

Enrolment Variation Application Guidelines



1. Application processes for varying enrolment

Under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), schooling is compulsory for students aged between 6 and 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted. Victorian children are eligible to commence school if they are five (5) years of age on 30 April in the year they start school. Students aged 13 years and over are to be enrolled in a secondary school.

There are circumstances where a parent / carer, with the support of the school, may seek to vary their child's enrolment or level during their schooling. For this to occur, the school and parent must have the exemption approved by a Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) committee, chaired by the Director, Education Excellence.

These guidelines provide steps for completing the application process and indicate the required documentation. For further details, please refer to the relevant application forms available on the Catholic Education Victoria Network (CEVN) website and linked below.

The following exemptions to compulsory education age that require approval are:

[Minimum Age Exemption](#)

[Maximum Age Exemption](#)

[Student Year Level Acceleration](#)

Full fee-paying overseas students who wish to enrol at MACS schools must follow a separate application process outlined in the [Dependant and Temporary Full-Fee Paying Overseas Student \(FFPOS\) Application Procedure](#).

Please note that applications that do not meet criteria and/or lack relevant supporting documentation and Principal endorsement will not be accepted.

2. Application dates and processing timeframes

- Application forms are to be submitted with supporting documentation by dates listed below.
- The committee will provide an outcome to the Principal and the general manager of the region after a 21-day period.
- Appeals are accepted within a 14-day period if new, additional information can be provided to support the criteria.

Type of Application	Form required	Applications due by	Submitted to
Minimum age (Pre Foundation)	Minimum age	As required	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Year level acceleration (F–10)	Year-level acceleration	Term 4, Week 5	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Retention (F–5)	Repeating a year	Term 4, Week 5	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Retention (Year 6)	Repeating a year	Term 3, Week 1	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Retention (Secondary)	Repeating a year	Term 4, Week 5	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Maximum age entry	Maximum age	As required	eav@macs.vic.edu.au
Full-Fee Paying Overseas Student (FFPOS)	Dependant and temporary FFPOS	As required	ffpos@macs.vic.edu.au

3. How to apply for minimum school age entry exemption

An approved exemption for minimum school age entry requires the student to meet clear criteria and provide supporting documentation with the [Minimum Age Exemption Application Form](#), available on the CEVN website.

For the application to be processed, the following steps apply:

1. Parent / carer meets with the school to discuss the minimum age exemption process.
2. Principal determines their support for the application, based on the student meeting the following criteria with supporting evidence provided by the parent / carer:
 - a) Student will be aged at least 4 years, 6 months on or before 30 April in the year they start school, with a form of identification as proof.
 - b) A score at or above 130 for Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) on a suitable cognitive assessment when the child is at least four (4) years of age.
 - c) Evidence supporting early age entry and indicating the potential negative affect of not attending school early from one of the following: childcare, kindergarten or allied health professional.
 - d) For students who have attended another school interstate or overseas, evidence of enrolment and attendance in formal schooling for at least one term.
3. Principal endorses the application in writing only if satisfied that above criteria are met.
4. Principal submits application with the supporting documentation (as listed in checklist below) to eav@macs.vic.edu.au for processing and approval by the MACS committee.

Supporting documentation for a minimum age exemption application

Birth certificate/ passport/ ImmiCard

Copy of a cognitive assessment report that shows a Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) score **at or above 130** on a suitable cognitive assessment e.g. Weschler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence - 4th Edition (WPPSI-IV) conducted post age four (4) years

A supporting letter or equivalent from a kindergarten teacher, allied health professional, etc, that gives evidence of student's suitable social, emotional and academic ability to attend school. The letter should include the following:

- observations of academic, language/communication, literacy, numeracy skills
- observations of social and emotional development
- an assessment indicating risk of long-term academic disadvantage if the application for early entry is not approved

For students transferring from interstate/overseas

[Interstate Student Transfer Note](#), letter from principal or equivalent that shows evidence from previous school regarding attendance and academic ability. It should have full details of the previous school, date of enrolment, and year level

A school report or similar documentation showing that the academic program at the other school was equivalent to the Foundation (Prep) program offered by Victorian schools.

4. How to apply for maximum age exemption

Generally, a person who is aged over 18 years must not be enrolled at or allowed to attend a MACS school or participate in any program or course conducted unless granted an exemption or falling under the [Exception](#) category and approved by the Executive Director or their delegate.

An **exemption** may be granted when a person meets the criteria and submits an [Maximum Age Exemption Application Form](#), found on the CEVN website.

