GUIDELINES
OVERSEAS/INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Updated February 2011

Introduction

The enrolment of overseas or international students (OIS) in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane is a decision made at the local school level. The intention is to develop good intercultural understandings amongst young people by fostering among international and Australian students an appreciation of a variety of religions, cultures and attitudes that exist in different societies.

The Church provides Catholic schools as a response to the right of each individual to a Catholic education for the integration of faith, life and culture. The Catholic schools of Brisbane Archdiocese, in welcoming OIS where capacity permits, commit themselves to being aware of and providing for the spiritual, pastoral, cultural and academic needs of these students and for teacher development needed to respond appropriately to these needs.

The impact of such an approach can be beneficial not only in the lives of the individual students, but also in the local school communities and in the overseas countries to which the students will return.

In most cases, the Commonwealth and State Governments do not provide grant funds for the education of OIS. In order to be fair and just, schools are required to charge a higher fee compared to domestic students in order to cover this absence of funding.

As mentioned in Section 4 Payment and Collection of Fees below, the fee invoiced to parents must include a Brisbane Catholic Education Office (BCEO) component and may include a School component. The BCEO component covers the equivalent Commonwealth and State Recurrent Grants plus a charge for ESL support and system administration. This BCEO component is to be remitted to BCEO for staffing and other educational purposes.
Definitions

An Overseas or International Student (OIS) is a student with a passport from a country other than Australia with a current Australian entry visa granting Temporary Residency status. An OIS can enter Australia either on a tourist or a student visa. Applicants on a tourist visa can attend a school for a maximum of 12 weeks. If the applicant intends to study for greater than 12 weeks, they must apply for a student visa. OISs come into Australia either as a Primary or Secondary holder of a visa type. The following listing defines some of the regular terms used when discussing OISs.

Primary Visa Holder: The student seeking enrolment is the main applicant of the visa.

Secondary Visa Holder: The student seeking enrolment is a dependent of the primary applicant, accompanying them whilst they are undertaking a course of study in Australia. For example, a parent studying a Postgraduate course at a local university is the Primary visa holder; their dependent child of primary school age seeking enrolment would be considered the Secondary holder of the visa type.

Temporary Resident: A person who has travelled to Australia on "an entry permit whose effect was subject to a limitation as to time" - Migration Regulation 1994 vol1_NT p34. All OISs are temporary residents to Australia. Some OISs are required to pay fees before they can enrol in an Australian school. Some (for example, dependants of some scholarship holders) are entitled to enrol in an Australian school without paying fees.

Commonwealth Assisted Overseas Student: An OIS holding a secondary student visa type, usually under the AusAID or Defence Sector. These students currently receive funding from the Commonwealth but not the State Government.

Bridging Visa Holder: A bridging visa may be issued by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to a person whose temporary visa has expired, or is likely to expire, before a decision has been made on the person’s application for another visa.

The purpose of the bridging visa is to prevent the holder from becoming an ‘unlawful non-citizen’ because of administrative delays. The visa allows the holder to remain in Australia, usually under the same DIAC conditions as the previous visa held by the person e.g. original visa 572 now have bridging visa A visa subclass 010 will retain the conditions of a visa subclass 572 whilst on visa A visa subclass 010.

Under a bridging visa status, the student is assessed as still holding their original visa subclass (for fee determination and billing purposes by) until such time as their new visa is granted. In the above example, the student will therefore still be classed as holding a visa subclass of 572 and therefore a Full Fee Paying Overseas Student until their new visa status is granted.
Regulations

1. The three basic types of OIS are exchange, visiting/tourist and full-fee paying students. The following defines and sets out the requirements for each type:

**Type 1: Exchange Student:** An OIS student holding a primary entry visa AND who is undertaking a full time course of study at age appropriate levels equivalent to their home country. In order to obtain a student visa, the student must enter Australia under the auspices of a Registered Exchange Organisation (REO) approved by the State. Students come on a reciprocity process to Australia, meaning exchange organisations are required to send at least as many students from a particular state overseas, as they host in that state, in full year equivalent terms.

To obtain a student exchange visa, overseas exchange students require an Acceptance Advice of Secondary Exchange Student (AASES) form. The onus is on the school/REO to complete these arrangements. These students do not need to be registered with CRICOS (Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students) or attend a CRICOS registered school. Schools hosting an exchange student through a REO are not expected to provide additional pastoral care for exchange students in excess of what would normally be provided for students.

Exchange students are treated as local resident students for General Recurrent Grant Funding from the Government but are not eligible for extra Commonwealth funded programs such as ESL support. Schools will enter these students in their School Administration System as a statement of achievement outlining school attendance, progress and behaviour is required to be provided at the end of their stay.

