



The How to Guide to
**STUDENT
REPRESENTATION
POLICIES**

GOVERNANCE

HOW TO: ESTABLISH A STUDENT REPRESENTATION POLICY

This guide is designed to assist you in establishing a Student Representation Policy and is specific to P&Cs in Queensland. Information within this guide may be subject to change.

Representing the school, local area or state at an Education Queensland sanctioned event is an exciting & memorable experience for students that usually involves a financial contribution from families. Whether a P&C is in a position to assist families with their costs, to what value and a firm eligibility criteria must be summarised in a Student Representation Policy – some P&Cs will decide that they cannot contribute P&C funds for this purpose. The opportunity to apply must be open to all students equally.

See an example Student Representation Policy in Appendix A and an example Student Representation Application form in Appendix B.

❑ STEP 1 – LIST WHAT SPORTS/ACTIVITIES WILL BE INCLUDED

The first thing to develop is a list of which sports/activities are included. This list will be a starting point as there will no doubt be further additions as the curriculum, sports and activities change into the future. Consider supporting competitions for the following:

- Sports - AFL, baseball, basketball, cricket, cross country, soccer, golf, hockey, netball, rugby league, rugby union, softball, squash, surfing, swimming, tennis, touch football, track & field, triathlon & aquathlon, volleyball, water polo
- Music - band, choir
- Arts - dance
- Activities - chess club, debate team, STEM, robotics

❑ STEP 2 – DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO BE OFFERED

When trying to determine how much money the P&C should offer for student representatives, the P&C must choose an amount that is realistic and achievable. The figure stated in the policy will set precedence for years to come and needs to be sustainable – the P&C cannot get into a position where they need to fundraise to keep up with student representation to the detriment of other projects.

Some years there may be a high volume of students representing the school, whilst other years it might only be 1 or 2 students. If the school can provide data (or even an estimation) on how many students have been representatives at an Education Queensland sanctioned event over the past few years, the P&C can better determine an appropriate figure to offer eligible families - \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100.

❑ STEP 3 – SPECIFY HOW FREQUENTLY CAN FAMILIES APPLY

Clearly specify how regularly families can apply for P&C assistance with regards to student representation. Options may include (examples only):

- \$50 per student per sport/activity to a maximum of \$150 per year.
- One application of maximum of \$50 per student per year.
- Tiered funding based on the level of representation achieved, e.g. \$50 for state, \$100 for national, \$150 for international.

❑ STEP 4 – SETTING AN ANNUAL BUDGET

Using the data the school provides regarding the average number of student representatives per year and based on the decisions made in Steps 2 & 3, the P&C should be able to set an annual budget for expenditure. Example:

2020 – 10 student representatives

2021 – 15 student representatives

2022 – 18 student representatives

2023 – 12 student representatives

2024 – budget for 15 anticipated student representatives x \$50/student = \$750

Remember that budgets are approved in theory at the AGM, however they are fluid and should be reassessed as expenditure occurs. If the P&C has budgeted a certain amount for student representation funding for the year and then receives applications in excess of that amount, each application should be assessed based on the financial position of the P&C at that time.

It is recommended that the P&C state on the Student Representation Policy that *“whilst the P&C aims to support student representation, in some instances they may not be in a financial position to be able to do so, therefore applications must be considered based on the funds available at the time and the funds are not guaranteed”*.

❑ STEP 5 – DETERMINE WHEN CAN FAMILIES APPLY

In your Student Representation Policy, outline when a family should apply for P&C assistance. Does the application have to be sent to the P&C and actioned prior to the sport/activity or is the P&C willing to accept applications after the event? Is there a cut-off time for how far before/after the event the P&C would be willing to accept applications?

Consider only accepting applications in the same term or within 2 months of the sport/activity, ensuring that the application and funds transfer occur in the same calendar year (which matches the P&C’s financial year – 1 Jan to 31 Dec).

❑ **STEP 6 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION TO BE SUPPLIED BY FAMILIES**

You should stipulate exactly which costs meet the criteria for this application, e.g. accommodation, uniform, event registration, bus/plane transfers might be covered but food and fuel for the family car may not. By asking for supporting documents to be submitted with the application, the P&C will be able to confirm that the student is formally participating and that there is a financial component to their representation. Supporting documentation could be the permission note issued to the student by school or a tax invoice in the student's name showing accommodation, uniform, registration fees and travel costs.

❑ **STEP 7 – VERIFYING THE VALIDITY OF THE APPLICATION**

On the application form, include a section for the school's Principal or Head of Department for the chosen activity to sign, verifying that the applicant is representing the school at an Education Queensland sanctioned event at a state/national/international level and that the stated costs are accurate.

