

# Guidelines for counting students for school census

February and August



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education and Training conducts a school census on two occasions in the school year. The first census occurs on the last school day in February, while the second (mid-year census) occurs on the first Friday in August.

Enrolment and other data are collected from each government school and used for planning, reporting and for allocating resources. Enrolments from the February census are the core input into the calculation of the Student Resource Package (SRP). Student background data submitted in the August census is used for calculating elements of the SRP for the following year.

Schools will receive funding through the SRP for students who meet the enrolment eligibility requirements, attendance criteria and funding criteria contained in these Guidelines.

Principals must ensure that all students enrolled in their school are correctly classified on CASES21 as either SRP funded or non-SRP funded.

Each year, on the basis of a risk profile, a sample of schools is selected to verify or audit student enrolments. Principals must ensure that the school retains documentary evidence that demonstrates that each student included in census counts and classified as SRP funded meets the eligibility criteria in these Guidelines.

# 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLMENT

The key purpose of the census is to count the number of students in Victorian government schools. Importantly, a student's total full-time equivalent (FTE) time fraction as reported in the census returns must not exceed 1.0 FTE.

## GENERAL AND AGE REQUIREMENTS

For admission to a government school, students must be:

- an Australian citizen, or a student with relevant specified visa or [Immicard](#) see : [International Students](#)
- deemed eligible and approved for enrolment by the principal or relevant regional director.

The [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Admission](#) sets out the information that schools must collect from all students before admitting them to the school.

Principals are responsible for assessing eligibility and approving the admission of students who:

- are of compulsory school age, i.e. those aged between 6 and 17 years; and
- fall within an exception under the Education and Training Regulations.

Individuals who fall outside of the compulsory school age may attend school only if they fall within an exception under the Regulations or are granted an exemption.

Student age is calculated as the age in completed years as at 1 January of the current school year. For example, students aged 18 to 20 years refers to students who have turned 18 but have not yet turned 21 by 1 January of the relevant school year.

There are exceptions for:

- children who are at least 5 years of age by 30 April of the year of enrolment, and are enrolling in a course of primary education; and
- certain categories of students aged 18 or over who are enrolling in or completing an accredited senior secondary course.

Details of the exceptions and the process for being granted an exemption are set out in the [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Admission](#)

## TRANSFERS

When enrolling a transferring student the school must seek a transfer note at the time of enrolment. If the transfer note is not provided, the school should keep documentary evidence of requests made to the transferring school for transfer notes (for example, copies of faxes or emails).

**For students transferring from another Victorian government school**, schools must import student information using CASES21 and provide parents with the Student Enrolment Information Form for validation of student information.

When a student transfers from a school, the student's transfer date is to be recorded on CASES21 as the last day of attendance at that school. The student's date of enrolment at the receiving school is to be recorded on CASES21 as the date on which the student first attends classes at the receiving school.

The student should generally be counted where he/she meets attendance criteria and is enrolled and attends on census day. Where a student transfers between schools on a short term basis, e.g. a short foster care placement, the respective principals should negotiate an appropriate way to share funding across the two schools, while ensuring the student's total FTE between both schools adds to no more than the student's workload (up to 1.0).

Principals who wish to negotiate how students who change schools in the days close to census day are counted should reach agreement and advise the Census Hotline accordingly.

If the principals cannot reach agreement, the documentary evidence held by both schools as to the validity of the student's enrolment and the expected duration of the enrolment will be considered. The Department's practice is to count students in the school at which they have a valid, regular, ongoing enrolment. The Department and the Enrolment Verifier will consider documentary evidence of valid enrolment and of attendance before and after census day in any review of where the student should be counted.

## PART-TIME STUDENTS AND TIME FRACTIONS

Students undertaking a workload less than the normal workload for that year level are to be recorded as part-time students.

Part-time students (including registered home schooling students) are counted pro rata at a time fraction assessed against the school's normal workload for that year level.

