Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

# Enrolment Application Procedures

for MACS schools

## 1. Purpose

To provide clear instructions for enrolling a domestic student in a Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic School Ltd (MACS) primary, secondary, combined or specialist school, in accordance with the *Enrolment Policy for MACS Schools* and the minimum standards for school registration under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic) and *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic).

## 2. Scope

These procedures apply to all MACS primary, secondary, combined (Foundation – Year 12) and specialist schools, including those operated by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Specialist Schools (MACSS).

It covers enrolment applications for domestic students and students on visas who are eligible for government funding. For overseas student enrolment, refer to the *Dependent and Temporary Full-fee Paying Overseas Students Application Procedure.*

## 3. Enrolment application procedure

To ensure consistency, fairness and transparency, all MACS schools are required to follow this mandated enrolment application procedure.

### 3.1. Enquiry

A parent or carer may make an enrolment enquiry with the school via the school's online enrolment program, by telephone, or in person.

### 3.2. Online application

The parent or carer submits a MACS online application for enrolment directly to the school.

Applications must be completed truthfully, accurately and in full, including information regarding:

- the child's background and educational history
- religious affiliation
- parish or catchment of residence
- sibling and alumni connections
- any learning, health, wellbeing or adjustment needs.

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the school year. Some schools, particularly for entry-level enrolments (Foundation and Year 7), have specified opening and closing dates, which will be clearly communicated. Submission of an application does not constitute an offer of enrolment or guarantee placement.

Where information is incomplete or inconsistent, the application may be placed on hold pending resolution. Applications received after a published closing date may be considered only where places remain available in the relevant enrolment round.

### 3.3. Interview

The school will arrange a meeting with the parent or carer and the child. An interpreter can be organised if required.

## 3.4. Consideration of applications

Applications are assessed in accordance with the enrolment criteria set out in this document and the school's available capacity. Decisions are informed by the information provided in the application and through the interview process.

Local pastoral discretion is an important element of enrolment decision-making. While the principal's priority is to enrol children of Catholic families within the catchment or priority parish, pastoral discretion may be exercised where considered appropriate.

All enrolment decisions are made by the principal. Some schools may have an enrolment committee to review and endorse enrolment decisions and advise the principal.

## 3.5. Offer of enrolment

Following consideration of the application and interview, the school may issue a conditional offer of enrolment.

All offers will specify:

- the year level and commencement date
- any conditions of enrolment
- the timeframe within which the offer must be accepted, deferred or declined.

## 3.6. Response to offer

Families are required to respond to an offer of enrolment within the timeframe specified by the school or forfeit their offer.

## 3.7. Acceptance, deposits and deferrals

Acceptance of an offer requires:

- a signed enrolment agreement
- signed Codes of Conduct
- submission of all required documentation
- payment of any applicable deposits or fees.

Schools may require a non-refundable application or enrolment fee at the time of application or acceptance. Any such fee will be set and published in accordance with approved fees and charges processes.

Requests to defer enrolment will be considered at the discretion of the school.

## 3.8. Enrolment completion

An enrolment is considered complete upon the school's receipt of:

- the accepted offer of enrolment
- any application fees required by the school
- all required documentation.

## 3.9. Unsuccessful applications

Where an application is unsuccessful, the school will notify the parent or carer in writing. Decisions are made carefully and consistently in accordance with the enrolment criteria and the school's available capacity. Schools are unable to provide comparative rankings or individual assessments of applications.

Families with questions regarding the fairness of a decision are welcome to access the *Complaints Handling Policy* available at macs.vic.edu.au or the school's website.

# 4. Variations to the enrolment application process

## 4.1. Enrolment applications from interstate students

Where a student was previously enrolled at a school in another state or territory, the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN) is used to obtain additional information to support the enrolment process. Refer to education.gov.au/transferring-student-data-interstate for information.

## 4.2. Enrolment applications from overseas students

Where a student is an Australian citizen or holds a visa that attracts government funding eligibility, the standard enrolment process applies. A flowchart outlining this process is provided at Appendix 1 Enrolment process - Domestic students for MACS schools (and students on visas eligible for government funding).

