Parent/carer guide to enrolment/transfer for ACT public schools

# Online enrolment/transfer form

Parents/carers seeking to **enrol** their child in an ACT public school for the first time must complete the online **enrolment**/transfer form.

Parent/carers seeking to **transfer** their child to another ACT public school must complete the online enrolment/**transfer** form.

Up to three school choices may be nominated when enrolling in a school or transferring to a new school. [**http://www.det.act.gov.au/school\_education/enrolling\_in\_an\_act\_public\_school.**](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school.)

For years 11 and 12 enrolments/transfers, students will need to identify course preferences on the online enrolment/transfer form.

For preschool enrolments, parents/carers will need to nominate preferred sessions on the online enrolment/transfer form.

# Educational requirements in the ACT

## Compulsory education age

In the ACT a child is of compulsory education age from the age of six until the child completes year 12 or turns 17, whichever happens first. Children who are of compulsory school age must be either enrolled in and attending a school, registered for [home education](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/home_education), or [exempted](http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/192175/EXEMPTION-CERTIFICATE-MARCH-2013.pdf) from the full-time attendance requirement. Children may be both enrolled in a school (part-time) and registered for part‑time home education.

Unless a child qualifies for *Early Entry*, children must be:

* 4 years of age by 30 April in the year they commence preschool
* 5 years of age by 30 April in the year they commence kindergarten.

## Early Entry

Early Entry is offered to eligible families to meet the needs of their children in the early years of their education. Early Entry will only be considered for children in the following categories:

* English as an Additional Language or Dialect
* Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
* children with hearing and/or vision impairment
* parental work mobility (such as for Australian Defence Force personnel)
* students who are formally identified as gifted.

Early entry criteria, procedures and application forms are available at [Early Entry Eligibility Procedures.](http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/187394/Early_entry_and_accelerated_entry_eligibility_and_procedures_26_March_2012_30Aug12.pdf)

# How enrolment/transfer is organised in the ACT

ACT residents having priority enrolment in ACT public schools.

Enrolment applications are accepted from ACT residents, NSW residents and international students. Parents/carers of children residing in NSW cannot assume enrolment rights for their children at their preferred schools.

Applications for enrolment/transfer for the current year may be lodged throughout the year and are processed as received.

The ACT public school enrolment/transfer process for the following year commences at the beginning of term 2 and concludes on 30 May each year. You will receive an offer of enrolment in the middle of June.

## Prospective enrolments

The online enrolment/transfer form allows for prospective enrolments for the following year. Schools process prospective enrolment applications after the closing date. Submitting an application prior to the closing date does not provide any advantage.

If more than one application is submitted the last application will override previous application(s).

## Priority Enrolment Area (PEA)

Most schools have a group of nearby suburb(s) listed as the school’s *Priority Enrolment Area (PEA).*

Each public school gives priority to the enrolment of children living in its PEA.

A number of suburbs in the ACT have a PEA for two or more public schools; this is called a *Shared Enrolment Zone.* A list of priority enrolment areas can be found at [PEA boundaries](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school/priority_placement_areas). They can also be found at <http://www.allhomes.com.au/ah/act/maps>.

## Out of area enrolment (OAE)

Families who live in a suburb outside of their PEA are deemed to be living in the *Out of Area Enrolment* (OAE) area. You may apply for a school that is located outside your PEA. When seeking an OAE schoolit is important to provide detailed reasons for the application on the online application/transfer form.

Where the reason of OAE is to study a specific subject and/or level this information should be included in the reasons for the OAE application.

If an application for OAE is unsuccessful the application will be forwarded to the school next listed in your application.

For ACT residents where there is no next choice school listed, the application will be forwarded to your PEA school.

For NSW residents where the application does not list a next choice school, the student will be referred to the Office for Schools and enrolment at another ACT public school will be organised*.*

If your child has an OAE at an early childhood school that is located in a primary school's PEA, enrolment at the primary school is not guaranteed.

If your child has an OAE at a primary school that is located in a high school's PEA, enrolment at the high school is not guaranteed.

If your child has an OAE in a high school that is located in a college's PEA, enrolment at the college is not guaranteed.

## New South Wales students

Where demand for places at a particular school exceeds available places, applications from NSW residents for enrolment for these schools will not be considered. In these circumstances NSW applications will be referred to the Office for Schools who will organise an enrolment at another ACT public school.

## International students

Non-Australian citizens or non-permanent residents may enrol and be offered an enrolment in ACT public schools. This is subject to specific considerations which may include payment of international student tuition fees. The [International Education Unit](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/international_students) is responsible for the enrolment of international students and the dependents of temporary residents in all ACT public schools. Enrolment of international students is subject to the approval of the relevant principal.

## Preschools

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011,* preschool class sizes are set at a maximum of 22 students. Where there is enrolment pressure from within the school’s PEA, the maximum class size may be increased to 25 students depending on the site’s physical capacity. This provision will only be available until the end of 2015. After this the preschool class size will return to a maximum of 22 students.

Where there is excess demand for places from students within the PEA, enrolments may be referred to other preschools within the local area that have capacity. This may occur for children who are:

* resident within the PEA
* not resident within the PEA yet have siblings concurrently enrolled at the school
* resident in the shared enrolment zone for the school.

# How enrolment/transfer applications are decided

Principals are responsible for making offers of enrolment. When considering an application for student enrolment/transfer, principals make offers of enrolment according to the enrolment criteria in the following order:

1. priority applications
2. enrolment/transfer considerations
3. other ACT residents
4. NSW residents.

