



Department of Education Services  
Non-government schools

# Renewal of registration for your school

## 2014

**A support document for principals and governing bodies**

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# ***Why the renewal of registration process is important for your students and your school***

Non-government schools have autonomy to make decisions that set the overall direction for your school and improve student learning.

With this autonomy comes greater accountability for the standard of education and care provided by the school.

Reviewing the operations and performance of your school is an important part of that accountability process. It assures your school's community of the quality of education and care provided by the school, and indicates to the Minister for Education that your school is satisfying the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*.

Every learning organisation is a work in progress. Schools that are quality learning organisations consciously review their own performance in order to improve student learning. Review provides the opportunity to establish what the school is doing well, and what areas require further consideration. School review also enables the school's governing body to ascertain and analyse risk factors that will impact on its obligation to provide a satisfactory standard of education and care to its students.

The renewal of registration process can complement your school's own review processes in that it provides an independent assessment of the school's performance in meeting its legal obligations to provide an appropriate standard of education and care.

The renewal of registration process seeks to add value to your school's planning and review cycle. One or more Independent School Reviewers, all of whom have extensive education experience, will consider your school's application and documentation as well as conducting a visit to the school.

The renewal of registration process provides a different and independent perspective on a school's performance, confirms compliance with legal requirements, identifies areas where quality improvement is required and offers recommendations.

Many schools find having their school reviewed to be most useful in 'sharpening' reflection on how well the school is doing.

# *What is renewal of registration?*

**To what extent is your school maintaining a minimum standard of education and accountability for quality educational programs, the safety and welfare of students and legal compliance?**

Independent School Reviewers will read your school's renewal of registration application and the supporting documentation you provide before conducting a visit to experience your school community first hand.

Through analysis of achievement data, meetings, a tour of the school in action and discussions with a range of staff, the Independent School Reviewers gather inputs from the governing body, school leaders, teachers, students and others to gain a clear appreciation of your school's unique qualities.

Renewal of registration visits are conducted in accordance with the Department of Education Services Code of Conduct, which in turn is based on the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics.

Schools can be confident that the renewal process will be fair and transparent. Findings are based on evidence and judgements of the Independent School Reviewers. Any conditions to be placed on the school's registration, quality improvements required and recommendations made by the reviewers are discussed with the chairperson of the school's governing body and/or the principal at the conclusion of the visit. Reports are quality assured by the department.

# How you can manage the renewal of registration process

## Stage one: Preparation for renewal of registration

The department will notify your school in writing of the date for your school's renewal of registration visit and will include in the letter, a copy of your school's previous registration report. The school's governing body and school leaders may like to view the current registration document to obtain information about the renewal process on the Department of Education Services website at [www.des.wa.gov.au](http://www.des.wa.gov.au).

The document includes the 12 assessment criteria that are the basis for the judgements made about your school in meeting the registration requirements.

Each assessment criterion for registration consists of four parts:

Criterion:	legal requirements under the <i>School Education Act 1999</i> .
Intent:	provides a rationale for the legal requirements.
Written evidence:	sets out evidence that meets the criterion.
Explanatory notes:	provides further detail and advice for schools.

## Schools with Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (international students)

Schools that hold a separate registration under the *Education Service Providers (Full Fee Overseas Students) Registration Act 1991 (ESPRA)* to deliver education to those on student visa (571), should apply for re-registration at least three months before their expiry for international delivery.

The department may issue a courtesy reminder seeking the lodgement of an application to re-register if a renewal application is not received near the registration end date. A fee is required to accompany the ESPRA application. Further information can be found on the department's website.

If the timeframe for the ESPRA application is different from that of the school registration, site visits may be held concurrently to streamline the registration dates where practicable.

## Stage two: Application for registration details sent to school by the department

Your school receives details of where to download the *application for renewal of registration* form with the second letter from the department. This document is used by the school's governing body to apply for renewal of registration for your school. It includes the following document checklists to be completed by the school which assists in the process of collecting and presenting supporting documentation. The checklist should be read in conjunction with the current registration document, when preparing your application and supporting documentation.

- 1. Part A: School details** – the school's current contact details including accurate legal names for your school's certificate of registration.
- 2. Part B: Documentary evidence** – this section is a checklist to assist schools in assembling documentation for the renewal of registration process.
- 3. Part C: Registers and declarations** – this section has a number of declarations and supporting registers that require signature by the principal and in two cases the chairperson of the school's governing body.

### **Schools with Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (international students)**

The department requires a separate application to re-register under the ESPRA. Unlike the process for registration as a school, a fee is required to accompany the ESPRA application. Further information can be found on the department's website.

**Please note:** The application for renewal of registration must be submitted to the department along with other supporting documentation a minimum of four weeks before the date of the visit.

### **Stage three: School documentation forwarded to the department**

The application form and documentary evidence needs to be received by the department a **minimum of four weeks before the date of the visit.**

The following suggestions are offered on how to organise the information efficiently and clearly. This documentary evidence is only that which an effective school would have readily available.