Students undertaking 4 or more VCE units at one school are deemed to be undertaking a full VCE workload and count as 1.0 FTE. In the majority of cases, students study at only one school. Where a student is enrolled in more than one school the student's time fraction at each school should add up to 1.0 FTE overall. Schools are entitled to share students according to the workload and time at each school.

In the case of students attending more than one school, it is expected that each school will report part-time time fractions, calculated as a proportion of a full time student's workload, for each school attended by the student concerned. The total full time equivalent (FTE) for a student over all schools attended should not be greater than 1.0.

Part time students have a full time equivalent (FTE) time fraction less than 1.0 which must be recorded to one decimal place (e.g.0.8).

## POST-COMPULSORY PATHWAYS

Students in the post-compulsory years should have the opportunity to participate in a broad range of pathways programs that result in successful transition to further education and employment. A number of options are available for students in the post-compulsory years.

Advice is provided below on how student enrolments are to be treated in relation to these options.

### Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)

For the purposes of SRP funding, VCAL studies are considered equivalent to VCE studies and any reference to VCE also applies to VCAL.

### Vocational Educational and Training (VET) courses in senior schooling

The time spent by students in VCE VET is part of the normal VCE school workload.

### Block credit arrangements for VET courses outside VCE VET

In order for block credit study to be counted towards the FTE workload at the school and to be eligible for SRP funding, students undertaking a VET program under approved block credit arrangements are required to meet all the criteria listed below as follows:

- students are enrolled in a VET/Further Education (FE) program at AQF Level II or above
- the VET program is an agreed part of the student's full-time workload
- the school has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with an external provider for the delivery of the VET/FE program or the school delivering the program is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and the program is within their Scope of Registration.

If these criteria are not met, the student's time fraction is to be calculated according to Figure 1 below, excluding the VET/FE studies that do not meet the above criteria.

Where the student's time fraction is less than 1.0, there will be no additional time fraction added relating to the block credit studies.

### School based apprenticeships and traineeships

The time spent by students in the School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship program is part of the normal VCE/VCAL workload. For SRP funding purposes, the student's time fraction is to be calculated according to Figure 1, excluding those VCE/VCAL VET units that are delivered by a RTO and for which the RTO is paid directly by the Department (as would ordinarily be the case for School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships).

Where the student's time fraction is less than 1.0, schools should add an additional 0.1 to the time fraction in Figure 1 in recognition of the support schools provide for the School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program component of the VCE/VCAL.

Figure 1: VCE/VCAL students studying in only one school

Number of VCE/VCAL units per semester	FTE
4 or more	1.0
3	0.7
2	0.5
1	0.2

## Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships

Students undertaking a Head Start apprenticeship or traineeship are counted as having a normal VCE/VCAL workload. For SRP purposes, Head Start students are eligible for the full-time fraction regardless of the actual time spent at school.

Schools will receive funding for Head Start students commencing the program in Year 10 over three or four years, while ensuring an individual student is not funded more than 3.0 FTE by the time they complete their Year 12 qualification. If a student commences Head Start in Year 11, they should not be funded more than 2.0 FTE by the time they complete their Year 12 qualification.

Head Start students should be counted as follows:

- Year 10 – include in census as SRP funded at 1.0 FTE
- Year 11 – include in census as SRP funded at 1.0 FTE
- Year 12 –
  - a. if a student is not completing Year 12 in the current year, include in census as SRP funded at 0.5 FTE
  - b. if a student is completing Year 12 in the current year and has been counted more than 2.0 FTE since commencing Head Start, count as 0.5 FTE
  - c. if a student is completing Year 12 in the current year, and has been counted no more than 2.0 FTE since starting Head Start, include in census as SRP funded at 1.0 FTE.\*

Schools should document Head Start students and record their time fractions in the student's file for review by an enrolment verifier if requested.

