



Student Resource Scheme

Version Number

3.0

Implementation Date

9/07/2012

Scope

Department-wide

Purpose

A *parent* is directly responsible for providing the student with textbooks and other resources for a student's use while attending school.

As a service to assist parents with the cost of these educational resources, the school may choose to operate a student resource scheme (the scheme).

The purpose of the scheme is to provide the parent with a cost effective alternative to purchasing textbooks, resources, consumables and/or materials from elsewhere, through reduced prices gained from the school's bulk purchasing processes.

Overview

The purpose of the scheme is to provide the parent with a cost effective alternative to purchasing textbooks, resources, consumables and/or materials from elsewhere, through reduced prices gained from the school's bulk purchasing processes.

A student resource scheme enables a parent to enter into a [written agreement](#) with the school that, in return for payment of a specified annual participation fee, provides for the participating student's temporary use of prescribed textbooks and other resources and/or for the purchase by the parent of consumables and materials for the student's use.

The scheme is not to be used to raise funds for other purposes. Participation fees are to be directly applied to fund the service delivered by the scheme.

The scheme provides the entire package for the specified participation fee and is not available in parts unless specifically provided for by the school in the scheme fee structure.

The scheme is to be referred to by the school as the Student Resource Scheme, regardless of the extent of goods and services provided by the scheme, for example textbooks, hire of musical instruments.

The operation of the scheme is required to be supported annually by the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), and the scheme may be managed by the school or the P&C, but not by a **third party unless approved by the principal**. While the principal or P&C may enter into supply arrangements for items provided by the scheme, the principal or P&C ultimately remains responsible for the management of the scheme.

The school and the parent share decision-making and responsibility for the scheme.

Participation in the scheme is voluntary, and no obligation is placed on a parent to participate. A parent's decision to participate is based on consideration of the value afforded by the scheme.

If a parent chooses to participate in the scheme and completes a [Participation Agreement Form](#), a participation fee be due and payable by the parent.

On lodgement of the completed Participation Agreement Form with the school and payment of the participation fee in accordance with the agreed payment arrangement, the school shall provide the items to the student when due for the student's use.

Payment of the participation fee by the parent is a requirement for continued participation in the scheme. **An unpaid fee will be subject to the school's debt recovery processes.**

Where parents have opted for the [textbook and resource allowance](#) to be paid to the school, the allowance must be applied to offset the student resource scheme participation fee.

A parent who does not wish to join the scheme is responsible for providing the student with the items that would otherwise have been provided to the student by the scheme as detailed on the Year Level Requirements List and/or Subject Requirements List, to enable the student to engage with the curriculum. **Parents of secondary school-aged students who choose not to participate in the scheme will receive the textbook and resource allowance directly from the school.**

The amount of the participation fee is to be defensible and reasonable, and supported by **documentation provided by the school to parents on the details of the scheme.** The documentation will assist a parent to make an informed decision on the benefits of participating in the scheme, and will include:

- Year Level Requirements List and/or Subject Requirements List specifying:
 - all textbooks, resources, consumables and materials that a student is required to have for each year level or subject being undertaken
 - which of the listed items are provided to the student by participation in the scheme
 - which of the listed items are provided by the scheme for the temporary use of the participating student and must be returned to the school in good condition
 - which of the listed items are provided by the scheme for the permanent use of the participating student and may be retained
 - component costs of the items provided by participation in the scheme
 - which of the listed items are not provided by participation in the scheme and are to be provided to the student by the parent.
- the annual participation fee for the scheme or capacity to calculate a total annual participation fee where a selection of components and costs are available in the scheme
- the [Participation Agreement Form](#).

The Year Level Requirements List and/or Subject Requirements List and component costing will also assist a parent to calculate and substantiate an entitlement for the [Education Tax Refund](#) (From 1 January 2013, this will be known as the Schoolkids Bonus.)

To ensure that the operation of the scheme is consistent with legislative and policy requirements, a standard Participation Agreement Form is prescribed for use by schools. A school community may resolve to amend the standard form and/or the terms and conditions, and amendments must be supported by the P&C and approved by the regional director before being implemented in the scheme.

The student resource scheme includes textbooks and/or educational resources that, in the absence of the scheme, would normally be purchased by the parent for the student's use at school. The scheme may include printed material such as workbooks and worksheets, produced by the school in lieu of a prescribed textbook. The [State Education Fee Matrix](#) reflects the

goods and services commonly provided to a student and included in school fees. The list is intended to be informative rather than definitive, and is provided as a guide only. The purpose of the matrix is to inform the legislative authority and appropriate charging scheme for the provision of the goods or services. The matrix is not intended to encourage the introduction of a new fee in a school.

All items provided for temporary student use by the scheme remain the property of the scheme and shall be returned at the end of the education program or school year or when the student leaves the school, whichever is the earlier. Items provided for temporary student use shall be kept in good condition by the student. Where an issued item is lost or negligently damaged or not returned, the parent may be invoiced and required to pay the replacement cost of the item.

