

Approval to provide Student Exchange Programs

Application form for registered schools

Registered schools can use this form to apply for approval to operate a student exchange program in Victoria.

Associated documents

* [Guidelines for Student Exchange Programs](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/schools/Pages/becoming-a-student-exchange-organisation.aspx) (the Guidelines)

**About this application**

There are three sections to this application.

Part A — Applicant information

Part B — Overseas sister school(s)

Part C — Standards for approval: supporting documentation (evidence list)

Part D — PEO/Principal declaration

Supporting documentation

The applicant must attach supporting documentation as evidence they meet the minimum standards for the operation of a student exchange program for each item listed in the checklist provided at **Part C** of this application.

**Before submitting your application**

Check that the application is complete and has all required attachments. Incomplete applications will be returned, delaying the assessment of your application.

Privacy statement

The VRQA requires the information collected in this application for the purpose of approving organisations to provide student exchange programs under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the ETR Act). Section 4.9.4 of the ETR Act provides for the disclosure of information about an applicant for approval to operate a student exchange program to a prescribed person or body if the information relates to the performance of a function of that person or body, including:

* a department of the Commonwealth Government or an Australian state or territory government
* an agency of the Commonwealth.

The VRQA may also disclose information where required, permitted or authorised by law. The VRQA is committed to handling all personal information securely in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. To learn more about how the VRQA handles personal information, see the VRQA website:

* [Information Privacy Policy](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Pages/privacy.aspx).

Principal Executive Officer

The person nominated in this form as the Principal Executive Officer (PEO) assumes responsibility for the school’s compliance with legislative requirements in the ETR Act and the Guidelines. The PEO will be the point of contact for the school’s compliance under the ETR Act. The PEO in a school would usually be a Principal or a Principal Class Officer.

The application must include a Fit and Proper Person Declaration completed by the PEO. To get a copy of the declaration, see:

* [Visa and forms](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/schools/Pages/visas-and-forms.aspx)

Sister schools

The applicant must provide details of each sister school involved in providing the student exchange program. For each sister school, applicants must include a copy of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or written agreement signed by the principal or PEO of both schools that contains:

* a joint commitment to operate a reciprocal student exchange program that meets the minimum standards listed in the Guidelines, and any regulatory requirements of the sister school’s regional or national government
* a termination provision that enables either school to cease the operation of the exchange program with a notice period.

Submitting your application

Applications must be submitted with all attachments in electronic format to:

* [vrqa.student.exchange@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:vrqa.student.exchange@education.vic.gov.au)

**Application process**

**Step 1**: Complete and submit an application form

**Step 2:** Pay fees when invoiced

The VRQA will acknowledge your application by email and email an invoice for the application fee (non-refundable) and the assessment fee.

The invoice must be paid in full before your application can be assessed. To pay fees online by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), BPAY or Post Billpay, follow the instructions on your invoice.

**Step 3:** Assessing your application

Following receipt of payment, the VRQA will assess your application and provide feedback. You will be notified if further information is required.

**Step 4:** Decision made on application

Applicants will receive formal advice regarding their application.

For more information about the application process, contact the International Education Unit:

* [vrqa.student.exchange@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:vrqa.student.exchange@education.vic.gov.au)