\* If a student decides to complete Year 12 over two years, they would need to be included as non-SRP funded in the census in the subsequent year.

## STUDENTS STUDYING AT MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL

As a general rule, the time fraction for a student enrolled in more than one school should be adjusted by the schools involved to ensure that the student's time fraction at each school reflects the time actually spent and the workload undertaken. The student's total time fraction must not exceed 1.0 FTE across all of the schools attended.

In some circumstances, the home school may prefer to count a student who is also studying at another school for the full-time fraction (usually 1.0 FTE) and negotiate an appropriate transfer of resources to the second school. In this case, the second school would not include that student in their census counts. Shared VET programs are one example where this transfer of resources has been a preferred option. For instructions on recording such arrangements on CASES21 see Appendix: CASES21 instructions.

## STUDENTS ALSO STUDYING AT VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA OR VICTORIAN SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

Students undertaking subjects by correspondence tuition through Virtual School Victoria (VSV) (formerly Distance Education Centre Victoria) or the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) should be counted by their home school as part-time students.

Schools should use Figure 2 to determine and claim the appropriate time fraction (FTE) for students undertaking combinations of units studied at the school and VSV/VSL.

Saturday language classes conducted by the VSL are to be disregarded in calculating a student's time fraction at a school.

**Figure 2: Time fractions for students undertaking combinations of units at school and VSV/VSL**

	No. of units																		
VCE Units undertaken at school	6	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
VCE Units undertaken at VSV/VSL	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Time fraction (FTE) that school should count student	1	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3

Note that 0.1 FTE has been added to the student’s time fraction at the school, in recognition of the support provided by the school for the student’s Virtual School studies. For a student undertaking 4 VCE units at school and one VCE unit at Virtual School the student is counted at the school at a time fraction of 0.9 FTE, even though the normal workload breakdown for the student would indicate the school should count the student at 0.8 and Virtual School at 0.2 FTE. This differs from the situation where a student is enrolled in more than one school and the student’s time fraction at each school must add up to 1.0 FTE overall.

Students in all school years up to and including Year 10 who are undertaking a full school workload (six or more subjects) and studying no more than one subject by correspondence will count as full-time at the home school. If any student studies more than one subject by correspondence or fewer than six school subjects, that student should be counted part-time at each location with the time fractions shared between the school and VSV according to their workload.

## **STUDENTS AT ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS OR ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTRES**

Students at English Language Schools or English Language Centres in metropolitan regions are counted at these locations and should not be included in the census counts of the school at which they were originally enrolled.

The only exception is for students in Outposted Programs for English as a Second Language who should be counted at their home school rather than at the school where the outposting is conducted. Where students attend an English Language Centre in a country region, students should be counted at their home school.

## **STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR HOME SCHOOLING**

Students registered for home schooling who partially enrol at a school should be counted as part-time students according to their agreed attendance ratio.

The remainder of the time fraction should be assigned to the ‘home schooling’ option on CASES21.

Partially enrolled home schooling students should be marked absent when they are not in attendance for the activity or program for which they are enrolled.

Partial enrolment in school is only available to registered home schooling students of compulsory school age.

### 3. ATTENDANCE CRITERIA

Principals must ensure that all records relating to attendance are retained by the school for all students who are included in census counts. These records (such as manual rolls and absence notes) will be used to verify that students meet the attendance criteria.

Regular attendance after census day will be considered as evidence of continuing enrolment and will be taken into account in any review of decisions regarding the counting of students.

The following attendance criteria apply to both SRP funded and non-SRP funded students. Attendance rolls must be examined to ensure that only students who meet both of the following criteria (A and B below) are included in census counts.

**If students do not meet the attendance criteria they must be excluded from the census count, but should remain enrolled in the school.**

Students can be excluded from the census by changing the CASES21 enrolment status to 'inactive' or by manually excluding. For instructions, see: CASES21 Census Process Guide.