The student resource scheme does not include:

- a [voluntary financial contributions](#) request to supplement the instruction, administration and facilities for the education of the student at the school
- student internet access
- resources funded by the state through grant funding to provide a core educational service
- optional school activities such as excursions, camps, performances, and formals.

Before a student can be considered for participation in an optional school activity, a parent who has joined the scheme is expected to have:

- fully paid the student resource scheme participation fee or
- paid the student resource scheme participation fee up to and including the term in which the school activity takes place or
- made regular on-going payments towards the student resource scheme annual participation fee, as previously arranged with the principal or
- been exempted by the principal from paying all or part of the student resource scheme participation fee.

The principal is to use discretion in choosing to exclude a student from an optional school activity due to non-payment of the student resource scheme participation fee. A student, whose parent has joined the student resource scheme but not paid the participation fee, will continue to be provided with instruction, administration and facilities for the education of the student at the school.

A student resource scheme is not to be a deterrent to a student enrolling at a particular school or choosing a particular subject. The Department works to support all students and families, and to ensure that students are able to access the resources they need to engage with the curriculum. No student should be disadvantaged educationally because of financial hardship, and discretion and sensitivity are to be exercised in managing these issues.

Parents experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the principal or designated officer to discuss payment or resourcing options that may be available to accommodate their circumstances, including the waiving of a fee, entirely or partly, by the principal. Onus of proof of being so affected is on the parent, and might include a current [Health Care Card](#) or other evidence to establish financial hardship.

In considering information from a parent to substantiate financial hardship, the school must comply with the [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#) and the Information Privacy Principles contained in Schedule 3 of that Act. The extent of information requested and the way that it is sought should be fair and not unreasonably intrude into the personal affairs of the parent. The principal should document the reason for making a decision to waive a fee, entirely or partly, but is not required to retain copies of the information from a parent.

Responsibilities

Principals:

- determine, in conjunction with school staff, whether a student resource scheme is to operate for the school year
- determine, in consultation with the P&C:
 - the scope of the scheme and which body will manage the scheme
 - the textbooks, resources, consumables and materials provided by the scheme
 - the **Year Level Requirements Lists and/or Subject Requirements Lists** indicating:
 - all textbooks, resources, consumables and materials that a student is required to have for each year level or subject
 - which of the listed items are provided to the student by participation in the scheme
 - which of the listed items are provided by the scheme for the temporary use of the participating student, and must be returned in good condition
 - which of the listed items are provided by the scheme for the permanent use of the participating student, and may be retained
 - the component costs of the items provided by the scheme
 - which of the listed items are not provided by participation in the scheme and are to be provided to the student by the parent.
 - the annual participation fee for the scheme or capacity to calculate a total annual participation fee where a selection of components and costs are available
 - funding to operate the scheme, including [textbook and resource allowances](#), participation fees and pro rata fees, and expenses associated with the scheme
 - any proposed amendment to the standard [Participation Agreement Form](#) and/or terms and conditions for approval by the regional director before being implemented in the scheme
 - decision-making parameters for waiving entirely or part of the participation fees for parents experiencing financial hardship
 - action to be taken for scheme items that are lost or negligently damaged or not returned
 - action to be taken for non-payment of participation fees including:
 - generation of a reminder notice to the parent at intervals of 30 days overdue and 60 days overdue
 - after 60 days overdue, undertaking internal school debt recovery action as provided in the [School Accounting Manual](#) (DETE employees only) for the overdue participation fees including, where warranted, referral to an external [debt collection agency](#) via Finance Branch, or waiving the fee
 - exercising discretion in excluding a student from participation in an optional extracurricular school activity
 - withdrawing a student's participation in the scheme where warranted, or
 - excluding a student from the scheme where the student's participation fee is overdue from the previous year's scheme.
- provide the scheme documentation to parents including the standard [Participation Agreement Form](#)
- prior to commencing the scheme for the following year, provide to the P&C and, on request, to parents, an annual statement of receipts and expenditure for the current year's scheme
- ensure that the operation and administration of the scheme are in accordance with [legislative and policy requirements](#)
- apply the [textbook and resource allowances](#) to offset the cost of participation fees to parents of eligible students
- pay the full textbook and resource allowance to parents of eligible students who do not wish to participate in the scheme
- retain documents associated with the scheme, including documents of parents' decisions to participate or not in the scheme, in accordance with the [Retention and Disposal Schedule For Records Held in Schools](#)
- make decisions on applications for waiving or reducing the participation fee, based on the determined decision-making parameters
- approve and document agreed variations to the payment of participation fees

- charge pro rata participation fees for a student who enters the scheme after the first week of school, calculated on a 40-week school year basis
- make a pro rata refund to the parent of a student who, having paid a participation fee, leaves the school through the year. The pro rata refund is calculated on the participation fee paid, less the cost of consumed materials and the replacement cost of scheme items that are lost or negligently damaged or not returned, plus the pro rata textbook and resource allowance calculated on the basis of a 40-week school year.
- ensure that debt recovery processes are in accordance with [Financial Practices in Schools and Other Centres](#), the [School Accounting Manual](#), and [Debt Management](#)
- ensure that the student does not suffer educational disadvantage by way of school action as a result of the parent's decision not to participate in the scheme
- continue to provide instruction, administration and facilities for the education of the student where the parent who has joined the scheme does not pay the annual participation fees.

