit system

Staff must ensure and implement a three-stage driving permit system. Students are required to pass written and practical assessments for each vehicle type. For further details refer to Train, assess and supervise student drivers (staff only).

- **Red Permit**

- For light commercial vehicles and light tractors under 4,500 kilograms Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM).
- One-on-one instruction only, must have direct supervision
- No passengers on light tractors.

- **Yellow Permit**

- For students 15+ with prior experience determined by authorised staff.
- Allows supervised driving of vehicles and machinery up to 8,000 kilograms Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM).

- **Green Permit**

- Allows a student to drive and operate heavier machinery 4,500 kilograms GVM and above (e.g. trucks, large tractors, combine harvesters, loaders) determined by authorised staff and subject to other additional legislative and/or other requirements for operating particular machinery.

3.4 Training and assessment

The site manager must confirm that:

- Students undertake a written and practical assessment for each permit level.
- Training and assessment is delivered by staff who:
 - Hold a valid licence relevant to the vehicle or machinery
 - Are experienced drivers/operators
 - Are qualified trainers and assessors, or as a minimum holds the required Trainer and Assessor Skill set and demonstrates competence in the use of the vehicle or machinery.
- Training and assessment are aligned with the national Units of Competency.

3.5 Record keeping

The site manager must confirm:

- Records of student driver permissions, attainment suspensions, and other relevant

documents are maintained in accordance with the Department's Record Management policy.

- Examples of records include but are not limited to:
 - Training sessions
 - Assessment results
 - Permit progression
 - Medical/vision checks
 - Signed Student driver consent form
 - Signed student responsibilities and obligations form relating to the driving program.

3.6 Emergency and safety protocols

The site manager must:

- Develop and communicate an Emergency Response Plan using the Department's Emergency and Critical incident Management in Public Schools policy
- Ensure students wear appropriate personal protective equipment when driving
- Include risk assessments for each vehicle and machinery type in accordance with the Department's Risk and Business Continuity Management policy
- Obtain the Student driver consent form
- Communicate to the student their responsibilities and obligations relating to the driving program
- Confirm that any passengers in a light commercial vehicle driven by a student driver are inside the cab and are wearing seat belts
- Ensure that students are not permitted to drive quad bikes under any circumstances
- Ensure that students are not permitted to drive government owned light commercial vehicles and machinery on public roads even when they hold any class of Western Australian Driver's Licence as issued by the Department of Transport (including Learner and Probationary).

3.7 Behaviour and compliance

The site manager must:

- Establish a Student Driving Code of Conduct

- Consider suspension of driving rights for breaches of driving rules
- Include disciplinary procedures for unsafe behaviour.

3.8 Communication and consent

The site manager must:

- Provide clear information to parents/guardians about:
 - Program objectives
 - Risks and responsibilities
 - Supervision and safety measures
 - Communicate the need for written consent before allowing students to participate in driving activities as passengers or drivers
- Use standardised templates for consent forms and assessments
- Communicate to students their responsibilities and obligations regarding the driving program.

3.9 Supervision

The site manager must confirm that all staff approving students to drive government owned light commercial vehicles and machinery comply with the following levels of supervision:

- students on a Red Permit must only be permitted to drive **light commercial vehicles**:
 - **utility**, with a staff member in the front seat at all times who uses their professional judgement as to whether it is appropriate to have passengers (refer to the information provided below under guidance)
 - **light tractors**, when undertaking an approved task within a designated area and with a staff member in close proximity at all times.
- students on a Yellow or Green must only be permitted to drive:
 - **light commercial vehicles**, with students as passengers, when engaged in supervised activities within the designated area for the approved task and in line of sight of a staff member or if line of sight is obstructed, actively supervised by a staff member at all times
 - **machinery**, when undertaking an approved task within the designated area and in line of sight of a staff member or if line of sight is obstructed, actively supervised by a staff member at all times.

Guidance

Students on a Red Permit are permitted to have other students as passengers only when there is a staff member in the front passenger seat, who holds a valid licence applicable to the light commercial vehicle. A staff member uses their knowledge of student capabilities and environmental conditions to make a professional judgement in assessing and minimising the potential risks of having a student driver with student passengers. Factors to be considered in making a judgement include: number of students, age and abilities of students and developmental profile of each student.

Where possible the designated area for an activity should have a visible and identifiable boundary.

Variables affecting supervision levels and professional judgement decisions include:

- number of students, age, typical behaviour and abilities of students
- number and positioning of supervisor/staff
- current activity of each student
- areas in which the students are engaged in an activity
- developmental profile of each student (and/or group of students)
- experience, knowledge and skill of each supervisor/staff.