Students who are full fee-paying overseas students must follow the application process set out in the *Dependent and Temporary Full Fee-Paying Overseas Students Application Procedure*. A flowchart outlining this process is provided at Appendix 2 Enrolment process – Dependant and Temporary Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) for MACS Schools.

## 4.3. Enrolment of students with additional learning needs

MACS schools welcome enrolment enquiries for students with additional health and learning needs and work in partnership with families to understand each child's needs and the supports required.

The enrolment process for students with additional learning needs is the same as for all students. Where relevant, collaboration across early learning, primary and secondary settings supports continuity and consistency of experience. All enrolment decisions are made in accordance with applicable Australian and Victorian legislation.

## 4.4. Enrolment Variation Procedures

The *Enrolment Variation Procedures* set out the processes and required documentation for enrolment variations in the following circumstances:

- minimum age exemption for early entry to school
- maximum age exemption for continued enrolment at school
- year level acceleration
- year level retention.

The *Dual Enrolment Procedures* set out the processes and required documentation for dual enrolment arrangements between a MACS school and a Victorian Registration and Qualifications (VRQA) registered setting.

# 5. Admissions criteria

## 5.1. Primary school admissions criteria

Primary school applications must be assessed using the following criteria, which reflect the principles in the *Enrolment Policy for MACS Schools*.

### Admissions criteria – primary schools

Applications are assessed in priority order. Where a category has sub-categories, these are also listed from highest to lowest priority. For example, a student in category 2a is given higher priority than a student in category 2b.

***Table 1: Admissions criteria – primary schools***

| Priority | Criterion |
|---|---|
| 1 | Siblings of students currently enrolled at the school |

| Priority | Criterion |
|---|---|
| 2 | **Baptised Latin Rite Catholic and Eastern Catholic** students who **reside** in the designated priority parishes and:<br>a. **Have** a connection to the school (e.g. alumni, MACSEYE)<br>b. **Have no** previous connection to the school |
| 3 | **Baptised Catholic students** (Roman Catholic and Eastern Catholic) **residing outside the designated school catchment area**, considered for pastoral reasons |
| 4 | **Baptised Orthodox Christian** students **residing in** the designated school catchment area and:<br>a. **Have** a connection to the school (e.g. alumni, MACSEYE)<br>b. **Have no** previous connection to the school |
| 5 | Other **baptised Christian** students **residing** in the designated school catchment area:<br>a. **Have** a connection to the school (e.g. alumni, MACSEYE)<br>b. **Have no** previous connection to the school |
| 6 | Students of **other faiths or no faith residing** in the designated school catchment area:<br>a. **Have** a connection to the school (e.g. alumni, MACSEYE)<br>b. **Have no** previous connection to the school |

For information about the school's catchment area boundaries, contact the school directly.

Applications are assessed against these criteria until all available places are filled. Where demand exceeds capacity, the date and time of application receipt is used as the final differentiator between applications with equal assessment outcomes.

## 5.2 Secondary school admissions criteria

Secondary school applications will be assessed using the following criteria, which prioritise Catholic enrolment and continuity of education within the MACS school system.

Applications are assessed in priority order. Where a category has sub-categories, these are also listed from highest to lowest priority. For example, a student in category 2a is given higher priority than a student in category 2b.

***Table 2: Admissions criteria – secondary schools***

| Priority | Criterion |
|---|---|
| 1 | Siblings of students currently enrolled at the school |
| 2 | **Baptised Latin Rite Catholic and Eastern Catholic** students who **reside** in the designated priority parishes and:<br>a. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary school and **have** an alumni connection (e.g. parents, siblings)<br>b. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** alumni connection<br>c. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>d. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** alumni connection |
| 3 | **Baptised Latin Rite Catholic and Eastern Catholic students residing outside the** designated priority parishes for pastoral reasons (e.g. particular family circumstance) |
| 4 | **Baptised Orthodox Christian** students **residing in** the designated priority parish and:<br>a. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>b. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** alumni connection<br>c. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>d. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** and alumni connection |

| Priority | Criterion |
|---|---|
| 5 | A student **residing in** the designated priority parishes who has attended a Catholic Primary School |
| 6 | Other **Baptised Christian** students **residing** in the designated priority parishes and:<br>a. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>b. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** no alumni connection |
| 7 | Students of **other faiths or no faith residing in** the designated priority parishes and:<br>a. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>b. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** alumni connection |
| 8 | Students **not residing** in the designated priority parishes and:<br>a. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>b. **Have** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** alumni connection<br>c. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have** an alumni connection<br>d. **Have not** attended a Catholic Primary School and **have no** and alumni connection |

