



Boarding Standard for Australian schools and residences



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- Anglican Schools Australia
 - Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia
 - Australian Boarding School Association
 - Australian Catholic University
 - Australian Parents Council
 - Australian Primary Principals Association
 - Australian Secondary Principals Association
 - Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, NSW
 - Boarding Australia
 - Department of Education and Communities, NSW
 - Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia
 - Isolated Children's Parents' Association
 - Lutheran Education Queensland
 - National Catholic Education Commission
-

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Australian Standard[®]

**Boarding Standard for Australian
schools and residences**

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee ED-001, Education Facilities and Services Management.

The objective of this Standard is to provide owners, operators, managers and staff of boarding services with a framework of required topics that need to be addressed in order to deliver a safe, healthy and productive environment for boarders.

This Standard covers functional elements commonly found across boarding services and addresses them under relevant sections. The chart on the following page illustrates the structure of the document.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Desirable quality assurance has underpinned the development of standards for boarding services in a number of countries. That work, and previous work in Australia in this regard, helped inform the development of this Boarding Standard.



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INTRODUCTION

This Standard is designed for application in boarding services operated by Australian state and territory government agencies, by non-government schools and systems and by local government and community committees. This Standard is designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students for whom boarding accommodation is provided.

Legislative requirements affecting boarding services in Australia vary from state to state and between states and territories. This Standard provides a common framework across all jurisdictions and is intended to be of benefit to service providers and users.

Experience in other countries suggests that a national boarding standard is effective in promoting quality boarding services.

Many sections of this Standard may align with policies and procedures that already exist and are documented.

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA
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Australian Standard
Boarding Standard for Australian schools and residences
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SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

This Standard specifies requirements for the management and operation of residential boarding services for students attending school, including residential boarding services governed by the school or independently.

1.2 APPLICATION

Boarding service management shall be able to demonstrate compliance with relevant federal, state and territory legislation. Suitable frameworks and processes shall be established, documented, disseminated, implemented, maintained and reviewed. The Sections of this Standard set out minimum requirements for a framework and processes as follows:

Section 2—Governance and management.

Section 3—Boarders.

Section 4—Staff.

Section 5—Parent, family and community engagement.

Section 6—Facilities.

1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

The following document is referred to in this Standard:

AS/NZS ISO
31000 Risk management—Principles and guidelines

1.4 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Standard the definitions below apply.

1.4.1 Boarder

A school student who utilizes the boarding service. Includes school students from Australian rural, remote and urban locations and from overseas.

1.4.2 Boarding service

An accommodation service for Australian and international students attending school. This includes all aspects of student care and development and the boarding premises.

1.4.3 Boarding service management

The day-to-day implementation of the strategic direction and operation of the boarding service.

1.4.4 Boarding staff

Persons undertaking a variety of duties in the delivery of the boarding service.

1.4.5 Code of conduct

A set of standards describing expected behaviour.

1.4.6 Community engagement

The support, services, and advocacy activities that community organizations, including businesses and faith-based institutions, provide in order to improve boarder learning and wellbeing, and promote parent/family engagement.

1.4.7 External authorities

Bodies other than boarding service management bodies providing governing legislation, regulations, codes of practice (e.g. National Construction Code) and resources.

1.4.8 Facilities

All aspects of the boarding premises, including buildings, infrastructure, outdoor spaces and other assets.

1.4.9 Governance

The person(s) or entity responsible for the provision of the boarding service.

1.4.10 Handbook

A manual of instruction or guidance providing detailed and specific information and/or instructions.

1.4.11 Head of boarding

The person(s) responsible for the daily management of the boarding service.

1.4.12 Host

The person(s) authorized by a boarder's parents to be responsible for a boarder when the boarder is on leave from the boarding service.

1.4.13 International students

A school student from overseas who meets Australian government international student requirements.

1.4.14 Parent(s)

A boarder's legal parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s).

1.4.15 Parent/family engagement

Parent/family engagement (see definition in the glossary) is the process of working with parents/families to support their child's learning and wellbeing.

SECTION 2 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

2.1 GENERAL

Governance and management processes are used to govern and oversee the strategic planning and operation of the boarding service and incorporate its leadership and administration.