- Read the information provided in the most current registration document for guidance about what documentation you need to provide.
- Limit your documentation to key information that directly relates to the registration standards.
- Between two and five lever arch files are sufficient. The reviewers can let you know if they need further evidence. There is no correlation between the amount of files submitted and years of registration awarded. The documentation provided has to be able to be read and considered by the reviewers easily and in the time available to them between submission of documentation and the visit.
- Present your documentation in the same order as it appears in the checklist, with the original application form at the front of the first file.
- Use lever arch or other types of files, with dividers between each section; **do not use plastic sleeves.**
- Send only copies and not original official documents (except for the original application form). **Please let us know if you want to collect the documentation once your school's report has been received. Otherwise all documentation will be placed in the security bins at the department for secure disposal.**
- Hard copy format is easy to read but it may be more appropriate to submit your school's documentation on a USB flash drive. If you wish to consider this option, please contact the Regulation Officer (Schools) on 9441 1943 for confirmation.
- It is essential to label all files with the name of your school which should also appear on all documents.

**Please note:** Select documentation that will assist the Independent School Reviewers to get an overview of your school. In areas such as curriculum, your particular school's whole school curriculum plans are the most useful. Copies of curriculum materials other than those directly developed by your school do not provide any evidence of how your school meets the standards. The visit provides the opportunity for the Independent School Reviewers to view a range of material, meet staff involved and examine issues in greater depth.

## **Stage four: School visit**

The lead reviewer will contact the principal approximately one week before your school's visit to negotiate the plan for the day of the visit, and which key staff members will be required. Prior to the visit, the Independent School Reviewers read and analyse the documentation you have provided together with other information about your school including quality improvements required, recommendations and/or conditions noted in previous reports.

**When the lead reviewer contacts the school prior to the visit, they may indicate any matters of concern that they have identified so that your school can either amend documentation or provide further evidence on the day of the visit.**

While each registration visit is unique, typically the Independent School Reviewers first meet with the chairperson of the school's governing body, the principal and your school's key finance person.

The reviewers are then taken on a tour of the school to observe your school in action. Morning tea and lunchtimes often provide good opportunities for the Independent School Reviewers to meet staff to learn more about the school.

Samples of your school's detailed curriculum materials from different years and learning areas with related evidence of student learning can be organised for the Independent School Reviewers to peruse. Prior to the visit the lead reviewer will let the school know of any particular materials, subjects, learning areas or classes they wish to view.

For visits to schools with International full fee paying students, one of the reviewers will be assessing the school's ESPRA registration. They will liaise with the relevant contact officer at the school to indicate which records and processes will need to be available on the day of the visit.

In the afternoon, the reviewers will need time and a space where they can consider the ways that your school has addressed each of the standards.

The reviewers will invite the school to address any matter mentioned as soon as possible. If concerns identified at the visit can be addressed, and the evidence provided to the department before the report goes to the Minister, then the report will be edited accordingly. Addressing such matters immediately could have a positive effect on the years of registration awarded by the Minister.

At the end of the visit, the lead reviewer will provide a summary of the reviewers' observations to the school chairperson, the principal and any others you choose they will, highlight positive aspects of your school, and outline matters which will be included in the registration report as quality improvements required, conditions of registration and possible directions. The reviewers will not indicate how many years of registration the school will receive.

The Minister for Education will decide the period of registration following consideration of the Independent School Reviewers' report.

**Stage five: Registration report and certificate of registration**

The Independent School Reviewers prepare a report for the department to send to the Minister for Education.

The Minister for Education, who is responsible for all final decisions, receives your school's report from the department. In deciding the period of registration, the Minister will consider the Independent School Reviewers' report in conjunction with evidentiary documentation and a school risk analysis.

Once the Minister for Education has approved the school's registration the chairperson of the school's governing body will receive a letter enclosing the new certificate of registration. The department then sends copies of your registration report to the chairperson of the school's governing body and the principal.

***Schools with Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (international students)***

The decision makers for an ESPRA registration are the Chief Executive Officer of the department and the Commonwealth Government. The department will ensure that the registration terms recommended to the decision-makers are aligned where possible.

**Stage six: Feedback on the renewal of registration process**

Your school will be invited to provide feedback on the registration process by completing the Renewal of Registration Questionnaire. The department highly values your comments and your feedback will assist the department in ensuring a continuous improvement of the renewal of registration process.

**Stage seven: School response to Quality Improvements Required, Conditions and Directions**

You are requested to inform the department as soon as the required actions from any Quality Improvements Required, Conditions and Directions have been addressed. These responses are noted and filed with the report as part of the documentation of your next renewal of registration visit. Please be aware that the department will regularly contact both the chairperson of your school's governing body and the principal in regard to any quality improvements required, conditions and directions that are not addressed in their entirety by the date/s indicated.