**Type 2: Visiting/Tourist Student:** An OIS holding a temporary tourist entry visa. Length of study of these students is restricted, under the conditions of their specific visa class granted. Students may undertake “incidental study” whilst on a visitor’s visa provided that study is:

a. Under the general description of recreation, leisure or personal enrichment;

b. No longer than three months regardless of the visa length. If a student wishes to study longer than three months, the student should apply for a student visa and will fall under the sub category of FFPOS;

c. Not attracting any government subsidy

These students are not required to be recorded in the School Administration System but it is recommended that from a duty of care perspective, schools keep attendance records and contact details on file for these visitors. Short term study and cultural visit tours usually fall within this category.

Schools who accept students on a tourist visa do not have to be CRICOS registered and are not required to on forward any monies to BCEO if the length of stay at the school is less than or equal to 12 weeks. If the length of stay is greater than 12 weeks, the school will be invoiced a pro-rata equivalent of State and Commonwealth grant funding by BCEO.
Type 3: Full-Fee Paying Overseas Student (FFPOS): An OIS holding one of the following visa sub-classes:

I. 571 (except for Exchange students): Student is considered the primary holder of the visa and can only enrol in a CRICOS registered school.

II. 570 (Independent ELICOS sector), 572 (Vocational Education and Training sector), 573 (Higher Education sector), 574 (Postgraduate Research sector), 575 (Non-Award sector), 580 (Student Guardian). Students in these visa sub-classes are considered the secondary holder of the visa (parent is the primary holder). The school is not required to be CRICOS registered.

Please refer to the Payment and Collection of Fees section below for a break down of the fee to be charged in advance of enrolment.

2. The enrolment of an OIS should not prevent the enrolment of an Australian-resident Catholic applicant. As with the general enrolment policy for the Archdiocese, preference in enrolment must be given to OISs from Catholic families over those from other OIS families.

For further information, please refer to the Archdiocese of Brisbane Catholic Education Council’s Enrolment of Students in Catholic Schools Policy.

3. Overseas or international non-Catholic students and their guardians are required to make a commitment to accept the ethos of the Catholic school and participation by the student in all aspects of the religious education program.

4. Enrolment will proceed only if:
   a. The student’s language and academic needs can be catered for within the existing school structure, or if the school can otherwise provide additional requirements. If more than one hour of ESL support is required each week for a student, the school is responsible for meeting these needs

AND

   b. At least one semester’s (preferably a full year) fees and levies have been invoiced and paid in advance for the OIS. As mentioned in part a above, this fee must include any additional teaching support required eg. ESL.

As both the State and Commonwealth Governments do not provide financial resources for OIS, failure to pay fees in advance will result in the student not being eligible for enrolment. This enrolment practice is to apply each year the OIS wishes to attend the school.
Guidelines

1. Relevant Data on Travel Documents

Schools enrolling OISs must ensure that original travel documents have been sighted. The documents must contain the name of the student applying for enrolment, the visa class they have entered Australia on, conditions of entry, date of arrival in Australia and the number of people on the visa. Below is an example of documents required:

Date of arrival can be determined from the most recent Australian stamp, as in the example illustrated:

Some OISs may have an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) instead of a visa. An ETA is a modern day replacement for a visa label or a stamp in a passport, enabling travellers to obtain authority to enter Australia at the same time as they make their travel arrangements. Evidence of the ETA may be a separate page which is not attached to the passport. ETAs have a maximum duration of a 12 week stay. Students under this ETA would fall under the Type 2: Visiting/Tourist Student category.
2. Australian Citizenship

Not all children born in Australia are entitled to Australian citizenship. Each birth certificate presented should be checked to establish the birth places of the parents. Where the child’s birth certificate lists one or both parents as having been born in Australia, BCEO will accept the child’s birth certificate as *prima facie* evidence of Australian Citizenship. Where the child’s birth certificate lists both parents as having been born outside Australia, at least one of the parents must supply documentation to establish their child’s Australian citizenship status. This might be an Australian certificate of citizenship or an entry visa in a passport granting them (the parent) permanent residency status. Where neither parent can produce an Australian birth certificate, an Australian certificate of citizenship or a passport entitling the parent to permanent residency, the child may be enrolled, but only as an FFPOS student. Children up to the age of ten, born in Australia and who are dependents of overseas (international) parents are not Australian residents for funding purposes. Thereafter, the child may apply for Australian citizenship, upon proof of residing in Australia at least 90% of that time.

3. Payment and Collection of Fees

- **Exchange Students**: Exchange students are classified as local students and thus are eligible for both State and Commonwealth funding. Schools may wish however to also charge students for the equivalent of local fees and levies. If this is the case, it must be made clear upfront who is responsible for these charges i.e. whether the school will invoice the student directly or the REO.