Boarding service governance and management shall:

- (a) Identify and implement the service objectives, organizational structure, policies, processes, and resources needed to deliver a quality, appropriate and accountable boarding service.
- (b) Ensure that a written agreement is in place for the enrolment of each boarder.
- (c) Ensure that parents and boarders are provided with documented service objectives and relevant policies and processes at the time of enrolment and when updates occur.
- (d) Manage staff as detailed in Section 4.
- (e) Provide copies of the relevant documents to all boarding service staff and students and their families at induction.
- (f) Ensure that all boarding staff meet child protection and other screening requirements.
- (g) Ensure that all boarding staff are competent and have access to the information and resources they need to deliver a quality, appropriate and accountable boarding service.
- (h) Provide professional development and training to staff within the parameters set out by the relevant industrial instrument and to meet legislative requirements.
- (i) Ensure that financial management and financial transactions are fully accountable and audited.
- (j) Implement risk management processes with input from boarding staff, boarders and parents.
NOTE: Guidance on risk management is provided in AS/NZS ISO 31000.
- (k) Review the risks periodically to ensure good practice within the Boarding Service. Where appropriate, the Boarding Service will replace equipment and review practices to meet the relevant work health and safety legislative requirements.
- (l) Monitor and analyse service performance with input from boarding staff, boarders, parents and other boarding community members.
- (m) Identify and implement procedures and actions that will deliver continuous improvements.
- (n) Ensure all policies and procedures implemented and developed are reviewed and updated at least once every two years or when legislative amendments occur.

2.2 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records management requirements shall include the development and implementation of a records management policy, system and procedures which identify the record-keeping, back-up, storage, security, retention, disposal, access and confidentiality requirements.

2.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial management requirements shall include:

- (a) Oversight of fees, charges and payment requirements.
- (b) Financial management policies, systems and procedures determined, documented, implemented and reviewed.
- (c) Regular oversight of budget, expenditure, financial reports and financial position.
- (d) Regular, independent auditing in accordance with documented audit scope, policy and procedures.

S E C T I O N 3 B O A R D E R S

3.1 GENERAL

The focus for all boarding services is the boarders. Their well-being is the main priority and the framework of this Section provides for their protection, safety, health, care and development.

3.2 CHILD PROTECTION OF BOARDERS

Different state and territory legislation applies to the subject of child protection.

Requirements relating to child protection for boarders shall include:

- (a) A child protection policy and procedures.
- (b) Current working with children clearances for all personnel.
- (c) Child protection training including reporting obligations, for all personnel.
- (d) Regular training and adherence to requirements regarding relationships with boarders for all required personnel.

NOTE: The requirements mentioned in this Clause are determined by the boarding service management and by legislation.

3.3 SAFETY OF BOARDERS

Requirements relating to boarder safety shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to safety.
- (b) Regular review of the record of critical incidents and injuries undertaken by a designated officer and timely documentation and reporting of critical incidents and injuries to boarding service management.
- (c) Risk management, including risk assessment undertaken in relation to on-site and off-site activities.

NOTE: Guidance on risk management is provided in AS/NZS ISO 31000.

- (d) The implementation of processes to increase boarders' understanding and their effective response to the following:
 - (i) Personal security.
 - (ii) Serious incidents and resulting trauma.
 - (iii) Evacuation and lockdowns.
 - (iv) Emergencies.
 - (v) Bullying and harassment.
 - (vi) Grievances and complaints.

3.4 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF BOARDERS

Requirements relating to boarder health and well-being shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to the management of boarder health and wellbeing.
- (b) A process to recognize and respect the rights and responsibilities of boarders.

- (c) Regular review of boarder health needs, which includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) Boarders' individual health records and/or plans.
 - (ii) Documented consent from, and notification of, parents regarding the administering of first aid and medical care.
 - (iii) Management of significant health incidents.
 - (iv) Records of the administration of medication.
 - (v) Records of the administration of first aid.
- (d) Ensuring all boarding staff supervising boarders are regularly trained and assessed as competent in performing CPR and applying general first aid in accordance with the HLT Health Training Package.
- (e) A trained person accessible at all times who can administer and manage, as a minimum:
 - (i) Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
 - (ii) Anaphylaxis and allergic reactions.
 - (iii) Asthma.
 - (iv) Diabetes.
 - (v) Epilepsy.
 - (vi) Infection control.
 - (vii) Distribution of medication.
- (f) Boarding service management promoting a boarding service culture of respect and inclusion.
- (g) A bullying and harassment policy and procedures.
- (h) A policy and procedure for age-appropriate use of electronic and mobile communication devices and cyber activity.
- (i) An annual review by staff and boarders of the food provision, including but not limited to:
 - (i) Nutritional value.
 - (ii) Quantity.
 - (iii) Variety.
 - (iv) Choice.
 - (v) Food handling.
- (j) Guidelines that provide for age-appropriate time for:
 - (i) Sleep.
 - (ii) Physical activity.
 - (iii) Study.
 - (iv) Organized leisure activities.
 - (v) Unstructured free time.
- (k) Boarders' timely access to:
 - (i) Qualified medical personnel.
 - (ii) Appropriate guidance and counselling.