*Note: Definitions of Latin Rite Catholic, Eastern Catholic, Baptised Orthodox Christian and Other Baptised Christian, are included in the Definitions section below.*

Applications are assessed against these criteria until all available places are filled. Where demand exceeds capacity, the date and time of application receipt is used as the final differentiator between applications with equal assessment outcomes.

Year-level ceilings are agreed through formal arrangements between MACS secondary schools and other Catholic secondary schools.

Families may submit applications to more than one secondary school. They may indicate a preference for one secondary school and will remain eligible for a first-round offer from their second-choice school if they cannot be accommodated by their first choice. To be eligible for a second-choice offer, the child must reside in a priority parish for that school and have made an application to that school. An offer will not be made to a family that has already accepted an enrolment place at another Catholic secondary school.

These procedures are designed to ensure enrolment processes are applied consistently and transparently across all MACS schools. In implementing these processes, schools remain committed to working thoughtfully and respectfully with families, guided by the mission and values of Catholic education and in support of each child's learning, wellbeing and faith journey.

# 6. Review and monitoring

MACS ensures policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to maintain relevance and compliance. These Procedures are reviewed every four years.

# 7. Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in these Procedures can be found in the Glossary of Terms.

**Admissions criteria**

The published and applied set of factors used by a MACS school to assess, rank and prioritise applications for enrolment where demand exceeds available places.

**Alumni**

Graduates or former students of the school. An alumni connection is considered to be a parent, grandparent or sibling.

**Application closing date**

The date specified by a school by which applications must be received to be assessed collectively as part of the admissions process.

**Baptised Orthodox Christian**

The term 'Orthodox' Christian generally refers to members of both the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Church. The Eastern Orthodox Churches include but are not limited to: Greek Orthodox Church, The Russian Orthodox Church, the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Oriental Churches include but are not limited to: the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eritrean Orthodox Church.

**Catholic child**

For enrolment in a Catholic school, a child is considered to be Catholic if they are a baptised member of the Catholic Church, usually established by a Certificate of Baptism, and have fully participated in a sacramental program or there is evidence of an intention to complete their sacramental journey.

**Continuity of MACS education**

Current or prior enrolment of a student in a school owned, operated or governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), recognised as supporting continuity of Catholic education within the MACS system.

**Demand**

Circumstances where the number of eligible applications exceeds the number of places available at a school or year level.

**Eastern Catholic**

Maronite, Melkite Greek, Chaldean, Ukrainian, Syro-Malabar. Eastern Catholic churches are in full communion with Rome while retaining their own Eastern Liturgies and Governance structures. See catholic-hierarchy.org/rite/

**Enrolment catchment area**

The enrolment catchment area is a defined area from which a school enrols students as officially designated to a school by MACS. For the majority of primary schools, this will be the parish to which the school belongs. In parishes with more than one primary school, the catchment for each school is determined by the parish in consultation with MACS. For secondary schools, it will be those parishes designated as priority parishes by MACS. If you are unsure whether your address is within a school's enrolment catchment area, please contact the school directly for confirmation.

**International student**

A student who holds a temporary visa and is subject to visa, funding and enrolment requirements under Commonwealth and MACS policies, including *Dependent and Temporary Full-fee Paying Overseas Students Application Procedures*.

**Latin Rite Catholic**

Refers to Catholics who belong to the Latin (Western) Church of the Catholic Church, which follows the Latin Rite. In Australia, including Melbourne, this term generally corresponds to what most people simply call Catholic although the Catholic Church also includes Eastern Catholic Churches with different traditions and liturgical rites.