Parents and Citizens' Associations:

- in consultation with the principal, determine the scope of the student resource scheme and which body will manage it
- support the operation of the scheme annually through:
 - a meeting prior to the beginning of the school year, where the scheme is included on the agenda and
 - ensuring all parents are notified at least one meeting in advance with an invitation to attend.
- provide all parents with an opportunity to present their views on the scheme
- record the decision to support the scheme's operation, including the participation fee in the minutes of meeting
- support a request by the school to the regional director to amend the standard Participation Agreement Form and/or the terms and conditions of the scheme.

Parents:

- make a decision on participation in the student resource scheme, and indicate the decision by completing the Participation Agreement Form and return the form to the school
- where a decision is made to join the scheme, pay the participation fee in accordance with the selected payment option on the Participation Agreement Form
- where a decision is made to join the scheme, comply with the [terms and conditions](#) for the operation of the scheme as agreed to on the Participation Agreement Form
- where a decision is made not to participate in the scheme, provide the student with the items otherwise provided to the student by the scheme as detailed on the Year Level Requirements List and/or Subject Requirements List, to enable the student to engage with the curriculum
- in circumstances of financial hardship, contact the principal or designated officer to discuss how the financial obligations can be met throughout the school year, or to negotiate alternative arrangements that may be available to accommodate individual circumstances, including waiving of the fee entirely or in part by the principal.

Regional Finance Managers:

- advise schools and parents on policies, procedures and documentation in relation to the student resource scheme
- advise the regional director on a request by the school to alter the standard Participation Agreement Form and/or terms and conditions of the scheme.

Regional Directors:

- make a decision, in conjunction with the regional finance manager, on a request by a school to alter the standard Participation Agreement Form and/or the terms and conditions of the scheme.

Process

Steps

1. Decide to have a student resource scheme.
2. Consult with school community.
3. Undertake costing exercise to determine amount of fee.
4. Provide list of resources provided and the cost of the resources to parents with the Participation Agreement Form, along with the amount of the scheme, with the deduction for the Text and Resource Allowance clearly indicated.
5. Receive signed Participation Agreement Form.
6. Generate invoices for participating parents.
7. Pay the Text and Resource Allowance to non-participating parents.
8. Follow up on unpaid invoices following departmental debt management guidelines.

Online Resources

Forms

- [Participation Agreement Form](#)

Supporting documents

- [State Education Fee Matrix](#)

Review Date

1/01/2013



Definitions

Fee

A charge, other than a fine, levy or tax, for goods or services provided by the school. See also [State Education Fees](#).

Financial hardship

As a general guide, circumstances by which payment of a fee would cause significant adverse financial effects on the student and/or family.

Grant funding

Funding paid to schools by the Department of Education Training and Employment (DETE) for their operational and capital works needs.

Parent

In terms of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#), the parent, parents, or a person who exercises parental responsibility for the student. However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.

A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child. A parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child. A person granted guardianship of a child under the [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#) or a person who exercises parental responsibility for a child under a decision or order of a federal court or a court of a State is regarded as a parent of a child.

In terms of this policy, "parent" also means carer, guardian and independent student.

Participation fee

The annual fee to participate in the student resource scheme, in return for payment of which, the participating student will receive the items provided by the scheme as indicated on the Year Level Requirement List and/or Subject Requirement List.

Authority

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Old\)](#)
Chapter 3 ss. 50, 51, 56
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2006 \(Old\)](#)
Part 9 s. 66

Related Policy Instruments

- [Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009 \(Old\)](#)
Part 2 ss. 17, 18
- [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Old\)](#)
Schedule 3
- [Debt Management](#)
- [Textbook and Resource Allowance](#)
- [Financial Practices in Schools and Other Education Centres](#)
- [State Education Fees](#)
- [Trade Practices](#)
- [Decision-making and Responding to a Request for Reasons for a Decision](#)
- [School Accounting Manual](#) (DETE employees only)
- [Education Tax Refund](#)

Attachments



[Contact List](#)



[Participation Agreement Form](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact your closest [regional office](#).

DETE employees, please contact:

Principal Policy Officer
Corporate Finance
Phone: (07) 3237 0298
Fax: (07) 3237 0751

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