REGISTRATION OF SCHOOLS
IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Evidence Guide

to using the *Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia* for Registration of New or Changed schools

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Education Standards Board | early childhood to senior schooling

Government of South Australia

Evidence Guide

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Introduction

Board

The *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011* (the Act) establishes the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia, known as the Education Standards Board, as the regulator of the provision of education services in South Australia, with the object of the Act being to regulate the provision of education and early childhood services in a manner that maintains high standards of competence and conduct by providers.

Under the Act, the Board regulates schools which includes registration of schools to provide education services (permission to operate as a school and enrol domestic students); review of registration (confirmation that a school is operating within the legislative requirements); and endorsement of a school to enrol full fee paying overseas students.

Legislative Framework

The regulation of schools in South Australia is governed by the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011* which commenced operation in January 2012.

The Act is supported by the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Varied Regulations 2017* (the Regulations) which commenced operation in January 2012 and was varied in 2017 to include additional information about the regulation of schools.

The Regulations reference the Board's standards for registration and review of registration: *Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia*.

Once registered, the registration of a school is ongoing unless a registered school applies to: extend its educational program to one or more year levels, change its location (or part of it) to a different site, add a new campus, or amalgamate with another school hence creating a new school. Review of registration occurs at least once in a five-year period of registration.

Purpose of Evidence Guide

This Evidence Guide to Using the *Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools* for registration of new or changed schools (the Evidence Guide) supplements the *Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia* (the Standards) and is intended to assist organisations and schools with providing evidence to demonstrate that they have met the Standards. It applies to organisations applying to be registered as a school and to registered schools applying to change their registration, such as adding one or more year levels, changing location for some or all of the school, adding a new campus or amalgamating with another school.

The Evidence Guide should be used in conjunction with the following documents:

- the Standards
- Application to register a new school in South Australia form *or*
- Application for changes to registration of a school in South Australia

Both forms are available on the Board's website at http://www.esb.sa.gov.au

The Evidence Guide is provided by the Board to support its approach to contemporary regulation which is efficient, cost effective, risk appropriate and transparent for both registration and review of registration. The assessment principles of fairness, validity, reliability and flexibility guide the Board's judgement in assessing the evidence provided.

Using the Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide provides guidance on the type of evidence suitable for demonstrating that a school, or an organisation applying to become a school, meets the registration requirements set out in the Standards.

Evidentiary requirements vary depending on the criterion in the Standards. The Evidence Guide provides guidance on the evidence that may demonstrate meeting a particular criterion. While examples of evidence are provided in the Evidence Guide, the examples are not intended to be comprehensive, nor are all examples of evidence necessarily required. Evidence of meeting each criterion is required, however one type of evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one criterion. Schools are expected to present evidence in a manner that suits their circumstances. For example, the style and form of policies and procedures and how they are packaged together is at a school's discretion.

Schools and organisations will have evidence unique to their individual circumstances for some criteria, whereas for other criteria, the evidence may be similar to other schools or could be the same as used by schools within the same system.

Schools that are part of a system, such as the South Australian public school system, the Catholic Education system or a cluster of independent schools operating under the same governance arrangements, may use evidence of meeting their registration requirements that is provided by their system. Whether evidence is at a system level or at a school level will be a matter for the system itself to determine.

In making their judgements about the adequacy of evidence in meeting the registration requirements, the Board may also use evidence acquired elsewhere, such as data provided by the Commonwealth Government.

Standards

Standard 1
School Governance

The school is accountable for its safe, legal and financially viable operation and has corporate governance arrangements in place to lead this.

This standard addresses the governance arrangements that are in place to effectively govern a financially sound school that meets it legislative responsibilities. The governance arrangements may vary according to the nature of the legal entity of a school.

Criterion 1.1

The school is established as a body corporate or body politic.

Explanation

A body politic is an entity owned and managed by an elected government. A body corporate is a legal entity other than a body politic and in Australia could be a company, incorporated association or a statutory corporation.

Evidence

Evidence that a school is a properly established legal entity is the documentation that establishes it as a legal entity, such as a certificate of incorporation.