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| Part A – Applicant information | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **A.1** | | **Applicant details** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.1.1 | | Legal entity name | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.1.2 | | School trading name | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.1.3 | | Australian Business Number | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.1.4 | | Address | | Street address | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Suburb/town | | |  | | | Postcode | | | |  | | |
| A.1.5 | | Postal address (if different) | | Street address | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Suburb/town | | |  | | | | Postcode | | | |  | |
| A.1.6 | | Email | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.1.7 | | Website | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.2 | | **Contact details** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.2.1 | | Principal Executive Officer | | Full name | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Position | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Email | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Telephone | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| A.2.2 | | Contact for day-to-day  operational matters | | Full name | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Position | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Email | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Telephone | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Should this person be included in correspondence about this application? | | | | |  | | | No |  | | | Yes |
| A.2.3 | | Contact for invoicing | | Full name | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Position | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Email | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| Telephone | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| **A.3** | **Previous approval** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A.3.1 | Has the school previously been approved to operate a student exchange program? | |  | | No |  | | Yes | | | | | | | | |
| If yes, provide details about the period of approval and why the approval ended. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| Part B – Overseas sister school(s) | | | | | | | | | |
| B.1 | | **Overseas sister school #1** | | | | | | | |
| B.1.1 | School name | |  | | | | | | |
| B.1.2 | Address | | Street address | |  | | | | |
| Suburb/town | |  | | Postcode | |  |
| Country | |  | | | | |
| B.1.3 | School website | |  | | | | | | |
| B.1.4 | Frequency and duration of proposed exchange program | |  | | | | | | |
| B.1.5 | Year levels for inbound  and outbound students | |  | | | | | | |
| B.1.6 | MOU or agreement attached | |  | Yes | | | | | |
| B.1.7 | Date MOU or agreement signed | | DD | | | MM | | YYYY | |
| B.2 | | **Overseas sister school #2** | | | | | | | |
| B.2.1 | School name | |  | | | | | | |
| B.2.2 | Address | | Street address | |  | | | | |
| Suburb/town | |  | | Postcode | |  |
| Country | |  | | | | |
| B.2.3 | School website | |  | | | | | | |
| B.2.4 | Frequency and duration of proposed exchange program | |  | | | | | | |
| B.2.5 | Year levels for inbound  and outbound students | |  | | | | | | |
| B.2.6 | MOU or agreement attached | |  | Yes | | | | | |
| B.2.7 | Date MOU or agreement signed | | DD | | | MM | | YYYY | |
| B.3 | | **Overseas sister school #3** | | | | | | | |
| B.3.1 | School name | |  | | | | | | |
| B.3.2 | Address | | Street address | |  | | | | |
| Suburb/town | |  | | Postcode | |  |
| Country | |  | | | | |
| B.3.3 | School website | |  | | | | | | |
| B.3.4 | Frequency and duration of proposed exchange program | |  | | | | | | |
| B.3.5 | Year levels for inbound  and outbound students | |  | | | | | | |
| B.3.6 | MOU or agreement attached | |  | Yes | | | | | |
| B.3.7 | Date MOU or agreement signed | | DD | | | MM | | YYYY | |

Attach a separate list if additional fields are required.

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| Part C – Standards for approval: supporting documentation (evidence list) | | |
| The applicant must provide evidence that the school meets the following standards. | | |
| General | | |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.1 | A statement or a policy that confirms that the purpose of the school’s student exchange program is to provide a broad educational experience for students and to further international and intercultural understanding |  |
| 5.2 | A policy that ensures that all inbound exchange students will enter on subclass 500 student visas issued via an AASES form.  If the school also provides teacher-accompanied study tours for inbound or outbound students, the school must demonstrate:   * that these programs are not referred to as ‘student exchange’ * that the school makes clear to parents of participants in these programs that they are not student exchange programs under the Guidelines and are not regulated by the VRQA |  |
| 5.3 | A policy and procedure for managing reciprocity that indicates that the school:   * will operate its student exchange program on a reciprocal basis, balancing the number of inbound and outbound exchange students * will provide a register of all outbound students to the VRQA before those students have departed from Australia |  |
| **Student exchange organisation governance** | | |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.5 | Evidence that the school’s public liability insurance covers inbound and outbound student exchange programs. |  |
| 5.6 | A Fit and Proper Person declaration for the PEO | *Attach a Fit and Proper Person declaration* |
| 5.7 | An overview of the organisational structure within the school that indicates how the structure:   * is effective and appropriate for the size of its operation * allows ready access by and communication with parents, schools, students and officers of appropriate agencies, including phone accessibility 24 hours per day, and seven days per week * enables them to make appropriate arrangements in Victoria for inbound exchange students’ accommodation, support and general welfare * can facilitate the provision of effective and appropriate support to participating inbound and outbound students |  |
| 5.8 | A policy and procedure that ensures all officers, employees and volunteers working with children or with access to exchange students’ personal records or information in Victoria have a Working With Children Clearance (WWCC) or hold current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. |  |

