

5.01A

MERCY EDUCATION LTD POLICY 5.01A OVERSEAS TOUR APPROVAL FOR MERCY COLLEGES

Rationale:

Mercy Colleges provide a comprehensive curriculum and co-curricular programme to meet the educational needs of their students. This may include participation in overseas tours from time to time.

To support the provision of outstanding educational Service to their communities, Mercy Education Limited requires that Colleges obtain prior approval for any overseas tour which may involve a higher level of risk to students or staff.

Definition:

Overseas destinations are categorised in levels according to the [Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(DFAT\)](#). DFAT assists travellers avoid difficulties overseas by maintaining travel advisories for more than 160 destinations. Advice for travellers may be accessed on the [smartraveller](#) website supported by DFAT www.smartraveller.gov.au.

DFAT through the smartraveller website provides country specific travel advice for destination countries to understand better the specific travel risks, local laws, health issues, visa requirements and local customs. Certain regions within countries have a higher travel advice level which can determine the requirement to choose a safer location or require taking extra security precautions. In some countries, consideration must be taken due to greater risks for women and the LGBTI community.

Policy Statement:

A01 The Colleges governed by Mercy Education Ltd (MEL) need to ensure that any overseas tour should have an educational purpose in line with the current curriculum and co-curricular activities offered by the College. These educational objectives should be clearly stated in writing for the information of the Board in requesting approval for an overseas tour.

- A02 The Colleges need to ensure the safety of all students and accompanying adults on school tours. The principal, in discharging their duty of care, shall ensure that the highest emphasis is placed on the safety and wellbeing of all participants in overseas tours. In order to discharge their duty of care, the principal shall ensure that appropriate planning, hazard identification and risk assessment has been completed prior to approving any school tour.
- A03 Staff and volunteers on tours shall ensure the highest standards of child safety are implemented. This includes and is not limited to familiarising themselves with the relevant Catholic Education Office Child Protection policy and procedures as well as any legal requirements of the jurisdiction(s) in which they are travelling. Appropriate training must be provided for any adult participants who require it.
- A04 Schools in planning any overseas tours need to determine the travel advice level for the destination country. Tour destinations that may be considered for students and staff would be designated "*Level 1 - Exercise normal safety precautions*" or "*Level 2 – Exercise a high degree of caution*". Tours will not be considered to destinations with higher 'travel advice levels'.
- A05 *Level 1 - Exercise normal safety precautions* destinations are approved at College Leadership level and require the Principal's expressed approval for the tour to occur. All '*Level 1 - Exercise normal safety precautions*' overseas tours require notification to MEL twelve months before departure and with a reminder at one Term's notice via the Risk and Compliance Leader. *Level 2 – Exercise a high degree of caution* destinations require Board approval to proceed each time the tour is planned.
- A06 Principals in applying for tour approval to *Level 2 – Exercise a high degree of caution* destinations will need to satisfy the procedures in the associated document as outlined in 5.01B Overseas Tour Approval - Procedures.
- A07 Participants in planned *Level 2 – Exercise a high degree of caution* tours must be informed from the commencement of planning that the initial approval to participate in such a tour may be revoked at any stage after consideration of DFAT advice regardless of monies forfeited for cancellations.
- A08 All current overseas tours offered by a school at the time of publishing of this Policy must be re-evaluated in light of the travel advice level from DFAT. Any previous tours designated at *Level 2 – Exercise a high degree of caution* must be approved by the Board and cannot be assumed approved due to previous successful experiences.

- A09 As per the Mercy Policy on Fee Setting and Collection, where families are receiving financial assistance through fee concession, the access of students to optional overseas travel programs which do not form part of the core school curriculum is determined according to the local policy of the College.
- A10 Each College must have documented policy and procedures in regard to overseas tours and the College's policies and procedures in regard to overseas tours are to be consistent with the relevant Catholic Education Office's policies in this matter.

Associated Procedures:

Procedure 5.01B: Overseas Tour Approval for Mercy Colleges

Related Documents:

Policy 8.01A: Setting School Fees at Mercy Colleges

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia - Policy 2-B4: School Excursion Policy

Review History

Approved February 2017

Next Review

2020

Version Control

Version	Date	Changes	Authorised
1	16/2/17	Original Public Release	Board