For further information about recording, monitoring and managing attendance, see: [School attendance](#).

#### A. REGULAR ATTENDANCE DURING THE CURRENT YEAR

A principal may determine that a student is eligible to be included in the census count if the student has attended the school regularly prior to census day.

Regular attendance is defined as attendance for at least 80 per cent of the time the student is enrolled at the school in the current year.

Approved absences count as attendance. Students who average more than one day's unapproved absence per week will be deemed not to have attended regularly.

Approved absences must be supported by appropriate notes, usually from parents or guardians, or other documentary evidence that the school has accepted the explanation for the absences. Absences approved for cases of school refusal or re-engagement must be supported by documentary evidence of the school's efforts to re-engage the student in the school and encourage regular attendance.

For schools with a staggered program for Prep students, whereby attendance before census day may not meet the criteria for regular attendance, students should be counted at 1.0 FTE unless they are enrolled on an ongoing part-time basis (in which case they are to be counted at their eventual part-time time-fraction).

Students who enrol and first attend a school on census day may be included in that school's census count provided that the student has not been included in the census return of any other Victorian government or non-government school. As verification of this, the previous school must be contacted and a transfer note obtained. (See Transfers page 4).

#### B. CENSUS DAY STATUS

A principal may determine that a student is eligible to be included in the census count if the student is enrolled at the school, meets attendance criteria A and:

- has attended on census day OR



- has attended in the current year prior to census day but is absent on census day and the school has documentary evidence that the student is continuing at the school OR
- has attended in the current year prior to census day but is absent on census day, AND
  - has attended regularly for the first two full school weeks of term and has accepted a late tertiary or TAFE offer made after that time OR
  - is attending an Alternative Education Setting (for example, Secondary Teaching Unit or Social Adjustment Centre).

## **STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT ATTENDED IN THE CURRENT YEAR UP TO CENSUS DAY**

A student who has not attended in the current year **must NOT be included in census counts**, except:

- A student who due to illness has not attended up to census day during the current year can be included in census counts if the school has documentary evidence that the student has been supplied with appropriate work.
- Students who receive support under the Home-Based Educational Support Program (HBESP) can also be included in the census counts only if the school has received a formal email notification from the Wellbeing Health and Engagement Division confirming eligibility for the HBESP in the current year. For further information regarding the HBESP see: [Home based support programs](#)

**All other students who have not attended in the current year must NOT be included in census counts and an 'inactive' CASES21 enrolment status should be used.**

## **STUDENTS WITH IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE BEFORE CENSUS DAY**

Students who have been absent without explanation or for an unapproved reason for more than 20 percent of the time before census day are irregular attendees.

Schools should encourage and support irregular attendees to remain at school and attend regularly. Regional Health, Wellbeing and Engagement staff are able to support schools in following up on student absence and attendance issues. Guidance is available on the DET website to assist schools identify students at risk of disengagement and provide support to help them to remain actively involved in their learning, see: [Student engagement](#).

Students who have attended irregularly in the current year up to census day may be included in the census counts if:

- the student has attended school in the month prior to census day
- the school has documentary evidence that consistent efforts are being made to encourage attendance
- there is evidence that the student is continuing at the school.

This evidence would include up-to-date documentation in a student's file of:

- correspondence between parents/guardians and the school and records of all phone contact
- strategies used by the school to improve attendance, including referral to the student welfare co-ordinator and records of meetings with the student and parents/guardians
- attendance records after census day
- correspondence between the Department regional office and the school

- negotiations with external providers/agencies
- a Managed Individual Pathways plan, for students of over 15 years of age.

Contact which does not indicate any engagement with the student’s family/carers – or in the case of older students, the student themselves (such as unreturned letters or phone calls) – cannot be considered as documentary evidence to support the counting of the student.

The intention of providing funding for irregular attendees aims to support schools in their sustained efforts to re-engage these students.