**Offer of enrolment**

A written conditional offer issued by a MACS school inviting a family to accept, decline or defer a place subject to specified conditions and timeframes.

**Other Christian**

A child baptised or affiliated with a Christian denomination other than the Catholic Church or a non-Catholic Eastern Church.

**Other Baptised Christian**

A baptism is considered valid by the Catholic Church, if it is performed with water, using the required Trinitarian formula. The parish priest or Office of the Vicar General can provide further information or clarity if this is required.

**Priority parish (parish catchment)**

A priority parish is a parish within the catchment area of a school. Children who reside within a priority parish catchment area receive priority consideration for enrolment over children who reside outside that area. If you are unsure whether your address is within a school's priority parish catchment area, please contact the school directly for confirmation.

**Parish and parish boundaries**

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne is divided into parishes, each led by a parish priest who is appointed by and accountable to the Archbishop. Most Catholic parishes in Melbourne are defined by geographical boundaries, with a family's principal place of residence used to determine parish residency.

**Selective or additional assessment**

Lawful school-based assessment processes such as interviews, testing, portfolios or information sessions that may be applied in addition to admissions criteria, provided they are published and applied consistently.

# 8. Related policies and documents

## Supporting documents

Appendix 1: Enrolment process – Domestic students for MACS schools (and students on visas eligible for government funding)
Appendix 2: Enrolment process – Dependant and Temporary Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) for MACS Schools
Enrolment Policy for MACS Schools
Enrolment Agreement for MACS Schools
Enrolment Application Form
Schools Family Occupation Index – Parent/Guardian/Carer Occupation Groups Form
Code of Conduct – Parents and Carers
Code of Conduct – Students

## Related MACS policies and documents

Attendance Policy for MACS Schools
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Complaints Handling Policy for MACS Schools
Concessional Fee Program Procedures (Primary schools only)
Consent to Transfer Information Form
Consent to Share Information with Third Parties Form
Debt Recovery and Management Procedures
Duty of Care Policy for MACS Schools
Photography and Recording Permission Form
Privacy Policy
Privacy Collection Notice – Students and Parents
School Community Safety Order Scheme – Internal Review Process
School Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
Student Behaviour Support Policy for MACS Schools
Student Health Support Policy

## Resources

Australian Government - Interstate Data Transfer Note for non- government schools

# 9. Legislation and standards

*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Cth)
*Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
*Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth)
*Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic)
*Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (*Vic)
*Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth)
*Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
*Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)

Ministerial Order 706 – *Anaphylaxis Management in Victorian Schools*
Ministerial Order 1359 – *Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*
*Ministerial Order 705 – Exemption from School Attendance and Enrolment*
*Ministerial Order 714 – Exemption to allow for employment in the entertainment industry*
*Ministerial Order 715 – Exemption if leaving school is in the best interests of the child*
*Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
*Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth)
*Australian Education Regulations 2013* (Cth)
*Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic)
*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic)
*Crimes Act 1958* (Vic)
*Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration*