- (iii) Academic assistance.
- (iv) Support for boarders with specific needs.
- (v) Communication with parents.
- (vi) Personnel responsible for pastoral care.
- (l) Boarders being provided with regular access, in a variety of mediums, to constructively contribute to the operation of boarding services. Boarders' comments given appropriate consideration regarding the operation of boarding services.
- (m) A documented policy and procedure for the management of boarder behaviours.
- (n) A policy and procedure for raising, receiving, acknowledging and responding to matters of concern, including complaints from boarders, parents and the boarding community.
- (o) Access to age appropriate play and recreational programs, facilities and resources for boarders.
- (p) A process to recognize and respect the rights and responsibilities of boarders in embracing human diversity and welcoming all as equal members of a residential community.
- (q) Policies and procedures relating to the use of alcohol and other drugs.

NOTE: Recommended first aid courses are provided by a joint initiative of the Australian and state and territory governments, viz. HLTFAD003—*Provide First Aid*, HLTFAD004—*Provide Emergency First Aid Response in an Education and Care Setting*, and HLTAID001—*Provide Pulmonary Resuscitation*, or their equivalent. See the training.gov.au website.

3.5 HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF BOARDERS

Requirements relating to boarder holistic development shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to, but not limited to:
 - (i) Academic development.
 - (ii) Social development.
 - (iii) Emotional development.
 - (iv) Physical development.
- (b) A program promoting social responsibility.
- (c) A leadership development program, including appropriate monitoring activities.

3.6 CARE AND SUPERVISION OF BOARDERS

Requirements relating to boarder care and supervision shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures including but not limited to:
 - (i) Records of rosters.
 - (ii) Ensuring the personal privacy of boarders.
 - (iii) Reporting of serious incidents and emergencies.
- (b) Risk management processes used to determine ratios of trained staff to boarders for all circumstances.

NOTE: Guidance on risk management is provided in AS/NZS ISO 31000.

- (c) Procedures outlining the manner of supervision of boarders in:
 - (i) Dormitories and/or bedrooms.
 - (ii) Recreation and common rooms.
 - (iii) Outside areas.
 - (iv) Dining rooms.
 - (v) Bathrooms/toilets.
 - (vi) Changing rooms.
 - (vii) Off-site or extra-curricular activities and excursions.
- (d) A daily record of the whereabouts of boarders, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Morning.
 - (ii) After school/mid-afternoon.
 - (iii) Early evening.
 - (iv) Bedtime.
 - (v) Extra-curricular activities.
- (e) A process for checking the cleanliness and orderliness of the boarders' living spaces.
- (f) An induction program for all new boarders.
- (g) Ongoing and annual information sessions for all boarders.
- (h) Policies and procedures in relation to leave, including roles and responsibilities of:
 - (i) Boarders.
 - (ii) Parents.
 - (iii) Hosts.
 - (iv) Staff.
- (i) Policies and procedures in relation to the conduct of searches of boarders' accommodation and possessions.
- (j) Provision of facilities for boarders to secure their valuables.

3.7 PROVIDING FOR BOARDERS WITH PARTICULAR NEEDS

Requirements on providing for boarders with particular needs shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to the induction and care of boarders, including acknowledgement of their culture and heritage from:
 - (i) Overseas.
 - (ii) Indigenous communities.
 - (iii) Isolated country areas.
- (b) Policies and procedures in relation to the access and care of boarders with disabilities.
- (c) Policies and procedures in relation to the support for boarders with specific education needs.

S E C T I O N 4 S T A F F

4.1 GENERAL

Boarding service governance and management and staff are responsible for the delivery of a quality boarding service.

The framework of staff-related provisions covers health, safety, well-being, competence, professional learning and management of staff.

Boarding staff shall be regularly trained in and regularly monitored in regard to their duty of care obligations, as determined by the boarding service management.