Criterion 1.2

The school (or schools that form part of a system) is governed by a body which collectively has the knowledge, skills and experience to effectively govern the school and which is responsible for:

- ensuring the school fulfils its obligations as a legal or government entity and as a registered school and complies with all relevant Commonwealth and South Australian laws
- setting and monitoring the strategic direction of the school
- ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the school and reporting on the school's financial performance
- determining the school's educational philosophy and approach
- setting the school's enrolment policy and practices in compliance with Commonwealth and South Australian laws
- ensuring the school has the necessary leadership staff to provide education services
- ensuring the proprietor of the school, members of the governing authority of the school and principal and other school leaders are fit and proper persons
- nominating a person responsible for compliance with these Standards.

Explanation

The legal structure of the entity will determine the type of governing body that a school is required to have by law. The governing body is responsible for ensuring a financially viable and soundly managed organisation that delivers education to the standard required by governments in Australia. The governing body is comprised of members whose combined knowledge, skills and experience of governance and education enable the body to effectively govern the organisation and its core business of education. Members of the governing body will be of good character to the extent that they are suitable for a governance role and for governing a school and have not been disqualified by law for such a role.

Evidence

Evidence to demonstrate the breadth of this criterion may include:

- Documentation of the ownership of the school
- Constitution for the governing body, showing its structure and roles and responsibilities
- Charter, or similar, for the operation of the governing body which documents how the governing body fulfils its obligations as a legal entity
- Vision, mission and/or purpose statement
- Statement or policy of the school's educational philosophy and approach
- Strategic plan for 5 years of operation
- Business plans for 5 years of operation, including
  - Financial projection for 5 years
  - Income projection from fees for 5 years
  - Enrolment projection for each year level for 5 years
  - Statement of viability in relation to its defined catchment area for proposed enrolments, including spatial data from Department of Transport, Planning and Infrastructure as appropriate
  - Staff projection for teaching, support and maintenance staff for 5 years
  - Strategy for appointment of a principal or school leader
- Enrolment policy and fees policy
- Information for families of future students, such as prospectus or an information book, which includes information about the school's vision/mission/purpose, education philosophy and approach, fees and enrolments policy
- Signed, written statement from the governing body giving authority to the person responsible for the school's compliance with these Standards. This could be the head of the governing body, the principal or a member of staff who has responsibility for internal quality assurance.

Criterion 1.3

The school has academic governance arrangements to ensure accountability for the satisfactory quality of the nature and content of the education instruction provided.

Explanation

This criterion requires a school's governing body to have in place an arrangement to enable it to be assured of the quality of education provision across the full spectrum of the school. This may be a role and responsibility of the governing body itself or it may delegate this to an academic board or committee or to its principal or education leader, provided that the governing body retains ultimate responsibility.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures for monitoring education quality.

Criterion 1.4

The school systemically monitors and informs the school community of its academic and attendance performance in accordance with Commonwealth and South Australian laws.

Explanation

This criterion requires a school to have an internal quality assurance system in place to monitor its academic performance and its performance in student attendance and to have processes in place to improve its performance in both areas as necessary. It also requires a school to report its performance to the school community on a regular basis and to provide governments with information on its performance.

The South Australian *Education Act 1972* (and its successors) and the Commonwealth *Australian Education Act 2013* (and its successors) have specific requirements for reporting academic and attendance performance.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- a system in place to monitor academic outcomes and attendance performance which enables:
  - data collection and analysis
  - internal reporting to the school's governing body and leadership
  - external reporting to the school community
  - publishing information as required by government legislation.

Standard 2
Student Learning and Assessment

The school has curricula, teaching and performance policies and practices and staffing in place to effectively deliver education services for each stage of schooling and monitors its educational achievements.

This standard addresses the learning and assessment, resourcing and staffing arrangements that a school has in place to effectively deliver the Australian Curriculum (or approved equivalent) and meet its obligations under the *Education Act 1972* (and successors).

Criterion 2.1

The school's education philosophy guides its teaching and learning.

Explanation

A school delivers its educational program guided by the philosophy determined by its governing body. This may include a faith or other belief system which underpins its teaching and learning. A school's education philosophy may be documented in a number of ways and its implementation should be evident in its teaching, learning and assessment methodologies and resources.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Mission, vision and/or purpose statement
- Education policy or statement
- Prospectus or information for families of future students
- Curriculum Handbook.

