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### **Rationale**

Overseas and Interstate excursions will be offered by Mater Dei College where they demonstrate support for the College's curriculum and shall reflect authentic Catholic principles and values.

### **Principles**

All overseas and interstate tours must be approved in the first instance by the Principal. The Principal shall consider the financial burden on sending students on overseas and interstate tours. Any request to organise an overseas or interstate tour must be submitted 12 months in advance. Staffing of tours will require "expressions of interest" from interested staff to be submitted to the Tour Organiser who will then discuss these with the Principal. The Principal in consultation with the appropriate Deputy Principals and Tour Organiser will recommend the supervisory staff. Approval to conduct a tour would in most circumstances be biannually.

Students of families with College Fee accounts in arrears (ie if a payment plan is in arrears) will not be eligible to attend interstate or overseas tours. Parents should not sign an application for their son/daughter if College fees are in arrears and an approved and up to date payment plan is not in place. While it may be argued that it is not the student's fault the fees are in arrears, this rule will stand, even if the student has worked to save money for the tour, or if a family member has offered to fund the cost of the tour.

All overseas and interstate tours will be voluntary for staff and students and therefore cannot be made part of an assessment of any particular subject offered at the College.

It is a requirement that supervising teachers accompany students on the outward and return travel arrangements of the tour. Family members of a supervising staff member should not travel in a private capacity with the group.

Overseas and interstate tours are to be regarded as an extension of the school. The same code of conduct expected during school hours is expected of all students, staff and supervisors for the duration of the tour. Regardless of the student's age, school rules will apply for all students on tour.

Gender balance of accompanying staff must be maintained for the adequate supervision of male and female students. At least one member of the supervisory staff must hold a current First Aid Certificate.

Any fundraising for College tours should be limited and external to school activities.

Overseas and interstate tours must be planned in accordance with the College Camps and Excursion Policy.

### **Procedures**

- 1) In the first instance the organiser of the proposed tour should discuss the program with the Head of Department, then the Principal. The Principal will require as much information as possible that is available at the time; relating to: the educational benefit to students, an outline of the itinerary, number and year level of targeted students, anticipated staffing numbers, approximate costs, a strategy for shortlisting applicants if required and proposed timing. Staff must be aware of the financial imposition on parents and students and pressure of any sort should not be placed on students to attend voluntary educational tours. Countries that have a DFAT travel warning that results in travel insurance being compromised or would pose unreasonable risk to the safety of the travel group will be ineligible for College tours.



- 2) All overseas and interstate tours will be scheduled to ensure there is minimal conflict for a student or staff member with their existing obligations to the College. (ie where possible, all tours should commence and conclude within scheduled term breaks). Adequate recovery time prior to resumption at school should be considered in planning the itinerary.
- 3) Once the Principal has given in principle support, detailed tour budgets are to be discussed with the Business Manager. Approval will not be given without supporting documentation in the form of formal quotes and indicative booking costs. *The cost of any relief required to enable the tour to proceed will form part of the overall tour cost. This cost will be paid by the students and will be included in the total tour price.*
- 4) When details have been formalised and proposed correspondence to parents and students has been approved by the Principal, the tour organiser may then proceed to advertise the tour to the target student population. At that stage, students are requested to submit an expression of interest. This expression of interest must be signed and endorsed by both Parents/Guardians. No student is to be guaranteed a position with the tour group at this point.
- 5) The nominated student list must then be submitted to the Principal for approval. The Principal or Tour Organiser may rule a student ineligible for the tour. Families with College fee accounts in arrears will be ineligible to attend interstate or overseas tours.
- 6) Once the nominated students have been approved, a deposit and payment plan can be instigated. All payments must be made to either Mater Dei College or to a registered travel agent. Under no circumstances is a staff member to collect deposits to their personal accounts. Initial Tour deposits should be 20% of the total tour cost and non-refundable to ensure commitment to the program by parents and students.
- 7) All tours must be covered with comprehensive overseas travel insurance. It is suggested that this be arranged in the early stages of planning as cover may be extended for cancellation fees in the advent of a student accident or natural disasters prior to departure.
- 8) Copies of all student passports are to be given to the Business Manager prior to departure.
- 9) Fundraising for any tours should be kept to a minimum. The sale of chocolates or similar items are not to be sold at the College. It is anticipated that only one major event be conducted at a school level for any tours. Activities conducted out of school hours will be at the discretion of the Principal.
- 10) Any variations to these Principles & Procedures must be negotiated with the Principal.