For the application to be processed, the following steps apply:

1. A review of student's enrolment and possible exemption for maximum age for students aged between 18 and 21 years during the year of enrolment completing a senior course or upon receipt of enrolment application undertaken at by the school.
2. Principal in consultation with student, parent / carer and relevant student support group members, endorses the exemption based on **ONE** of the criteria below:

Category A: Special Circumstances

A student is unable to complete Year 10 before they turn 18 and will be under 20 years of age on 31 December in the year they complete Year 10, due to circumstances that have prevented them from attending school

Category B: Transfer to English Language School/Centre

A person is between the ages of 18 and 21 wishing to transfer from an english language government school or centre into Year 10 at a MACS school, approved by the Director, Education Excellence.

Category C: Other reasons

- A person between 18 and 21 years old requesting to participate in a specific course or program approved by the Director, Education Excellence
 - A person between 18 and 21 years old requests an exemption and Director, Education Excellence is satisfied it would be unreasonable in the circumstances not to grant the exemption.
3. Principal endorses the exemption based on it meeting one of the above criteria, with supporting evidence, as listed below.
 4. Principal submits the endorsed application and supporting documentation to eav@macs.vic.edu.au for processing and approval by the MACS committee.

Supporting Documentation for a maximum age exemption application	
Proof of date of birth, e.g. birth certificate, passport, ImmiCard, letter from doctor attesting to young person's age	Required for all applications
Proof of address	
Most recent school reports or other documents with observations and assessment of their academic and social needs and details on expected school completion/ transition	Required for Category A
Supporting documentation, e.g. medical documents, court orders, etc. which verify the special circumstances in the applicant's life, e.g. period of serious illness or injury, a period of parental/carers responsibilities, a period of detention in a juvenile justice facility.	
A letter endorsing the transfer from the English language school or centre principal/coordinator	Required for Category B
Any relevant letters of support, assessment details or references that provides information related to the person's application supporting the enrolment request for the course/program or other circumstances requiring an exemption	Required for Category C

Exceptions

Exceptions listed in the [Maximum Age Application Form](#) do not require an application.

5. How to apply for student year-level acceleration

Acceleration generally occurs at school entry or across year levels from Foundation to Year 10. Decisions to accelerate a student must be based on the best interests of the individual student. Consideration should be given to distinction in individual learning needs, strengths, talents, and interests and to differences in aptitudes across a variety of domains.

In exceptional situations where a student is identified as gifted (IQ at or above 130) and when considered in their best interest, a Principal may request that a student is granted an exemption to accelerate a year level.

An year-level student acceleration exemption may be granted when a student meets the criteria and submits an application using the [Year Level Acceleration Application Form](#) found on the CEVN.

If considering early entry for students under five (5) years before or on 30 April of the first school year, please refer to the [Minimum School Age Exemption](#) information.

For the application to be processed, the following steps apply:

1. Principal establishes a review committee for application, comprising relevant school members.
2. A request for year-level acceleration is received by the review committee.
3. The principal and review committee review the application, using the following criteria and supporting evidence:
 - a. A score at or above 130 for Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) on a suitable cognitive assessment e.g., Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children, 5th Edition (WISC-V) or equivalent by an Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registered educational psychologist.
 - b. Evidence discussing how acceleration is in the student's best interest, through observation of the student's:
 - i. social and emotional development and maturity
 - ii. gifted ability in one or more areas of the curriculum
 - iii. academic, language/communication, literacy and numeracy skills
4. If the student attended another school or interstate school, evidence from previous school regarding attendance and academic ability.
5. Principal endorses the application form only if satisfied that the above criteria are met.
6. Principal submits the endorsed application with the supporting documentation (as listed in checklist below) to eav@macs.vic.edu.au for processing and approval by the MACS committee.

Supporting documentation for year level acceleration application

Birth certificate/ passport/ ImmiCard

Copy of a cognitive assessment report that shows at or above ≥ 130 Full Scale Intellectual Quotient (FSIQ) score (Two standard deviations or more above the mean) conducted

A supporting letter or equivalent from an authoritative, independent source e.g. suitably qualified independent professionals, medical practitioners, educational psychologists or allied health professionals, including observations on the following:

- academic, language/communication, literacy, numeracy skills
- areas of giftedness in one or more curriculum areas
- social and emotional development and maturity

For students transferring from interstate/overseas

[Interstate Student Transfer Note](#), letter from principal or equivalent that has full details of the previous school, date of enrolment, year level, attendance, and academic ability

6. How to apply for student retention

Retention should only be considered in exceptional circumstances where there is strong evidence that it is in the best interests of the student. Current research does not support retention as an effective intervention to improve a student's academic achievement and often is associated with negative educational outcomes such as lower confidence and achievement (The Education Endowment Foundation, 2020). Students at risk require specific and targeted interventions based on detailed, diagnostic evaluation of their needs. Further information on the research evidence on repeating a year in the Australian context is available on the [Evidence for Learning website](#).