Criterion 2.2

The school has curricula for each relevant stage of schooling that meets South Australian and Commonwealth governments' requirements.

Explanation

Schools in South Australia are required to deliver the Australian Curriculum or alternative curricula approved by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) as being equivalent to the Australian Curriculum and have in place an approved learning program as required by the *Education Act 1972* (and successors). For schools registered to deliver years 11 and 12, the curricula must also meet the requirements of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE), or equivalent, such as the International Baccalaureate. This criterion requires a school to have a curriculum for each relevant stage of schooling that documents how the school will deliver the Australian Curriculum and SACE (or approved equivalents for either).

Curriculum documents will vary depending on a range of factors related to the school's educational philosophy, however a strong link between the curricula and the relevant Australian Curriculum and the SACE (or approved equivalents) must be evident.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Curriculum overview statement
- Curriculum policy or handbook for each learning area.

Criterion 2.3

The school has a documented teaching program that details the scope, content and sequence of learning and assessment for each of its curricula.

Explanation

Documented teaching programs contain details of the scope of the content of the subject and how it will be taught and assessed to ensure that the students achieve the learning outcomes expressed in the curriculum. Teaching programs are likely to be dynamic, responding to the diverse and changing needs of student cohorts and school priorities.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Samples of teaching plans including the scope and sequence for each learning area
- Teaching and learning policies.

Criterion 2.4

The school has sufficient learning and assessment resources to support the delivery of each teaching program.

Explanation

This criterion encompasses the broad range of resources that are required to effectively deliver a teaching program, ranging from whole-of-school resources through to the classroom resources.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Financial provisions in a 5 year Business Plan for acquisition of resources to support teaching and learning
- Asset register for resources acquired or to be acquired.

Criterion 2.5

The school uses learning and assessment methodologies appropriate for the support of the learning needs of its student cohorts in achieving the curriculum outcomes.

Explanation

The methodologies used for the teaching, learning and assessment documented in the teaching programs support the diverse needs of the students undertaking the subject. Schools have responsibilities under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* for students with disabilities and in particular to make reasonable adjustments to learning and assessment methodologies.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Education policy or statement
- Curricula overview statement
- Policies for teaching and learning and for assessment and reporting.

Criterion 2.6

The school regularly monitors, reviews and records individual student performance and informs students and their parents about the student's performance throughout each enrolment year.

Explanation

A school has a system in place for recording and reporting student results.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Assessment and reporting policies
- Samples of reports and/or other intended mechanisms for reporting student performance to parents.

Criterion 2.7

The school regularly reviews its curriculum, teaching program and learning and assessment approaches for each stage of learning to improve student performance outcomes, using external and internal performance data.

Explanation

A school has a system in place for continuous improvement of performance through adjustments to its curricula, teaching programs and learning and assessment approaches.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Date for review included in all relevant policies and procedures
- Policies and/or procedures for review of documented curricula, teaching programs and learning and assessment approaches.

Criterion 2.8

The school employs registered teaching staff to achieve its curriculum outcomes and the school supports their performance through the provision of professional development.

Explanation

This criterion requires a school to employ sufficient teaching staff to enable it to deliver its curriculum and achieve satisfactory student outcomes. It also requires a school to meet its obligation to employ appropriated registered teachers under the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* and support their professional development. The requirement for teachers to be registered and the registration of teachers and their conditions of registration are administered by the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia. The Teachers Registration Board references the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leaders *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* as a requirement for initial and ongoing teacher registration.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Policies and/or procedures for employment of teachers, including checking their eligibility to teach
- Policies and/or procedures for the professional development of teachers that supports their performance.

Criterion 2.9

The school has appropriate non-teaching staff, contractors and volunteers to support the achievement of its educational outcomes and the school supports their performance through the provision of professional development as appropriate.

Explanation

A school requires a broad range of non-teaching personnel to enable it to effectively deliver its educational programs and achieve satisfactory student outcomes. This may include teaching support, administrative and grounds personnel and could also include boarding accommodation personnel if boarding is operated by the school. Personnel may be employed or be volunteers and a school may use external contractors.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Policies and/or procedures for employment of non-teaching staff, contracting of external contractors and use of volunteers, including checking their eligibility to work with children
- Policies and/or procedures for the professional development of non-teaching staff, external contractors and volunteers as appropriate to support their performance.