The enrolment verification process would expect to find evidence that the school follow-up and documentation to re-engage the student in education did not only occur prior to census day but that it had continued up to the time of verification. If there is no evidence of further attendance, or further follow-up of the student post-census day, then the school will not be eligible for funding for this student.

Evidence must be available on the student file at the time of the enrolment verification.

When a young person re-entering education enrolls in a school after the February census date, schools may be able to apply for late enrolment funding. For eligibility criteria and application information see: [Late enrolment funding](#) (edugate).

## STUDENTS RETURNING AFTER CENSUS DAY (LATE RETURNING STUDENTS)

Written requests can be made for a re-calculation of the SRP to include students enrolled in the previous year who returned to school between March and the end of the first week of Term 2. These should be forwarded by letter, email or fax by the last school day in May to the Census Hotline.

Schools seeking such adjustments need to provide supporting documentation demonstrating that:

- the student was enrolled at the school in the previous year
- the student has not been included in any Victorian government or non-government school’s February census count, and
- the student returned to school on or before the end of the first week of Term 2.

A school can request late returning student funding for a student who was due to start Prep if they are the sibling of a student attending the school in the previous year. The school must provide documentation demonstrating that classes were structured to include the Prep student at the beginning of the school year.

**Figure 3: Documents to provide with an application for a late returning student**

Criteria to demonstrate	Documentation required
the student was enrolled at the school in the previous year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of the December roll to confirm the student’s attendance in the previous year (for continuing students)</li> <li>• a copy of the enrolment form confirming enrolment date (for students commencing Prep)</li> <li>• a copy of class lists showing the late returning Prep student was included in the class structure</li> </ul>

Criteria to demonstrate	Documentation required
the student has not been included in any Victorian government or non-government school's February census count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a copy of the final census report 'Students excluded from the February Census Count' to confirm student was not claimed for SRP-funding</li> <li>a copy of the note from the parents informing the school of the student's intended absence from the commencement of the school year until after census day for reasons such as an overseas or interstate holiday</li> <li>if the absence was not due to a scheduled family holiday, a copy of correspondence or communication with the parent or student before census day clarifying the reason for absence</li> </ul>
the student returned to school on or before the end of the first week of Term 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A copy of the relevant year's attendance roll confirming student's return date and ongoing attendance</li> </ul>

Changes to the SRP for students returning after census day will be processed after the enrolments from the mid-year census have been finalised. Where the SRP funded enrolment remains stable or decreases between February and August, no additional funding will be provided. Where the SRP funded enrolment increases between February and August, the SRP will be recalculated to reflect the increase that is attributed to any late returning students.

## STUDENTS COMMENCING AFTER CENSUS DAY

**Students who enrol at the school after census day cannot be included in the census counts.**

Contact the Census Hotline in the rare event that a student enrolls at a school in the week after census day and if:

- the student has regularly attended and was eligible to be counted in another Victorian government school, and
- both the transferring school and the receiving school agree that the receiving school can count all or part of the FTE for the student, and
- both schools resubmit their census returns by no later than one week after census day and ensure that the student is counted to a total of no more than 1.0 FTE.

Schools should also contact the Census Hotline if a student meets **all** the following criteria:

- the student has regularly attended a Victorian government school in the current school year
- was not eligible to be counted in any other school's census count
- was absent from school on census day (as part of a short absence from the Victorian government school system such as moving from Warrnambool to Bairnsdale and taking a few days to do so)
- made a valid enrolment and commenced attending classes at the school in the week after census day, and
- is a continuing student at the school.

The Department may agree that counting the student at the school is consistent with the Department's intention to count such students in the census return of the school where they will be a continuing student.

All other students, including students from interstate or overseas, from the non-government sector, or students enrolling in school for the first time, who enrol (first attend classes) at the school after census day cannot be included in census counts.