4.2 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF STAFF

Requirements relating to staff health, safety and wellbeing shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to the management of staff health, safety and wellbeing, including an effective occupational work health and safety policy.
- (b) A regular review of the record of incidents and injuries to staff undertaken by a designated officer.
- (c) A risk management process in relation to on-site and off-site activities.
NOTE: Guidance on risk management is provided in AS/NZS ISO 31000.
- (d) Ensuring staff understand and respond to the following:
 - (i) Personal security.
 - (ii) Serious incidents and resulting trauma.
 - (iii) Evacuation and lockdown.
 - (iv) Emergencies.
 - (v) Bullying and harassment.
 - (vi) Grievances and complaints.

4.3 COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OF STAFF

Requirements relating to staff competency and professional learning shall include:

- (a) Determination of the necessary competencies for staff on the basis of appropriate education, professional learning, skills and experience.
- (b) Employment of staff in a boarding service who have the necessary competencies.
- (c) Provision of annual professional learning relevant to the role and context.
- (d) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the actions taken, to achieve the necessary competencies.
- (e) Maintaining appropriate records of education, professional learning, skills and experience.

4.4 MANAGEMENT OF STAFF

Requirements relating to staff management shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures in relation to the recruitment, employment and management of staff and engagement of volunteers.
- (b) The provision of all policies and procedures to staff at commencement of employment.
- (c) A systematic performance review process.
- (d) A code of conduct for staff.
- (e) Documented position descriptions and duty statements for all staff.
- (f) Documented conditions of employment for all staff.
- (g) A staff handbook.
- (h) Induction programs and exit processes for staff.
- (i) Provision for the opportunity for staff to submit ideas for boarding service improvement.

SECTION 5 PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

5.1 GENERAL

Parents are primarily responsible for their children, including their children's development and wellbeing. In partnership with boarding service management and staff, parents, families, schools and community organizations contribute to the quality and accountability of boarding service delivery, including boarder support and wellbeing. This Section covers requirements on establishing engagement processes.

5.2 PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Requirements relating to parent and family engagement shall include:

- (a) Policies and procedures developed and implemented, including but not limited to:
 - (i) The training of staff in strategies for parent and family engagement (refer to Clause 4.3).
 - (ii) The provision of and easy access to clear, plain language information about the boarding service, its policies, procedures, and calendar of activities.
 - (iii) Communication with parents during settling in and other vulnerable periods.
 - (iv) The provision of clear and convenient avenues for parent contact and communication, and timely and effective responses (refer to Clauses 3.3 and 3.4 for information on complaints processes).
 - (v) Facilitation of regular communication between all parties including academic teaching staff and residential boarding staff.
 - (vi) Regular collection and use of information about family needs and expectations to improve service delivery.
 - (vii) Proactive and appropriate communication about individual boarder's care and support needs, progress and achievement, personal strengths and contributions.
 - (viii) Regular assessment of parent satisfaction.
- (b) The development of partnerships that:
 - (A) Promote and support parent/family engagement in boarder learning.
 - (B) Involve parents/families in policy development and decision-making.
 - (C) Enrich boarding programs and activities.
 - (D) Consider the diverse needs and expectations of the parents and families of children with particular needs.

5.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Requirements relating to community engagement shall include:

- (a) Communication protocols that support positive relationship building with partner schools, community services and organizations.
- (b) Active engagement by heads of boarding and staff with school and community representatives, agencies and partners to develop relationships and partnerships that improve opportunities and outcomes for boarders.

S E C T I O N 6 F A C I L I T I E S

Quality, safe, functional and comfortable facilities help boarders have a life enhancing boarding experience. These facilities support boarder and staff health, well-being and safety and boarder learning and recreation.

This Section covers requirements relating to boarding facilities, their day-to-day management and maintenance, and plans for their improvement.

Requirements relating to the development and management of the facilities shall include:

- (a) Facilities and associated infrastructure established, constructed, audited and maintained in accordance with relevant building, health and safety, and environmental requirements.
- (b) Written evidence of legislative and regulatory compliance maintained.
- (c) Policies and procedures developed and implemented in relation to the establishment, improvement, maintenance and cleaning of the facilities.
- (d) Provision of appropriate security and privacy for boarders and live-in staff. More information is provided in Clause 3.3(d)(i), Clause 3.6(a)(ii) and Clause 4.2(d)(i).
- (e) Checks that ensure vehicles used for boarder and staff transport are safe, well maintained and appropriately licensed and insured.
- (f) Provision of 24-hour access for boarders and staff to an emergency communication system.
- (g) Identification and management of maintenance in accordance with the relevant standards.
- (h) Provision of suitable accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities, to cater for the needs of boarding students who are sick or injured.

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