Criterion 2.10

The school ensures that its teaching and non-teaching staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors are regularly informed of their obligations for child protection and mandatory reporting.

Explanation

A school is responsible under the *Children's Protection Act 1993* (and successors) and the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* (once proclaimed) to ensure that personnel working with children meet their obligations.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures for child protection training for teaching and non-teaching staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors, as appropriate.

Criterion 2.11

The school has a built environment, infrastructure, grounds and facilities for teaching and learning and student safety, health and well-being at each of its sites that:

- are suitable for the stages of schooling it offers and for the student cohorts and age levels enrolled
- support the delivery of quality education and achievement of its curriculum outcomes
- are well maintained, and
- comply with Commonwealth, State and Local governments laws that apply to its built environment, infrastructure, grounds and facilities.

Explanation

This criterion applies to the site, buildings, grounds and facilities used by the school for the purpose of education and extends to boarding facilities if operated by the school.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Documentation of the ownership of the site, including the land and premises, on which the school is located, such as copy of the title(s) of the land
- If the land, including any premises, is leased, rented, licenced, sub-let or similar, documentation of:
  - the relationship between the landlord and the school's owner(s) and the school's governing body, and
  - the contractual agreement (which may be in-principle until registration is approved), including any conditions placed on the contract
- Documentation that the site and the buildings, whether owned or leased/rented, are approved for use as a school and comply with South Australian government and local council laws and regulations for zoning, planning and building development
- Master plan for the site, buildings and facilities for a new site or an improvement plan for an existing site and capital development plan for 5 years; this would include plans, sketches and/or photographs of the site, buildings and outdoor play area and equipment, classrooms, administration areas, staff and student amenities, and boarding facilities if operated by the school
- Certificate(s) of occupancy for each new or renovated building that demonstrate compliance with the relevant legislation and includes electrical, plumbing, and gas installations and fire safety provisions
- Certification of correct installation of playground equipment
- Maintenance policy, schedule and register for site, buildings, grounds, play equipment and facilities.

Standard 3
Student Safety, Health and Welfare

The school provides a safe, healthy and supportive learning environment that protects the well-being of students.

This standard addresses the safe, healthy and supportive environment that a school is expected to provide for its students. The quality of the provision is expected to be consistent with generally accepted community standards and be comparable with those in all schools across South Australia. Many aspects of this standard are determined by South Australian and Commonwealth legislation beyond the E*ducation and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011* and it is the responsibility of the school to determine which apply to its circumstances.

Criterion 3.1

The school complies with Commonwealth and South Australian laws and policies that apply to the safety, health and welfare of its students and any relevant child protection laws and policies for employment of all staff and management of contractors, volunteers and visitors.

Explanation

Commonwealth and South Australian legislation, and relevant associated regulations, protect the safety, health and welfare of students in all aspects of schooling at any location where children are undertaking any school associated activities and evidence of a school's adherence to this legislation must be apparent in its policies and procedures prior to commencing operation as a school or expanding its operation. This legislation includes, but is not limited to, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)* (and successors).

The *South Australian Children's Protection Act 1993* (and successors) and the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* (once proclaimed) protect students in all aspects of schooling at any location where children are undertaking any school associated activities through ensuring that personnel, whether employed, contracted, volunteering or visiting, have met the legal obligations for working with or around children.

A school is responsible for ensuring it has in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that covers all aspects applicable to its circumstances.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures covering the following:

- Child protection responsibilities
- Child protection training requirements
- Duty of care
- Photographing students
- Protecting privacy
- Protective practices and behaviours for staff, contractors and volunteers interacting with children
- Responding to child abuse and neglect
- Reporting child abuse and neglect, including mandatory reporting obligations
- Screening and police checking staff, contractors and volunteers interacting with children
- Security checking of all personnel on any premises operated by a school.

Criterion 3.2

The school implements policies and procedures for the safety of students at school sites, off-school locations and external providers where school related activities occur and includes management of emergencies, incidents and risks.