## **LATE ENROLMENT FUNDING FOR RE-ENGAGING STUDENTS**

When a young person re-entering education enrolls in a school after the February census date, schools can apply for late enrolment funding. For eligibility criteria and application information see: [Late Enrolment Funding](#) (edugate) or contact the youth pathways and transition manager in the DET region.

# **4. ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDENT RESOURCE PACKAGE FUNDING**

Generally, Australian born residents and holders of a New Zealand passport are eligible for SRP funding. Holders of resident visas, temporary resident visa and bridging visas may be eligible for SRP funding, depending on the particular visa they hold.

For further information or queries regarding the enrolment of overseas students, temporary entrants or exchange students and fee liability see: 8. Key Contacts

## **OVERSEAS/INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Some international students are eligible for SRP funding and some students need to pay fees to study in a Victorian government school, it all depends on the visa they hold.

To find out if a student is eligible for SRP funding, schools should refer to the [International Student Visa Fee Table](#).

There are different enrolment procedures depending on whether the student needs to pay a fee or not. These are included in the student visa fee table guide. For instructions on how to enter visa details see: Appendix: CASES21 instructions.

The visa fee table also includes information about the eligibility and documentation requirements for students on bridging visas and protection visa applicants.

## **STUDENTS ON BRIDGING VISAS**

Whether a student is eligible for SRP funding when they are on a bridging visa is determined by the visa held by the student immediately prior to receiving their bridging visa. If that visa was exempt from paying fees to study in a Victorian government school, the student is eligible for SRP funding while they are on the bridging visa. If that visa was fee liable, the student needs to pay fees and enrol in the International Student Program.

## **PROTECTION VISA APPLICANTS**

An international student is not charged tuition fees to attend a government school in Victoria if they have applied for a Protection Visa. The student becomes fee exempt from the day the protection visa application is lodged.

The family must provide evidence they have applied for a protection visa to the school. Acceptable evidence of lodgement includes: a visa lodgement receipt or letter from the Red Cross (Asylum Seeker's Assistance Scheme) or Department of Home Affairs which clearly indicates that the student is included in the Protection visa application.

The school must continue to monitor the student's visa status. If the student's protection visa application is rejected by the Department of Home Affairs, the student may become fee liable again. Schools receive Student Resource Package funding for protection visa applicants.

Please contact the International Education Division on 9637 2990 or via [international@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:international@edumail.vic.gov.au) if you have any questions about protection visa applicants.

## **EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

Exchange students are eligible for SRP funding if they hold subclass 500 Student Visas issued via an Advice and Acceptance of Secondary Exchange Students (AASES) form provided by the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

A school enrolling a secondary exchange student must ensure they receive the student's AASES form on arrival, complete the Part D, and keep a copy of the AASES form on file.

## **5. CONDUCTING THE CENSUS COUNT**

Principals should use these Guidelines to classify students as SRP funded or non-SRP funded and record this funding status on CASES21. Student enrolment details that prove eligibility for SRP funding must be retained for verification purposes.

It is the responsibility of principals to ensure that the school has a sound, well understood and reliably implemented process for recording and verifying student attendance throughout the school year.

Principals should arrange for attendance rolls to be examined to ensure that both SRP and non-SRP funded students are counted in accordance with census attendance criteria. Use the CASES21 Enrolment Census application to exclude from the census count students who do not meet the attendance criteria.

An examination of manual rolls and CASES21 or other electronic attendance records may be necessary to confirm that students are correctly included in census counts. It is strongly recommended that principals who rely on electronic or CASES21 attendance records have February attendance verified by the relevant class teacher, home-group teacher or year level co-ordinator prior to finalising the census return.

Enrolment and attendance records and other documentary evidence that prove a student's eligibility to be included in census counts must be retained for verification purposes.

Principals should refer to the CASES21 Enrolment Census Process Guide for detailed instructions on preparing their student data in CASES21.

