



# Parent Payments

## Purpose

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This policy provides information to the school community regarding Parent Payments at Upper Yarra Secondary College.

This policy covers payments for essential student learning items, optional items and voluntary financial contributions that our school requests and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests will be made.

This policy complies with the requirements of the DET Parent Payments Policy.

## Context

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This policy is governed by the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (the Act) which provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools.

Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. The standard curriculum program refers to the eight key learning areas – English, Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Languages, Health and Physical Education, and Technologies, and four capability areas – Critical and Creative thinking, Intercultural, Ethical and Personal and Social.

The standard curriculum for years F-10 means the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

The Department allocates funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP). This includes funding for the standard curriculum program, including associated administration, equipment, facilities and operational costs. The Act also empowers school councils to charge parents for items that the school provides or makes available to the student. The items may be categorised as either Essential Student Learning Items or Optional Items. School council may also ask parents to make a voluntary financial contribution to the school for a stated purpose.

## Categories of Parent Payments

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School Council requests payments from parents under three categories:

Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items or Voluntary Financial Contributions.

### Essential Education Items

These are items, activities or services that the school deems essential to student learning in the standard curriculum. Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own. Examples are:

- Items that the student takes temporary or permanent possession of such as text books, student stationery, book bags, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS)

- Materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. Technology projects, workbooks, photography).
- School uniform (where applicable).
- Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend, such as costs associated with excursions and work placements.

## Optional Extras

These are items or services that are optional and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum. Students may access these on a user pays basis. These items include:

- Activities the student purchases (e.g. Fees for extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum such as instrumental music tuition; fees for guest speakers; optional camps and excursions; entry fees to school-based performances, productions and events).
- Items the student purchases or hires (e.g. School magazines; class photos; formals/graduation functions; materials for extracurricular activities; student accident insurance).
- Items and materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum (e.g. use of silver in metal work instead of copper).

## Voluntary Financial Contributions

Parents, or anyone else, can be invited to make a voluntary contribution or donation to the school for the following purposes:

- Contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school (e.g. Equipment, materials or services) in addition to those funded through the srp. This may include additional computers or student-related services. These contributions are not tax deductible.
- General voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school. These contributions or donations are not tax deductible.<sup>2</sup>
- Donations to a building fund or library fund (if these funds have been endorsed by the Australian taxation office and have a deductible gift recipients (dgr) status). Donations to these funds are tax deductible to the donor.
- Any donations to special schools with a DGR status are also tax deductible to the donor.

## Implementation

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The Principal is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Upper Yarra Secondary College Parent Payment Policy developed by school council.

### The School Principal will ensure that:

- Items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed.
- Payment requests are broadly itemised within the appropriate category.
- Parents are advised that they have the option of purchasing equivalent essential student learning items themselves, in consultation with the school.
- Information on payment options is available, accessible and easily understood to all parents so that they know what to expect and what supports they can access.

- Parents are provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees (i.e. A minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year). This enables parents to save and budget accordingly.
- Parents are provided with reasonable notice of any other payment requests that arise during the school year- ensuring parents have a clear understanding of the full financial contribution being sought.
- The status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel.
- Parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school fees from one year to the next.
- Use of debt collectors to obtain outstanding school funds owed to the school from parents is not permitted.
- There will be only one reminder notice to parents for voluntary financial contributions per year.
- Invoices/statements for unpaid essential or optional items accepted by parents are not generated more than monthly or according to the parent payment arrangement with the school.

### The School Council will ensure that:

- The Parent Payments policy is reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle.
- The Parent Payments Schedule is reviewed and endorsed annually, however no later than September of the year proceeding the year of the required payments.
- The parent payments are kept to a minimum and will not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the student.

### The Parents/Guardians will ensure that:

- Essential education items are provided for their child/ren.
- The Principal or Business Manager is contacted to discuss alternative payment options if required.
- For further information, please refer to the Department of Teaching (DET) guidelines: 'Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools.'

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## Evaluation

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This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

<b>Author:</b>		
<b>Ratified By:</b> UYSC School Council		
<b>Name:</b> Glenn Bray President	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Date Implemented:</b>		
<b>Date Updated On-Line:</b>		
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Responsible for Review:</b>	
<b>References:</b>		