Explanation

A school has in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that guide all personnel in ensuring the safety of all children in its care, regardless of where they may be located during this time. As well as school grounds, the policies and procedures extend to school camps, school excursions, placement of students with other providers for part of their schooling (such as vocational, advanced or specialist studies), boarding facilities if operated by the school. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that it has covered all aspects of safety applicable to its circumstances.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures covering the following:

- accidents and critical incidents
- emergency management, including natural disasters such as bushfire and floods
- evacuation and lockdown
- fire safety
- hazardous substances, inflammable or noxious substances
- risk assessment for all student activities
- use of private motor vehicles
- yard/ground supervision.

Criterion 3.3

The school implements policies and procedures for the health of student and includes management of the risks to health, students who are ill or hurt, and students with medical conditions.

Explanation

A school has in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that guide all personnel in ensuring the health of all children in its care, regardless of where they may be located during this time. As well as school grounds, the policies and procedures extend to school camps, school excursions, placement of students with other providers for part of their schooling (such as vocational, advanced or specialist studies), boarding facilities if operated by the school. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that it has covered all aspects of health applicable to its circumstances.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures covering the following:

- administering medication
- anaphylaxis and asthma
- canteen provisions and food safety
- communicable diseases
- first aid
- medical emergencies
- possession and use of illicit substances.

Criterion 3.4

The school implements policies and procedures for student welfare that covers pastoral care, early intervention, child protection including mandatory reporting, and behaviour management including associated safety and wellbeing management.

Explanation

A school has in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that guide all personnel in ensuring the welfare of all children in its care, regardless of where they may be located during this time. As well as school grounds, the policies and procedures extend to school camps, school excursions, placement of students with other providers for part of their schooling (such as vocational, advanced or specialist studies), boarding facilities if operated by the school. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that it has covered all aspects of welfare applicable to its circumstances.

Evidence

Evidence may include policies and/or procedures covering the following:

- anti-harassment and bullying, including cyber bullying and sexual harassment
- grievance and complaint resolution, including between students and between students and adults
- ICT use and security, including cyber safety and use of social media
- pastoral care
- personal development responsibilities or behaviour education/management.

Criterion 3.5

The school maintains an up-to-date register of enrolments that records for each student enrolled, the student's name, date of birth, place of residence, parent or guardian's contact details, start of enrolment and when appropriate end of enrolment.

Explanation

Up-to-date and accurate enrolment records for currently enrolled students are to ensure that a school has a record of all its present students, and past as appropriate, and details of students' parents/guardians to assist with the safety of its students.

Evidence

Evidence may include procedures for recording and maintaining the details outlined in the criterion.

Criterion 3.6

The school maintains an up-to-date register of attendance which records the attendance for each student enrolled.

Explanation

Attendance at school is governed by the *Education Act 1972* (and its successors) and a school is obliged to have in place a register of attendance.

Evidence

Evidence may include procedures for recording the attendance and absences for all students, regardless of their age.

Criterion 3.7

The school monitors the attendance of each student at school and at classes and has in place processes to minimise non-attendance and to keep parents or guardians and the education authority informed as required by legislation.

Explanation
A school has a legal obligation to monitor students' attendance. It is also expected to inform parents and the relevant authority, as appropriate, of absences.

Evidence
Evidence may include policies and/or procedures for:

- Monitoring and maintaining attendance of students at school and classes
- Minimising non-attendance for individual students or cohorts of students
- Communicating with parents/guardians on attendance/non-attendance
- Reporting non-attendance to the appropriate authority as required.

Criterion 3.8

The school communicates with parents and guardians about issues concerning the safety, health and welfare of students.

Explanation

A school has in place appropriate methods for communicating with parents/guardians about issues affecting student safety, health and welfare.

Evidence

Evidence may include communication requirements with parents and guardians being included in relevant safety, health and welfare policies and/or procedures.

Criterion 3.9

The school has in place, and implements, policies and procedures for managing complaints and grievances from students, parents, caregivers and the community.

Explanation

From time to time, a school may receive complaints, or have grievances lodged, about an aspect of its provision of schooling and has in place arrangements to respond to them.

Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Policies and/or procedures for handling complaints and grievances from students
- Policies and/or procedures for handling complaints from parents, caregivers and/or the community.



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