- **Visiting/Tourist Students**: Depending on the length of stay of students, the amount charged is usually negotiated at the local school level. A visiting student who wishes to enrol for more than 12 weeks must apply for a student visa. If students anticipate to be at the school for less than 12 weeks, the decision to charge local or FFPOS rates is at the discretion of the school. If the FFPOS rate is charged, the BCEO component does not need to be remitted to BCEO.

Cultural/study groups visiting for a short period of time usually make a contribution to the school as an acknowledgment for the facilities used and time provided by the school. This contribution is to be negotiated between the school and the tour group organiser for these students.

- **FFPOS**: Each school is responsible for the establishment of an appropriate FFPOS fee structure. This fee structure should consist of two components, namely a BCEO component (payable to BCEO in September) and a School component (retained by the school).

The BCEO component is required to cover the following on a per student basis:
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grant for the year
- State Recurrent Grant for the year
- 6% of the International Student Levy

(As mentioned previously, FFPOS families are required to compensate BCEO for government funding not received for overseas students. The International
Student Levy includes the cost of one hour of ESL support per week and system administration).

The **School component** would normally cover the following on a per student basis:

- Local School Fee and Levy charges including Building Fund Levies
- Moderation fee (if applicable for year 11 & 12 students)
- 94% of the International Student Levy
- CRICOS Registration (if applicable on a per student basis) – Commonwealth Government charge
- QRICOS Registration (if applicable on a per school basis) – State Government charge
- Administration Fee
- Any additional costs incurred to teach a student

(Some of the above School component charges may be waived for established pastoral reasons at the discretion of the school principal. Local funding, such as from the P&F or local service groups, may also provide subsidies to assist families with fees, levies and other support).

Please contact the Administration Officer – Curriculum on (07) 3033 7000 for details on current Grant, International Student Levy, CRICOS and QRICOS Registration and suggested Administration Fee values.

Schools are required to invoice all FFPOS families at least one semester’s (preferably a full year) fees and levies (or pro-rata if attendance is less than a year) in advance and ensure payment is made before enrolling FFPOSs.

It is a requirement that all FFPOSs are appropriately recorded in the School Administration System. The necessary fields to complete include: Arrival Data in Australia, Type of Resident, Visa Sub-class Number, FFPOS, Visa Valid from, Visa Valid to, Date of Entry to School and Date Left (if applicable).

BCEO will invoice all schools for the BCEO component during September based on information contained in the August Commonwealth Census together with relevant information from the Commonwealth Government’s PRISMS (Provider Registration and International Student Management System) database and the School Administration System.

All FFPOS will be charged the full component (or pro rata if less than a school year) from the date of enrolment at a school.

As schools are required to ensure FFPOS families pay both the BCEO and School components in advance, under no circumstances will BCEO discount the BCEO component. Should a school wish to reduce the overall cost to an FFPOS, any reduction must be limited to the School Component.

**NB**: Commonwealth Programs for Schools - Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines - Appendix I: School Funding for Temporary Residents of Australia under the *Schools Assistance Act 2004*, paragraph 263 states that schools must collect the full imputed cost of education (including recurrent and capital costs).

The BCEC invoice is payable within 14 days.
4. Determining an Overseas Student Classification

In order to determine which sub category of OIS student an applicant falls under, we recommend you refer to the flow chart provided in Appendix 1.

This should be assessed in line with the Residency State and Applicant Classification Determination Guide available on the School Implementation System (SIS) portal within the BCEO site and entered into the School Administration System (eMinerva) accordingly.

5. School Administration System Set Up

For information on setting up the School Administration System to invoice and report on FFPOSs, please contact the BCEO Help Desk via email helpdesk@bne.catholic.edu.au or phone (07) 3033 7777 with a request for a School Support Accountant to make contact.

6. Additional References

A helpful contact for additional support is:

Mary-Anne Fleming  
Senior Education Officer Literacy and Numeracy  
Learning and Teaching Directorate  
Tel: 3033 7416  
Fax: 3844 5101  
Email: mfleming@bne.catholic.edu.au

John Percy  
Executive Officer – Education  
Queensland Catholic Education Commission  
Tel: 3336 9308  
Email: johnp@qcec.catholic.edu.au

CRICOS Registration

To begin the process of CRICOS registration, contact the Queensland authority for approval of providers and courses at:

International Quality Unit (CRICOS)  
International Quality Unity  
LMB 527  
BRISBANE   QLD   4000

Phone: (07) 3225 2442  
Email: cricosreg@deta.qld.gov.au

Useful Websites

QNGSIEC Website: www.qics.qld.edu.au

Education Queensland Website: http://education.qld.gov.au/international/