## *Renewal of registration process*

<p>The department gives your school advance notice of the timeline for the renewal of registration process.</p>
<p>School submits application and supporting documentation to the Department of Education Services.</p>
<p>Independent School Reviewers analyse school documentation and identify areas for further consideration.</p>
<p>Lead Independent School Reviewer discusses with principal and board chair the process for the renewal of registration visit.</p>
<p>Independent School Reviewers visit the school and meet with board chair, principal, staff and students as appropriate.</p>
<p>Independent School Reviewers discuss interim findings with principal and board chair.</p>
<p>Draft report is written and sent to the department.</p>
<p>Confirmed report sent to the Minister for Education for consideration and approval.</p>
<p>Chairperson of the school's governing body receives the certificate of registration (once approved) and a copy of the registration report.</p>
<p>School acts on Quality Improvements Required, Conditions and Directions, and reports on these to the department by the dates stipulated.</p>

# ***How you contribute to the renewal of registration as members of the governing body and school leaders***

The governing body and school leaders contribute to the renewal of registration process through their involvement in the school's cycle of internal evaluation processes and in understanding their obligations to meet the requirements for on-going registration as a non-government school.

School governing bodies have a particular role to play because of their legal obligation in governing the school and in maintaining oversight of the school's ongoing processes for planning and evaluating its own performance. It represents its stakeholders by providing information on matters of importance to the school, and reporting to the community on the board's and school's performance. Board members also have the opportunity to participate in discussions with Independent School Reviewers.

In order to facilitate focused and considered discussion of its own and the school's performance, the school's governing body may wish to reflect on its own performance and the management of risk.

The governing body and the school may also choose to evaluate their own performance against a reflective tool that is based on research about what makes a successful and effective school.

Matters that will require a greater focus for school governing bodies and school leadership include:

- Separation of governance and management as required in the *School Education Regulations 2000*
- Oversight of the implementation of the National Quality Standards (NQS) for the Early Years Learning Framework.
- Review of levels of care to strengthen child protection in schools
- Reporting of critical incidents to the Minister for Education through the Department of Education Services as required in the *School Education Regulations 2000*
- Financial viability
- Oversight of the school's progress towards implementation of the Australian Curriculum
- Delivery of education to International students.

# Summary of renewal of registration requirements

Requirements	Key information considered
<p><b>Governance and accountability</b></p> <p>The school is governed in an open and transparent manner by people of good character with the necessary skills and experience and with effective oversight of the school.</p>	<p>Legal entity            Constitution            Not-for-profit status            Governing body members            Minutes of meetings            Strategic planning            Annual self-review            Critical incident reporting            Training opportunities            International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Student learning</b></p> <p>The school focuses on the learning of all students through analysis of their needs, engagement and progress while implementing school-wide approaches to raising achievement in partnership with parents and the wider community.</p>	<p>Review of student learning            Analysis of student learning            School improvement plan            Annual report            Communicating with the school community            International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Curriculum</b></p> <p>The school provides all students with a planned and structured curriculum to improve their learning and equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become 'successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens'.</p>	<p>School curriculum plan            Curriculum evaluation            Assessment and reporting            Reporting to governing body            International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Level of care</b></p> <p>The school has policies and procedures to provide a positive, inclusive and safe environment in which students feel physically and emotionally secure.</p>	<p>Positive learning environment            Student welfare            Student safety            Critical and emergency incidents            Student health            Boarding - duty of care (if applicable)            International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Financial management</b></p> <p>The financial leadership and management of school operations and its long term viability are maintained for the benefit of students.</p>	<p>Audited financial statements            Unaudited management accounts            Loan, lease and rental agreements            Remuneration and staff salaries            Commonwealth financial questionnaire            Budget (forecasts and current)            Insurance policies            International students (if applicable)</p>

<p><b>Staff and management</b></p> <p>The practices and relationships of a school's staff members are guided by professional standards in order to provide a learning environment that is safe, predictable and stimulating for students.</p>	<p>Teaching staff  Non-teaching staff  Working with children checks  Police clearances  Organisational chart  Staff induction, performance management and professional learning  Staff handbook  Boarding facility staff (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Physical environment</b></p> <p>The school's buildings, facilities, grounds, furniture, equipment and resources meet all legal standards, fully comply with health and safety requirements, and are adequate for effective delivery of the school's curriculum and co-curricular activities and suited to students' various ages and developmental stages.</p>	<p>Buildings, facilities and grounds  Maintenance  Occupational safety and health  Risk management  Boarding facilities (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Enrolment and attendance</b></p> <p>The school's enrolment and attendance practices meet all legal requirements.</p>	<p>Enrolment and attendance policies and procedures  Attendance records and enrolment register  International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Number of students</b></p> <p>The school has sufficient students to enable it to maintain the financial viability to provide a range of learning programs and experiences that will support their academic and social development.</p>	<p>Number of students  Future enrolments  Class sizes  Boarding (if applicable)  International students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Time for instruction</b></p> <p>The time available for instruction must enable students to have access to effective learning experiences to improve their learning and equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens.</p>	<p>Days open  Hours of instruction</p>
<p><b>Complaints management</b></p> <p>Complainants are able to raise concerns and lodge complaints and have them dealt with fairly and efficiently.</p>	<p>Complaints management policy and procedures  Complaints management policy and procedures for international students (if applicable)</p>
<p><b>Legal compliance</b></p> <p>The school complies with the many legal requirements associated with its operation.</p>	<p>Declaration of legal compliance (State/Commonwealth)</p>