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| 5.9 | Evidence of a risk-assessment of the student exchange program, showing how existing school policies and procedures can be adapted to apply to the student exchange program in relation to:   * conflict resolution * procedures for handling and reporting emergency situations and critical incidents * Ministerial Order 1359, handling and reporting requirements * minimum standards for a registered school regarding care, safety and welfare of students   An example of a training program for student exchange program coordinators and student support staff about host family screening, the Guidelines, the ETR Act and the WWCC requirements. |  |
| 5.10 | A register of all third-party organisations used to support and deliver the student exchange program. In schools, this is typically the overseas sister school(s), including:   * the name of the third-party organisation/sister school * evidence that the sister school is registered by relevant authorities * the type of arrangement made between the parties * information about the school’s monitoring process in relation to the operations of the sister school * details of whether the third-party organisation is registered as a student exchange organisation in any jurisdiction * information about the SEO’s periodic evaluations of service delivery for both inbound and outbound students, i.e., end-of-program satisfaction survey.   A copy of the contracts between the school and the sister school (for example, the MOU).  Evidence that the school has ensured that its sister school has a process to adequately screen and select host families.  Evidence that the sister school has a critical incident policy to respond to incidents including natural disasters, terrorism, student illness or injury, and breakdown in the hosting relationship.  A risk assessment of all outbound students’ accommodation and welfare arrangements. |  |
| **Administration of student exchange programs** | |  |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.11 | Evidence that the school will manage the student exchange program effectively, minimising changes to the program dates, duration and host family. |  |
| 5.12 | Evidence of a screening process for selecting inbound and outbound students.  Only students with appropriate language proficiency or demonstrated capacity to acquire a language, and maturity to benefit from the experience should be selected to take part in a student exchange program.  A sample of the information provided to potential exchange students about:   * school terms and holiday breaks * the grounds on which the student’s exchange may be suspended or cancelled * the school’s policy and process for approving the host family, support and general welfare arrangements. |  |
| 5.13 | Evidence that the school ensures that the level of health cover for program participants meets the requirements of standard 5.13 and that it has been communicated to the parents of exchange students, for example in a pre-departure information pack. |  |