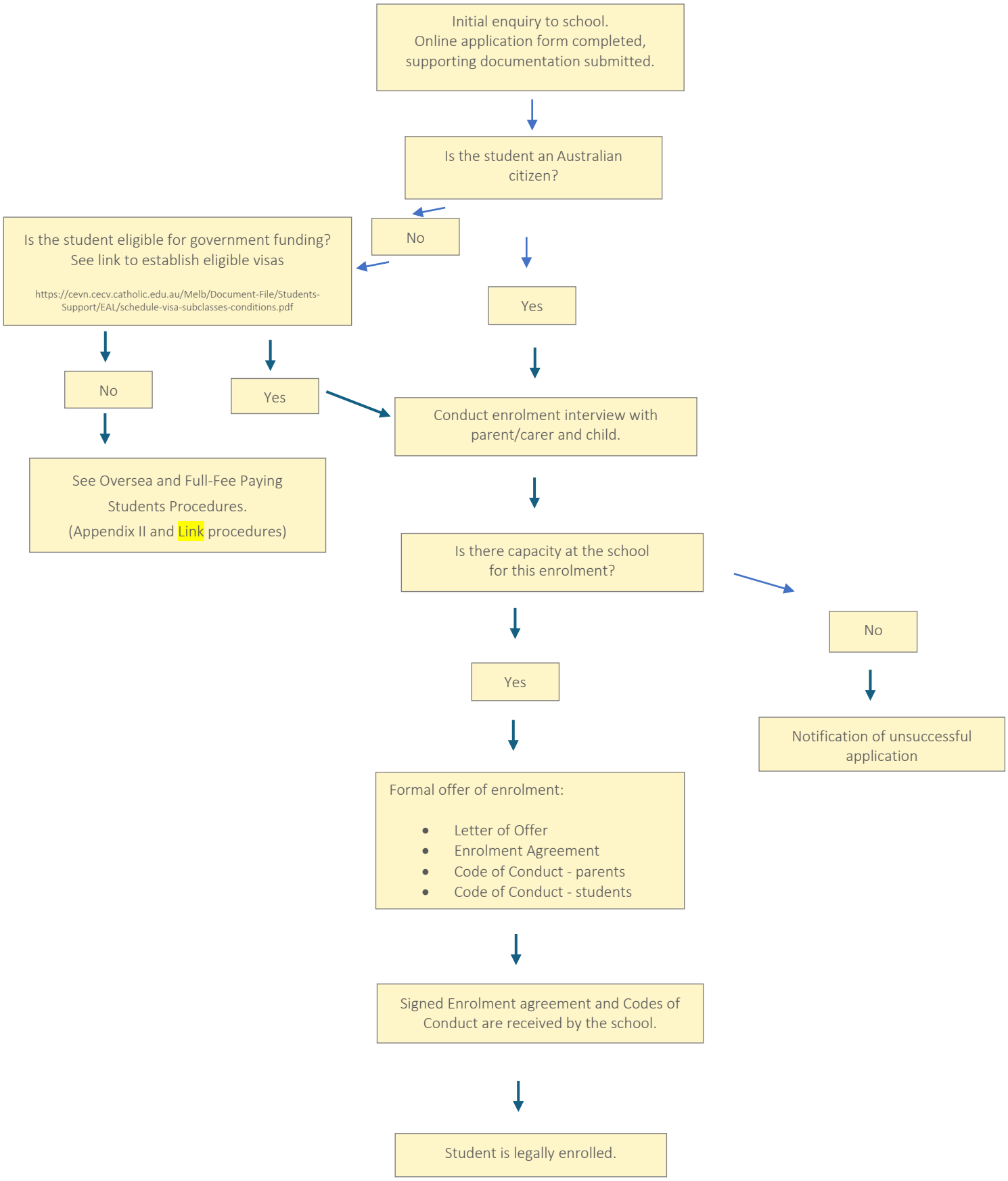
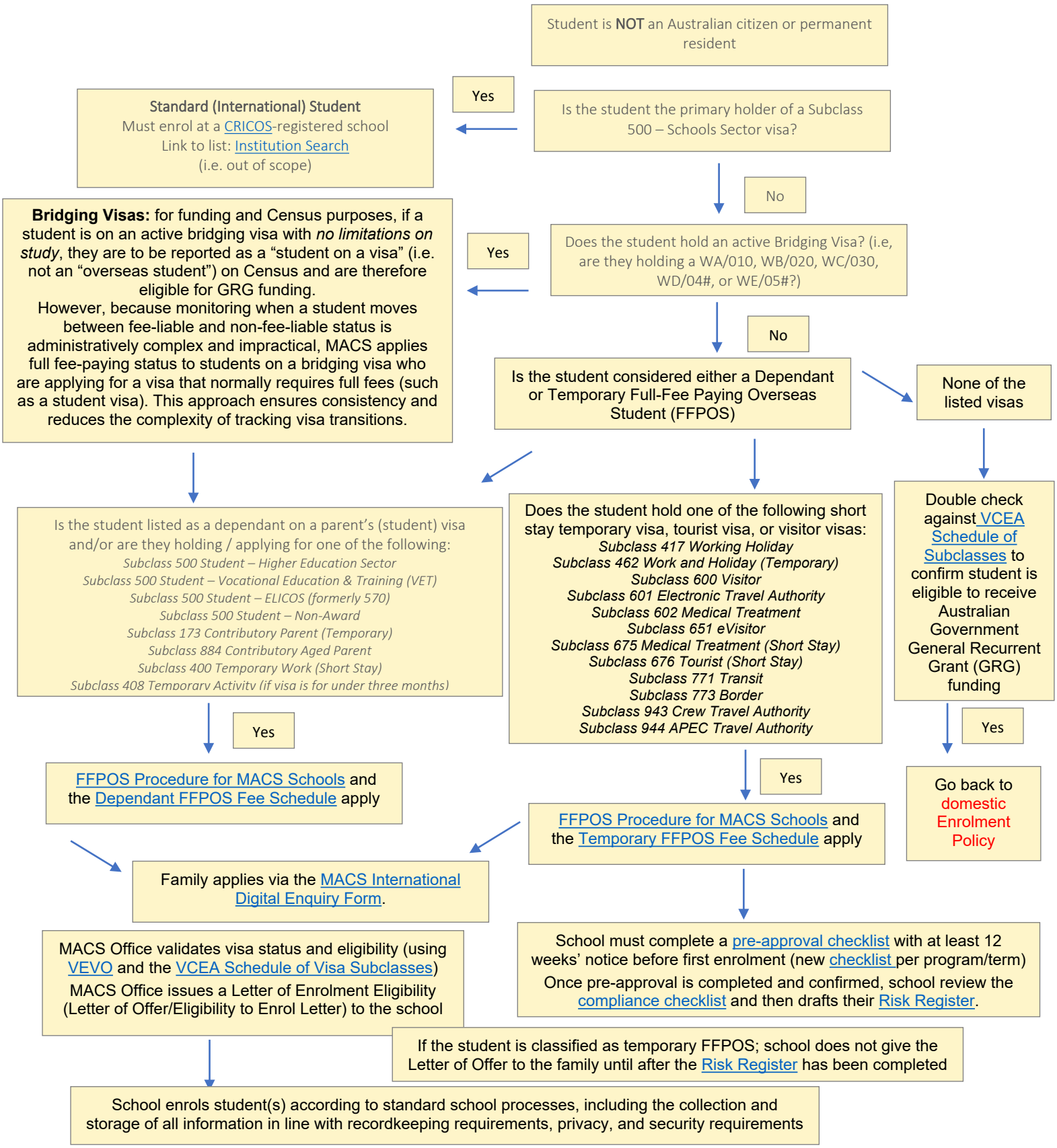
# 10. Policy information table