## **FUNDING CERTIFICATION REPORT**

The Funding Certification report produced when the Census application is run in CASES21 will identify all students potentially ineligible for SRP funding based on their age or visa details. Principals must ensure that documents to support the inclusion of these students in the census counts is retained at the school and available to produce during an enrolment verification.

## **SIGNIFICANT ABSENCES REPORT**

The List of Students with Significant Absences report produced in the CASES21 Census application includes all students who have been absent more than 20 percent of the time up to census day. The report specifies the total number of days absent and the number of approved

days absent. Principals should examine the report and ensure that all students are appropriately classified for inclusion in census counts with respect to the criteria for counting students.

Enrolment verifiers will check attendance records for all students listed on the Significant Absences report during an enrolment verification. Principals should ensure that documentation to support all absences is available, including documentation about efforts to re-engage a student who is attending irregularly.

## **STUDENT FAMILY OCCUPATION AND EDUCATION DATA**

Student Family Occupation (SFO) and Student Family Education (SFE) data is reported during the Mid-Year (August) Census and used for calculating elements of the SRP for the following year. SFO and SFE data submitted in the Mid-year (August) Census is not used to update SRP funding for that year.

Schools should ensure that SFO and SFE details have been collected from families through the student enrolment form for new and existing students and captured on CASES21 and that proper processes are in place to ensure this information is up-to-date.

Schools should review student records with missing SFO or SFE details and seek information from those families. To assist in this process, schools are advised to run the CASES21 report entitled 'Families with Missing Occupation Status Groups' (DF21004).

Schools are encouraged to access documents held on the SRP website to assist with difficult categorisations. See: [Student Resource Package](#)

Schools are required to keep a printed copy of their SFO and SFE data report, and where necessary, a paper trail clarifying any variation to SFO and SFE details.

## **6. AMENDING AND RESUBMITTING CENSUS RETURNS IN CASE OF ERROR**

Schools should RESUBMIT their census return in the week following census day if the initial return is found to be INCORRECT.

Some examples of where a census return should be re-submitted:

- a student originally included in census counts who was expected to return and meet ongoing enrolment criteria may subsequently be found to have transferred to another school and thus the original census count would have to be reduced. The exit date must be set as census day or before.
- a student marked as non-SRP funded should have been recorded as SRP funded
- negotiation with the principal of another school has resulted in agreement to change the time fraction a student is counted at each school.

Note: re-submitting the Census will not reflect any new enrolments, attendance or exits after census day.

Students who have not attended a Victorian government school by census day in the current school year CANNOT be included in the census counts, even if they attend a school immediately after census day. The only exception is for students who have been absent due to illness.

# 7. CENSUS DATA REVIEWS

## ENROLMENT VERIFICATION PROGRAM

The aim of the February Enrolment Verification is to identify the accuracy of the February School Census returns submitted to the Department by selected Victorian Government schools, using a predetermined census verification process.

Typically, a sample of schools is selected for Enrolment Verification from all regions, based on a risk profile methodology. The sample will include primary, secondary, primary/secondary, language and special schools.

The Enrolment Verification will be undertaken during a four-week period usually beginning in the second week of Term 2. An external firm is contracted to undertake the verification process with a team of authorised enrolment verifiers.

Principals of participating schools can appeal a decision made by an enrolment verifier on the basis that the decision:

- was not in accordance with the current guidelines for counting students for school census; or
- failed to take into account documentary evidence (e.g. attendance rolls, diary notes, parental correspondence) the school presented that supports the claim for the student's inclusion in the census count; or
- involves a student who is at risk of being disengaged from school and the school has been actively working to re-engage them. For more information about identifying students at risk, see: [Support for Disengaged and at Risk Students](#)

Principals must lodge an appeal within 3 working days after the completion of the enrolment verification at their school. Appeals can be lodged in the form of an email or written correspondence to the Census Hotline (see Section 8 for contact details). Principals must ensure that appropriate documentation is provided to support their appeal.