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| Host families | | |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.14 | A policy and procedure for selecting and screening host families for inbound and outbound students that complies with the requirements of standard 5.14.  The evidence should demonstrate that the school has a process for the placement of more than one student with a host family, and the placement of exchange students with single-adult host families without children. |  |
| 5.15 | A policy and procedure that prevents any conflict of interest in accordance with standard 5.15. |  |
| **Support and supervision** | | |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.16 | A sample of an orientation program for both inbound and outbound students as well as the host families that meets the requirements of standard 5.16. |  |
| 5.17 | An explanation of how the school provides support to students and host families that includes appropriate reception, orientation, accommodation, transport and emergency arrangements, as well as providing ongoing support networks for exchange students. |  |
| 5.18 | An overview as to how the school will maintain a monthly schedule of personal contact with all exchange students and host families, face-to-face or by telephone. For outbound students, the school may satisfy this requirement by ensuring a monthly schedule of personal contact by the sister school in the host country. |  |
| 5.19 | A policy that ensures that the placement of an exchange student with a host family does not involve payment of board or a subsidy to the host family. If the school offers an outbound program fee discount for hosting students, the discount meets the requirements of standard 5.19. |  |
| 5.20 | Procedures for ensuring that students are meeting the student visa conditions and fulfilling all relevant school requirements. For example, requirements could include abiding by the school’s code of conduct, the school rules, and policies about uniform and full-time school attendance. |  |
| **Requirement to notify the VRQA** | | |
| Standard | Attach a policy and procedure for notifying the VRQA of changes: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.21 | to the school’s ownership, control, executive management or operation, including changes in PEO or Principal Class Officer overseeing the student exchange program, within 14 days of the change |  |
| 5.22 | to a student’s program, such as changes to host family, start or departure dates. The policy must ensure:   * a school notifies the VRQA prior to implementing any changes to a student exchange program, unless there are exceptional circumstances that require an immediate change * if a change is made to a student’s program due to exceptional circumstances, the school must notify the VRQA as soon as practical, and within five working days of the change * the student and their parents’ consent to the change. |  |
| 5.23 | to the sister-school arrangements within 14 days of the change. If a school enters into a new sister-school agreement, the VRQA must be advised of this new arrangement, and the school must provide details of the new arrangements and any supporting documents to the VRQA, including the MOU. |  |
| **Protection measures for exchange students** | | |
| Standard | Please provide: | Document name and page number, or website URL: |
| 5.26 | A copy of the school’s emergency management and critical incident policies and procedures, amended as necessary to address the requirements of standard 5.26 for inbound and outbound exchange programs. |  |
| 5.27 | Evidence that the school has procedures in place to ensure that the VRQA is notified of the details of all outbound students prior to their departure from Australia.  An outbound student policy and procedure that provides for :   * a parent written agreement or student exchange contract with the SEO giving consent to:   + the SEO having responsibility for the student’s accommodation, support and general welfare for the duration of the exchange program, and   + the SEO having the authority to cancel the student’s exchange program and arrange the prompt safe return of the student to Australia, due to:   + global, national or regional emergency circumstances   + Australian national, state or territory government directives   + the student’s physical or mental health circumstances, and/or   + the student’s serious breaches of the SEO code of conduct   that require the SEO to exercise its responsibilities for the student’s welfareinformation be provided to parents about child protection laws in the destination country   * students be registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Smartraveller website prior to departure (where available) * outbound exchange students to only travel to the host country with international airlines that provide full transfer facilities and have age-appropriate procedures in the event of flight delays or interruptions * maintaining up-to-date emergency contact information for airlines, Australian embassies or high commissions and other relevant agencies for host and transit countries * students to be met on arrival in the destination country and assisted in their journey to the host family * parents or guardians of all outbound exchange students to receive confirmation of the student’s safe arrival at the host family as soon as practicable.   An example of the information provided to parents about child protection laws in the destination country |  |
| 5.28 | A copy of the school’s Student Safety Card policy and procedures as evidence that the school meets the requirements of standard 5.28 for inbound and outbound exchange programs. |  |
| 5.29 | Evidence that the school’s policies and procedures for reporting incidents and allegations of abuse in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359 encompass both inbound and outbound exchange students. |  |
| 5.30 | A copy of the school’s complaints and appeals policy and procedures, amended as necessary to address the requirements of standard 5.30 for inbound and outbound exchange programs. |  |
| 5.31 | A copy of the school’s privacy policy, amended as necessary to address the requirements of standard 5.31 for inbound and outbound exchange programs. |  |
| 5.32 | A copy of the school’s internet and social media policy and procedures, amended as necessary to address the requirements of standard 5.32 for inbound and outbound exchange programs. |  |
| 5.33 | Evidence of a process for periodically evaluating the student exchange program, including seeking post-program feedback from students, parents or guardians, host families and schools, and implementing improvements in response to the evaluation outcomes. The program evaluation should include a review of sister-school arrangements. |  |
| MO 1359/  Child Safe Standards | Evidence of policies and procedures to ensure the SEO is compliant with the Child Safe Standards. |  |

Part D – PEO/Principal Declaration

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| I declare that the information submitted in this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. |

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| PEO/Principal name |  | | | |
| PEO/Principal signature |  |  | Date | \_ \_ / \_ \_ / \_ \_ \_ \_ |