An exemption may be granted when a student meets the criteria and an application is submitted using the [Repeating a Year Application Form](#), found on the CEVN. **A student can only repeat a single year level during their education.** That is, for example, a student who repeats a four-year-old kindergarten year will be deemed to have already been retained and cannot repeat another year of schooling.

For the application to be processed, the following steps apply:

1. Principal establishes a review committee for application, comprising relevant school members.
2. A request to review the retention of a student is received by the review committee.
3. Principal and review committee review the application, using the following criteria and supporting evidence:
 - a. Evidence discussing how retention for a year is in the student's best interest, based on observation of the student's:
 - i. diverse learning needs in one or more areas of the curriculum
 - ii. academic, language/communication, literacy and numeracy skills
 - iii. social and emotional needs
 - b. Evidence of targeted learning supports and intervention in place
 - c. The risk of long-term emotional disadvantage if not retained
 - d. Circumstances that have prevented their attendance (where applicable)
 - e. Student will not be over 13 years of age when they commence secondary school.
4. If the student attended another school or interstate school, evidence from previous school regarding attendance and academic ability.
5. Principal endorses the application form only if satisfied that above criteria are met.
6. Principal submits the endorsed application and supporting documentation (as listed in checklist below) to eav@macs.vic.edu.au for processing and approval by the MACS committee.

Supporting documentation for retention application

Birth certificate/ passport/ ImmiCard

Copy of relevant allied health assessments (where available and applicable)

Letters, reports, or equivalent from an authoritative independent source, e.g. suitably qualified independent professionals, medical practitioners, educational psychologists or allied health professionals, including the following observations on:

- academic, language/communication, literacy, numeracy skills
- social and emotional development and maturity

Evidence can include academic records, psychology/medical/allied health report, teacher reports

Evidence of learning supports and targeted intervention (e.g. type, duration, frequency and progress over time). Examples include Personalised Learning Plan, (PLP), Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), etc.

Documentation supporting/explaining circumstances impacting attendance e.g., a period of serious illness, a period of parental or primary carer responsibilities, a period of detention in a juvenile justice facility, a period of reduced attendance, a period of suspension.

For students transferring from interstate/overseas

[Interstate Student Transfer Note](#), letter from principal or equivalent that has full details of the previous school, date of enrolment, year level, attendance, and academic ability.

7. Other variations to enrolment

Under the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006* (Vic), parents / carers must enrol a child of compulsory school age (6–17 years) at a registered school and ensure the child attends school.

7.1. Reduced school attendance

Any reduced school attendance should only be for exceptional circumstances, for example, 8 –10 weeks. It is recommended that a re-integration plan for full-time attendance occurs immediately. Rigorous review and monitoring by the student's Program Support Group (PSG) members should occur when a request to extend a reduced attendance arrangement is made.

7.2. Dual enrolment

If a family determines that an enrolment less than 1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) is more suitable for their child, they are required to ensure their child is enrolled at a registered school for the remaining FTE, for instance, in a specialist or special assistance school.

There are several factors to consider when a student enters into a dual enrolment agreement, including:

- enrolment processes
- updated assessments and documentation from specialists
- determining assigned days of attendance for each school setting
- length of dual enrolment
- transition and orientation processes
- communication and reporting processes between schools and parents/guardians
- identifying the student's learning needs and any adjustments.

The following documents provide advice to principals in MACS schools regarding attendance:

[Attendance Policy for MACS Schools](#)
[Monitoring School Attendance Procedures](#)
[Responding to Student Absences Process](#)
[Students Absence Guidelines for MACS Schools](#)

9. Related policies and documents

Supporting documents

[Repeating a Year Level Application Form](#)

[Student Acceleration Application Form](#)

[Enrolment Policy: Maximum Age Exemption Application Form](#)

[Enrolment Policy: Minimum Age Exemption Application Form](#)

Related MACS policies and documents

[Attendance Policy for MACS Schools](#)

[Enrolment Policy for MACS Schools](#)

[Enrolment Procedures for MACS schools](#)

[Student Acceleration and Retention Policy for MACS schools](#)

[Dependant and Temporary Full-Fee Paying Overseas Student \(FFPOS\) Application Procedure](#)

Resources (external to MACS)

[Gifted and Talented students: A resource guide for Teachers in Victorian Catholic Schools](#)

[Teaching and Learning Toolkit, Evidence for Learning, The Education Endowment Foundation](#)

10. Legislation and standards

Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

Policy information table

Approving authority	Director, Education Excellence
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