## Priority applications

* Children who live in the school’s Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) and/or ACT resident siblings of students concurrently enrolled at the school
* Children who live in a Shared Enrolment Zone
* Student well-being: where special enrolment/transfer consideration is requested, supporting documentation from a registered psychologist or medical specialist may be required.

## Enrolment/transfer considerations

### Curriculum availability

Enrolment consideration may apply to schools that offer specialised programs/pathways or specific subject choices. Students may need to meet the specific entry requirements set by the school.

## Exceptions to the criteria

### Student accessing Disability Education Programs

The ACT Government provides a range of educational services and settings to accommodate the diverse curriculum, resource, environmental and support needs of students with a disability. Parents are welcome to visit their local PEA school as they are able to meet the diverse range of student needs, however, families may elect to apply for specialised units or schools. For more information about available programs, eligibility or Disability Education application process, parent/carers may contact Disability Education on 6205 6925.

### The Inclusion Support Program

All public schools in the ACT are able to make the required reasonable adjustments to ensure your child is able to participate in education on the same basis as their peers. If your child is applying for the Inclusion Support Program (ISP), you should complete the enrolment procedures and timelines as outlined in this document as PEA principles apply. If the student meets eligibility, then ISP will be given at any public school where your child’s enrolment is accepted.

### Disability Education Units (LSC, LSU, LSUA or SCL programs)

Disability Education units refer to any of the following programs:

* Learning Support Centre (LSC)
* Learning Support Unit (LSU)
* Learning Support Unit: Autism Specific (LSUA)
* Support Class Language (SCL)

If your child has been offered a placement in a Disability Education unit, you will be sent a letter of offer from the Disability Education section. The majority of these placements are completed through the Central Placement Panel (CPP) held in term 2 and 3. Once the letter of offer is received, parents/carers will be able to complete the online enrolment and apply for the school where the program is located. Specific enrolment instructions will be attached to the letter of offer.

### Specialist Schools

Parents/carers of students with a disability who are interested in enrolling their child in a specialist school are invited to contact the specialist school principal directly. The principal will advise on eligibility criteria.

### Early Childhood Schools (preschool – year 2)

As early childhood schools do not have a designated Priority Enrolment Area, principals make offers of enrolment according to the criteria in the following order:

1. well-being considerations (evidence from a registered psychologist or medical specialist required)
2. child lives in the ACT and has a sibling attending the school (P-2)
3. child lives in the ACT and attends the long daycare program at the school
4. child lives in the suburb where the school is located
5. child lives elsewhere in the ACT
6. child lives outside the ACT.

### Telopea Park School – Primary years only

Telopea Park School is a unique bi-lingual school that operates under a bi-national agreement between the French and Australian Governments. The Priority Enrolment Area for this program in the primary years is the whole of the ACT. The [school’s website](http://www.telopea.act.edu.au/enrolments) outlines the school’s primary year’s entry criteria and enrolment procedures.

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# Accepting an offer of enrolment/transfer

Once you have received an offer of enrolment/transfer, it is necessary to accept the offer by arranging a school visit where you will complete the required paperwork and provide:

* proof of your child’s identity and date of birth (birth certificate)
	+ - proof of your child’s residential address (for example: residential lease, electricity /utilities account NB: a driver’s licence is not accepted as proof of residence)
		- copies of any family law or other relevant court orders
		- immunisation history
		- Emergency Treatment Plan if required.

If the offer of enrolment/transfer is not your school of choice, you may request a review of the enrolment decision.

It is advisable to accept the initial enrolment offer in case the review of the enrolment decision is not successful.

# Review and Appeal processes

If your application for enrolment/transfer has been unsuccessful, you may seek a review of the decision.

## *Review process*

The criteria for enrolment/transfer detailed above will be used as the basis for review. The review will be conducted by the school that declined your enrolment. Requests for a review should be emailed directly to the relevant school.

## Appeal process

If the review of the enrolment/transfer decision is not successful, you may appeal the review finding. The appeal will be conducted by a nominated School Network Leader and a school principal. The principal from the school subject to the appeal will be invited to provide information to the appeal panel. The appeal process will consider the grounds expressed in the original enrolment application. Applicants may elaborate on these grounds. Requests for appeals should be made in writing to:

Letters of Appeal

Office for Schools

PO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601 *or* officeforschools@act.gov.au

## ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT)

If the application for enrolment/transfer has been unsuccessful at the review and appeal stages, you may lodge an appeal with the:

 [ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal.](http://www.acat.act.gov.au/)

GPO Box 370 CANBERRA ACT 2601 or tribunal@act.gov.au

# Further information

* enrolment process: det.enrolment@act.gov.au (02) 6205 5429
* enrolment appeals: Officeforschools@act.gov.au (02) 6205 7194
* students with a disability [programs and specialist schools](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/disability_education): (02) 6205 6925
* early childhood education: (02) 6207 1961
* early entry: DET.Consultation@act.gov.au (02) 6207 1961
* enrolment for New South Wales residents: Officeforschools@act.gov.au (02) 6205 7194
* international student enrolments: ieu@act.gov.au (02) 6205 9178
* home education: HomeEd@act.gov.au (02) 6205 9299
* exemption certificates: ExemptionCerts@act.gov.au (02) 6207 7459

The contact details for individual ACT public schools may be found on the [Directory of Schools](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/directory_of_schools) which is located on the School Education page of the [Education and Training Directorate’s website](http://www.det.act.gov.au) – [www.det.act.gov.au](http://www.det.act.gov.au).