

# Open Access College enrolment policy

This is a mandated policy under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this page must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting operational policies](#) page.

## Overview

This policy outlines conditions for students eligible to enrol in the South Australian Open Access College.

Open Access College gives students unable to regularly attend school access to an external education program, or online learning to particular studies not available at their current school.

## Scope

This policy applies to students seeking an enrolment at Open Access College and all department employees.

When enrolling a student, Open Access College will seek appropriate approvals from parents responsible for a child in line with the department's [admission procedure \(PDF, 425.3 KB\)](#).

## Detail

Students who are eligible to enrol at the Open Access College can be college-based or school-based.

The minimum period of enrolment for students is 10 weeks.

## College-based students

College-based students undertake their entire course (full time or part time) with Open Access College.

The following categories of students may be eligible to enrol as a college-based student:

- a rural and remote student whose home is geographically isolated
- a student who is unable to access a government school
- an adult student
- an interstate student
- a student exempted from school for the purpose of home education.

## Rural and remote students

Rural and remote students living in areas of Australia that are considered geographically isolated may be able to enrol in Open Access College.

Geographical isolation is determined based on the distance or transport circumstances between the child's home and the nearest government school, which offers the same year level.

School of the Air (SOTA) Port Augusta campus provides reception to year 7 for geographically remote students. From 2022, this will become reception to year 6.

## Students without access to a government school

Students, including students from non-government school sectors, living in South Australia who are unable to access a government school, for 1 of the following reasons, may be able to enrol in Open Access College:

- They are travelling within Australia or overseas, or posted overseas (for a period of 1 term or longer). Proof of travel documentation and proof of identity and residency are required.
- They are undertaking specialised vocational study for example, full-time ballet school.
- They are 16 years of age or over and have work commitments that prevent enrolment at a secondary school. A letter from the employer detailing work requirements (hours and shifts) is required.
- They have a medical condition (see [students with medical conditions](#) in this policy).

## Adult students

Adults aged 18 years to under 21 years that wish to complete their studies may do so. Students who have left school for more than 6 months must be eligible through the [adult education enrolment policy](#).

Adults aged 21 years or older who have not achieved their SACE can complete this qualification under the adult education provision (AEP) detailed in the adult education enrolment policy.

All adult students who have left school for more than 6 months must have a current working with children check and meet legislated screening requirements before starting their studies as outlined in the adult education enrolment policy. See [relevant history screening](#).

## Interstate students

Open Access College has an agreement with some interstate distance education counterparts that allows the following interstate students to enrol, if they:

- live in New South Wales, and their home is geographically isolated in the proximity of Broken Hill
- live in the Northern Territory and are eligible to enrol at the [Northern Territory Distance Education School](#) but the subject that they wish to enrol in is not available.

## Home education students

Students who have a current exemption from school for the purpose of home education can enrol in Open Access College subjects as a college-based student on a part-time or full-time basis under the following conditions:

- reception to year 9 students may enrol in language or music programs
- year 10 students may enrol in 'personal learning plan' only or undertake a full load of year 10 in preparation for SACE studies
- year 11 to 12 students may undertake a full load of SACE subjects including a combination with a school-based apprenticeship or VET course.

When attendance issues occur, a student wellbeing leader will work to engage the student. The placement may terminate if a student doesn't attend required lessons over a 4 week period. Open Access College will inform the Home Education team before the 4-week period is over and termination is recommended.

## Length of college-based enrolment and reviews

All college-based enrolments are valid for a maximum period of 12 months (excluding students enrolled through Port Augusta School of the Air). The minimum period of enrolment is 10 weeks.

The student's continuation at Open Access College must be reviewed annually, by the principal (or delegate). The review will consider whether it is appropriate for the student to continue the external education program at Open Access College, or whether they should be attending a local school.

For students with a medical condition, a medical report will be sought from the relevant health professional (see [students with medical conditions](#) in this policy).

## School-based students

School-based students have the option of an alternative placement from their enrolled school, by enrolling at Open Access College (full time or part time).

The following category of students may be eligible to enrol as a school-based student:

- a student wishing to access a specific subject not available at their current enrolled school
- a student unable to attend full time at their current enrolled school due to family commitments
- a student who requires a temporary exclusion placement
- a student requiring an alternative placement for a specific period, including medical conditions (see [students with medical conditions](#) in this policy).

## Specific subject not available at enrolled school

Students can undertake specific subjects at Open Access College that they cannot access or are not offered by their current enrolled school. The enrolled school must agree to the student accessing a specific subject through Open Access College.

The enrolment at Open Access College will stop when the student completes the required subjects.

## Students with family commitments

A student who cannot attend in their enrolled school on a full-time basis due to particular family commitments may be eligible to enrol into Open Access College. Family commitments include, but are not limited to:

- A student who cares for a relative. To support this enrolment, a report must be provided from a doctor of the person in care or other healthcare professional, confirming the reason for the disruption and likely duration of the interruption to learning

- A student who is pregnant; or any new parent who is unable to attend their enrolled school on a full-time basis. Consideration will be given to the level of support required for the student. An appropriate interagency service will be involved or a referral to the local student support service will be facilitated. Student support services should also consider the opportunity provided by senior secondary schools to meet the needs of these students, before considering enrolment at Open Access College.