## SFOE DATA REVIEW

To ensure that resources provided through the SRP are targeted effectively, an annual review of data submitted for SFO and SFE will be undertaken on a random sample of schools, based on a risk profile methodology.

The SFOE review process will consider the following:

- the process undertaken by the school, which included assessing documentation the school provided to parents to collect the necessary data;
- whether judgement applied to parental occupational coding was reasonable;
- the extent of missing or inaccurate data at the time of the review;
- the due diligence that was undertaken in the school's environment; and
- the accuracy of submitted information before and after the census process

## 8. KEY CONTACTS

### **Census Guidelines and conducting the census**

Queries regarding the Census, Enrolment Guidelines, funding students returning after census day and the Enrolment Verification Program should be directed to:

#### **Census Hotline**

Data Collections and Services Unit  
Performance and Evaluation Division  
Department of Education and Training  
Level 3, 33 St Andrews Place  
PO Box 4367  
MELBOURNE 3001

**Telephone (03) 7022 0359**

Facsimile (03) 9637 2830

**Email:** [census@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:census@edumail.vic.gov.au) (include school number and school name in subject line)

### **Overseas Students**

Queries regarding enrolment and funding of overseas students should be directed to:

#### **International Student Services Unit (ISSU)**

Telephone (03) 9637 2990

Email: [international@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:international@edumail.vic.gov.au)

### **Exchange Students**

Queries regarding students on exchange programs should be directed to:

#### **VRQA (Student Exchange):**

Telephone (03) 9651 3801

### **New arrival students**

Queries regarding enrolment and funding of new arrival students should be directed to:

#### **EAL Unit**

Telephone (03) 9637 2023

Facsimile (03) 9637 2040

Email: [esl@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:esl@edumail.vic.gov.au)



# APPENDIX: CASES21 INSTRUCTIONS

Full instructions on how to prepare and submit the student enrolment census using the CASES21 Census application are provided in the *CASES21 Census Process Guide* available from the School Census Data webpage.

The following instructions are provided for two CASES21 enrolment items that specifically relate to census counts.

## Entering visa details on CASES21

Schools must enter visa details through the Demographics tab screen of CASES21 program ST11001/ST11001T. A student's visa details can relate to a Permanent or Temporary Residence Visa.

If the student holds a Permanent Residence Visa, then:

- Enter the student's Resident Status as 'P' for Permanent;
- Enter the student's Basis of Permanent Residency as P (Permanent Residence Visa); and
- Enter the visa sub-class as recorded on their visa.

If the student holds a Temporary Residence Visa, then:

- Enter the student's Residence Status as 'T' for Temporary;
- Enter the visa sub-class as recorded on their visa; and
- Enter the Visa Expiry Date and Statistical Code when prompted as CASES21 will require these details for some visas.

## Record a student on CASES21 whose SRP funding is being claimed by another school

For students who do most of their study at one school (referred to in these Guidelines as the home school) with some study at a second school, the schools may agree that the home school will claim all SRP funding and transfer resources to the second school for the additional subject. To reflect this outcome in each school's census return, the following needs to occur:

- The home school should record the student on CASES21 as SRP funded and full-time at the school.
- The second school should record the student on CASES21 as follows:
  - Go to the School tab screen of CASES21 program ST11001/ST11001T and set the Full-Time field to N to indicate that the student is part-time;
  - Enter the time fraction appropriate to the workload being undertaken at the school;
  - Click on the Part-Time details "daisy-chain" link that appears;
  - Ensure the home school is recorded as sharing the student with the remainder of the time fraction so that the total time fraction equals 1;
  - Go to the Finance tab screen of CASES21 program ST11001/ST11001T and set the Eligible for SRP Funding field to N; and
  - Exclude the student from the census count using the CASES21 Enrolment Census Application. Refer to the *CASES21 Enrolment Census Process Guide* for assistance in using this option.