4. Definitions

Active supervision

Active supervision refers to constant and diligent supervision of every student (individual or group). It differs for different permit types.

Active supervision in training towards the next permit

Trainer in the cab with the student driver of a light passenger vehicle or in close proximity or in the cab of a machine.

Active supervision at yellow permit

Student is conducting an approved task in a defined area with the staff member maintaining line of sight (clear visibility). The staff member maintains control, awareness and communication with the student if line of sight is temporarily broken.

Active supervision at green permit

Staff member may move between multiple students conducting approved tasks in defined areas. Approved tasks may be in adjacent paddocks, and the staff member may leave the students for up to 30 minutes provided the staff member maintains control, awareness and communication with students at all time.

Close proximity

Trainer is out of the cab but close enough for the trainer and learner driver to be visible and audible to each other.

Convoy

A convoy is the movement of multiple vehicles or machinery from one farm location to another.

In a convoy:

- all vehicles or machinery must have rotated orange beacons activated
- all vehicles and machinery must not travel more than 20 km per hour
- a communication strategy must be in place
- a staff member must conduct a risk assessment of the activity.

Duty of care

A duty imposed by the law to take care to minimise the foreseeable risk of harm to another.

Experienced driver

Is a driver who has held a current and valid driver's licence (for the class of vehicle being used) for at least 4 years, with regular use over that time and Unit of Competency for the assessment activity.

Gross vehicle mass (GVM)

Means the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle as specified by the manufacturer; or by the Chief Executive Officer (Department of Transport) if the manufacturer has not specified a maximum loaded mass; or the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer's specification is no longer appropriate.

Light commercial vehicle/machinery

Is a goods and/or passenger vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) not exceeding 4,500 kilograms GVM e.g. ute, light tractor, Gator and Utility Task Vehicle (UTV).

Line of sight

A straight line along which an observer has unobstructed vision.

Machinery (Heavy vehicles and machinery)

A powerful motor vehicle weighing in excess of 4,500 kilograms used primarily in an agricultural setting e.g. tractor or truck.

Parent/carer/guardian

In relation to a child, a person who at law has responsibility for the long term care, welfare and development of the child; or the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child.

Public schools with farms

A public school with a farm is an educational institution that integrates a working commercial farm into its curriculum to provide students with hands on, practical and academic training in agricultural and related trades.

Risk

The chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives. It is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood. An acceptable risk is an acceptable tolerance level of risk, based on the level of risk after evaluating existing controls.

Risk assessment

The process used to determine management priorities by evaluating and comparing the level of risk against predetermined standards.

Site manager

Officers, including principals, college managers and line managers, who have executive responsibility for overall management of any Departmental site or facility.

Supervisor

A staff member with the official task of supervision of student driving and learning.

Supervision

Supervision is the act of providing duty of care, guidance and observation to students.

Vehicle

Any means in or by which someone travels or something is carried or conveyed. Generally, machinery, with wheels and an engine.

5. Related documents

Relevant legislation or authority

School Education Act 1999 (WA)

School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)

Occupational Safety & Health Regulations 1996 (WA)

Related department policies

Occupational Safety and Health policy

Work Health and Safety policy

Risk and Business Continuity Management

Vehicle Management policy

Record Management policy

Manage driver and vehicle safety

Emergency and Critical Incident Management policy

Other documents

Train, assess and supervise student drivers (staff only)

Guidelines for First Aid in Department Workplaces

- Provide first aid in the workplace (staff only)

6. Contact information

Policy manager:

Director, Agricultural Education and Residential Colleges

Policy contact officer:

Principal Consultant, Agricultural Education and Residential Colleges

Telephone: (08) 9264 4041

Email: agriculturaleducation.services@education.wa.edu.au

7. History of changes

Effective date	16 January 2020
Last update date Procedure version no.	1.0
Notes	These new procedures support the Duty of Care for Public School Students policy and replaces the Student Drivers in Agricultural Education policy. Endorsed by the Director General on the 16 January 2020.
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Procedure version no.	1.1
Notes	Minor corrective changes as per D20/0059938.
Effective date	16 January 2020
Last update date	8 September 2022
Procedure version no.	1.2

Notes	Minor changes to contact details as per D22/0684284.
Effective date	11 February 2026
Last update date Procedure version no.	2.0
Notes	Major review. Director General's approval 19 January 2026 (Approval D25/1204973) (DG memo D26/0024897)
Effective date	20 March 2026
Last update date	20 March 2026
Procedure version no.	2.1
Notes	Minor changes to permit system and definitions covering machinery type (Approval D26/0234471)

8. More information

Supporting content

Policy

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

Procedure review date

11 February 2029

Procedure last updated

20 March 2026