## Student placement during exclusion

Students under 16 may be excluded, by negotiation, from their current enrolled school to Open Access College.

This is determined through consultation at the pre-exclusion conference, with the site leader of the student's enrolled school and the local student support services, as per the department's [suspension, exclusion and expulsion processes](#).

## Other alternative placements

### Behaviour or supported learning strategy

When a school is in the process of developing a [behaviour support plan](#) or considering a strategy to support learning outcomes it may be an appropriate strategy to achieve the goals identified for the student through an alternative placement with Open Access College. In these circumstances the length of the alternative placement will be negotiated between Open Access College and the student's current enrolled school.

Enrolled schools interested in this option must discuss the alternative placement with their local student support services and contact an Open Access College student wellbeing leader for a pre-referral discussion, phone 8309 3500 or email [student.services@openaccess.edu.au](mailto:student.services@openaccess.edu.au).

A local [student support services](#) or interagency referral is needed for an alternative placement to Open Access College.

The referral documentation for the student, including behaviour development plans, must be given to Open Access College.

## Length of school-based placements and recharge

All school-based enrolments are valid for a maximum period of 12 months. The minimum period is 10 weeks.

The enrolled school maintains the student's substantive enrolment while the student participates at Open Access College as a school-based student.

The student's current enrolled school must agree to a school-based enrolment at Open Access College, and agree to pay all fees, including temporary relief teachers (TRT) recharge by the department.

## Students with medical conditions

Students with medical conditions may be either school-based or college-based students.

Enrolment for students with medical conditions must be considered on an individual basis.

Medical issues may be long term or short term (physical or psychological), that prevent the student attending their enrolled school on a full-time basis.

In all cases, a health professional must provide a comprehensive written medical report that outlines the student's condition and how treatment impacts on their ability to attend their school or other local education provision. This will support the enrolment to Open Access College.

## Physical conditions

Where possible, school-based enrolments are preferable for students with physical conditions, with the student completing some subjects face-to-face in their enrolled school.

Curriculum continuity and learning programs will be negotiated between Open Access College and the enrolled school.

## Psychological conditions

In the case of psychological conditions the following is considered:

- current and previous enrolled school interventions including documented health support plans
- local student support service staff involvement and documentation outlining involvement in maintaining face-to-face education.

Initially, a term school-based enrolment with Open Access College will occur for students with a psychological condition, with the student attending their enrolled school on a part-time basis where possible.

This will allow Open Access College to assess the suitability of the placement and allow the student to maintain contact with their enrolled school.

A review will occur at the end of the school term between Open Access College, relevant student support service staff, the student's current enrolled school, and the student (where appropriate) and their parents to discuss ongoing Open Access College involvement.

## Supervision

All students (except adult students) must have a parent or supervisor (at home or at their enrolled school) available at all times. This will help to make sure child safety measures are maintained during their course of study, for example supervision, as well as to give support for the student as they complete the learning programs developed by Open Access College.

# Roles and responsibilities

## Home Education team

Inform parents of subject options.

Inform parents of requirements for paying materials and services charges (unless excluded by the [Education and Children Service's Act 2019 \(SA\)](#)) to Open Access College.

Give contact details of relevant Open Access College staff to parents.

Notify Open Access College if the approved exemption for the student for the purpose of home education is revoked or denied at any stage.

## Principal of Open Access College

Manage day-to-day operations of Open Access College, including enrolments.

Manage processes to acquire necessary resources and facilities to accommodate eligible students.

Make sure relevant enrolment information is communicated to parents and prospective applicants.

Manage all enrolments in a transparent manner without discrimination or prejudice.

## Student support services

Work with Open Access College and the student's current enrolled school to facilitate access and support for students requiring specific school-based or college-based placement.

## Student wellbeing leader – Open Access College

Consider enrolments and make recommendation to the assistant principal, Wellbeing or delegate.

Request parents to give a copy of the approved exemption for the student for the purpose of home education to Open Access College on an annual basis.

Check home education approvals and other exemptions.

Contact parents to provide an appropriate meeting time to discuss subject choices.

Outline Open Access College role and expectations at pre-enrolment meetings.

Send appropriate transfer request to enrolled school for students that become a full-time college-based Open Access College student.

Provide all necessary student information to the enrolled or new school when a student leaves Open Access College in line with the department [transfer procedure](#) .

## Supervisor – Open Access College

Directly support students studying Open Access College courses.

Support students by:

- making sure students attend scheduled lessons and complete work set in the allocated time
- providing necessary course materials and equipment
- monitoring student progress and maintaining a schedule of assignments due, work dispatch and receipt dates
- providing a suitable working environment for students
- making sure completed tasks are submitted by the due date
- maintaining close contact with Open Access College teacher about matters impacting student progress.

Sign the Open Access College agreement form.

## Partnerships Schools and Preschools division

Monitor, evaluate and review this policy every 3 years.

Give advice in the interpretation and implementation of requirements determined by the Minister and the department.