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sponsoring executive** | Director Education Excellence |
| **Policy owner** | Chief of Regional Operations |
| **Approving authority** | Director, Education Excellence |
| **Assigned board committee** | Education Strategy and Policy |
| **Approval date** | 4 July 2026 |
| **Risk rating** | Extreme |
| **Review by** | September 2030 |
| **Publication** | MACS website, CEVN, school website |

## POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| **Assigned framework** | Enrolment |
| **Supporting documents** | Enrolment Policy for MACS Schools<br>Enrolment Variation Procedures<br>Concessional Fee Program Procedures<br>Complaints Handling Policy for MACS Schools<br>Recordkeeping Policy for MACS Schools<br>School Community Safety Order Scheme – Internal Review Process School<br>Suspension Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion of Students Procedures |
| **Superseded documents** | Enrolment Agreement – Template for primary schools<br>Enrolment Agreement – Template for secondary schools<br>Enrolment Application Form – Template for primary schools<br>Enrolment Application Form – Template for secondary schools<br>Enrolment Policy – Template for primary schools<br>Enrolment Policy – Template for secondary schools<br>Enrolment Procedures for MACS Schools<br>Enrolment Variations Guidelines<br>Student Acceleration and Retention Policy<br>Student Acceleration and Retention Policy for MACS Schools |

# Appendix 1 Enrolment process – Domestic students for MACS schools (and students on visas eligible for government funding)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