Make sure this policy is compliant and up-to-date with relevant legislative and state government obligations.

## Definitions

### adult student

A student who is 18 years of age or over. Any action required of a parent in this policy may be done by an adult student on their own behalf.

### alternative placement

A student's attendance at a specific program or service for a set period of time (temporary in nature), and they are expected to return to their enrolled school.

### behaviour support plan

Required when a student is suspended or excluded from their current enrolled school. They can also be developed whenever concerns are raised about a student's behaviour.

### college-based students

Undertake their entire course at Open Access College (full time or part time).

### in loco parentis

A person acting in a parental style relationship with a child, where the person has intended to place themselves in the position of a parent toward a child and has assumed the same duty and authority as a parent with respect to the nurturing, control and protection of a child. A person in loco parentis may include a person:

- in a de facto relationship with a child's biological parent where they have assumed responsibility for the child
- who has taken over care of a child after the death of both biological parents, or where there has been a family breakdown and the child is estranged from both biological parents
- in an informal fostering arrangement.

This person does not have to assume any or all financial responsibility for a child to satisfy this definition.

## school-based students

Attend Open Access College (alternative placement), but continue to also attend at their enrolled school.

## enrolled school

The non-government and government schools registered with the [Education Standards Board SA](#) that the child or young person is currently enrolled as an active student. The enrolled school maintains the student's enrolment and records them as attending Open Access College. Government schools record the student in line with the department's [data dictionary \(PDF, 1.5 MB\)](#).

## exemption

A formal certificate issued by the Minister or delegate exempting a child or young person from attending school permanently or for a nominated period of time.

## geographically isolated

A student is regarded as geographically isolated from appropriate schooling if 1 of the following criteria is met:

- The distance between the student's residence and the nearest appropriate government school is at least 56 kilometres by the shortest practicable route.
- The distance between the student's residence and the nearest appropriate government school by the shortest practicable route is at least 16 kilometres and the distance between the student's residence and the nearest available transport service to that school is at least 5 kilometres by the shortest practicable route.
- The student does not have reasonable access to an appropriate government school for at least 20 school days in a year because of adverse travel conditions (for example impassable roads) or other circumstances beyond the family's control.

## government school

A government school established by the Minister to deliver primary or secondary education (including senior secondary schools, special purpose schools or specialised education options).

## guardian

A person who has legal guardianship or custody of a child.



## healthcare professional

Includes:

- medical practitioners
- psychologists
- social workers holding qualifications or accreditation approved by the Chief Executive by notice in the gazette.

## parent

For the purposes of this policy, the term parent refers to all persons responsible for the child. A person responsible for the child means a person who is the child's:

- biological parent, adoptive parent or other person recognised as a parent if the child was conceived following a fertilisation procedure or under a surrogacy arrangement
- guardian
- step-parent
- person standing in loco parentis.

This does not include a person who has had their legal custody, guardianship or responsibility for the child removed by a Court, Act or Law. As an example, a biological parent who has had their custody, guardianship or parental responsibility for the child removed by a parenting order made under *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) is not a person responsible for the child.

## physical condition

A condition that impacts a person's mobility, physical capacity, stamina, or dexterity. This can include but not limited to: brain or spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, respiratory disorders, epilepsy, hearing and visual impairments.

## physiological condition

A condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling, mood, and behaviour. It may be short term or ongoing. It can affect a person's ability to relate to others and affect their day-to-day function.

## qualification

A SACE or at least a certificate 2 (or equivalent qualification), under an approved learning program. A student over the age of 16 years of age, who has achieved a qualification under an approved learning program, is considered as having completed their schooling.

## step-parent

A person who is married to the parent of a child born to a previous relationship. A person ceases to be considered a step-parent when their marriage to the child's parent is dissolved by divorce.

## living in South Australia

The student's primary place of residence (physical home) is located within South Australia.

## SACE

South Australia Certificate of Education. Includes SACE achieved through modified subjects at Stage 1 and Stage 2 for students with identified intellectual disabilities.

# Supporting information

## Related legislation

[Education and Children's Services Act 2019 \(SA\)](#)

[Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 \(SA\)](#)

[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(SA\) \(PDF, 542KB\)](#)

[Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016 \(PDF 258KB\)](#)

## Related policies

[Admission procedure \(PDF, 425.3 KB\)](#)

[Adult education enrolment policy](#)

[Behaviour support policy](#)

[Data dictionary \(PDF, 1.5 MB\)](#)

[Duty of care policy \(PDF, 242.1 KB\)](#)

[Exemption from school procedure](#)

[Suspension, exclusion and expulsion of students procedure](#)

[School and preschool enrolment policy](#)

[Transfer procedure](#)

## Record history

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Policy officer: manager, policy and strategy, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools

Policy sponsor: director, Conditions for Learning

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Approved by:

Approved date: December 2011

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Amendment(s): change of department name and removal of youth compact scheme reference (youth compact scheme no longer exists).

## Contact

For general questions about this policy contact:

**Open Access College**

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Email: [client.services@openaccess.edu.au](mailto:client.services@openaccess.edu.au)

For questions about the School of the Air, contact:

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## Received feedback

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