❑ **STEP 8 – ASSESSING THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION**

Before the general meeting, the Secretary (or the P&C Executive or Member designated to the task) should assess the eligibility of the application, checking that:

- ✓ The application form is completed in full and signed by the applicant family and submitted in the appropriate time frame to be considered.
- ✓ Supporting documentation has been supplied to verify the activity & associated costs.
- ✓ The verification section of the form has been completed by a listed school representative confirming that the application is legitimate.
- ✓ P&C records have been checked to ensure that the applicant hasn't already exceeded the frequency of applications per year.

If any further information is required, the designated assessor can ask the family to provide it prior to the General Meeting (or Special Meeting) where the application will be formally approved or declined by the P&C.

❑ **STEP 9 – APPROVE OR DECLINE APPLICATIONS**

Under general business at a General Meeting, or Special Meeting called specifically for that purpose, the P&C Members will vote to approve or decline each application for funding and record the decision(s) in the meeting minutes.

After the meeting, the Secretary (or the P&C Executive or Member designated to the task) should email each applicant to advise of the P&C's decision and let them know how and when to expect funds.

❑ **STEP 10 – PAYMENT OF FUNDS**

Once the application is approved, the P&C must transfer the funds to either the school (for them to credit to the tax invoice) or by direct depositing into the bank account of the family.

Consider waiting until after the event has occurred to transfer funds as this avoids the need for refunds should the sport/activity be cancelled or if the student can no longer attend.

The method for payment and when must be specified in your Student Representation Policy.

❑ **STEP 11 – ADVERTISE THIS INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY**

It's important that the community are aware of the opportunity for funding and how to apply. Ideas for how to let people know are:

- Email a copy of the Student Representation Policy and Application Form to the Principal and all Head of Departments, so that they can pass them onto eligible students.
- Write an article/create an advertisement in the school newsletter. See an example ad in Appendix C.
- Ask the school administration team to include a copy of the Policy and Application Form under the "Our Community > P&C" tab on the school's website.
- Post on the school or P&C's Facebook page. See an example Facebook post in Appendix D.

Appendix A – Example Student Representation Policy

XXXX State School Parents & Citizens Association **Student Representation Policy**

XXXX State School Parents & Citizens Association, at its discretion, offers financial support to its students who participate at a state, national and international level in Queensland Department of Education sanctioned events upon written request to the Association.

This policy is designed to recognise and support students' achievements. To qualify for support, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Students must have participated in events sanctioned by the Queensland Department of Education. Their representation must have been reached through their initial involvement at the school level.
2. Students may receive compensation for costs related to accommodation, uniform, event registration, bus/plane transfers, etc (NOTE: costs related to food and fuel for the family car are not included and the P&C's financial contribution will not exceed the cost to families as specified on the supporting documentation – *e.g. if P&C has stated a maximum contribution of \$50 per student but total cost to family was \$20, as confirmed on the supporting documents, then the P&C will only contribute \$20*) to:
 - a maximum of one application of \$xx per student, per year.

OR

 - the following levels of assistance will apply for individuals, to a maximum of \$xx in support in a 12-month period:
 - State \$xx
 - National \$xx
 - International \$xx
3. The attached application form must be completed by the parent/caregiver and signed by the Principal/Head of Department, verifying that the student is participating in a school-based activity with a cost payable by the family (supporting documentation must be attached to confirm this).
4. Applications must be received 2 months <before or after> the event and must be finalised in the same calendar year.
5. Applications will be assessed at a General Meeting, or Special Meeting called specifically for that purpose, with the decision of the P&C Members recorded in the minutes and notification sent to the applicant family in the days following the meeting.
6. Payment of funds will be made by <donation to the school in the student's name/direct deposit into the families bank account>, in the <fortnight/month> following the event.

NOTE: The P&C plan for Student Representation funding in the annual budget, as approved at the AGM. Whilst the P&C aims to support student representation as budgeted, in some instances they may not be in a financial position to be able to do so, therefore applications must be considered based on the funds available at the time and are not guaranteed.

Appendix B – Example Student Representation Application Form

**XXXX State School Parents & Citizens Association
Student Representation Application Form**

I wish to apply for financial assistance for _____ (student name)

in class _____ (class name/number)

to support their participation at _____ (name of event)

to be held on _____ (date of event).

Details of anticipated costs (or attach copies of permission slip/information from school OR tax invoices received):

Accommodation: \$ _____
Basic uniform: \$ _____
Registration: \$ _____
Travel: \$ _____
Other (please specify): \$ _____

Total \$ _____

If approved, funds can be deposited to:
Account name: _____
Financial institution: _____
Account No: _____
BSB: _____

This is the first application for student representation funding from the P&C, for this student, this calendar year:

YES NO

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Name of parent/guardian: _____

PRINCIPAL/HEAD OF DEPARTMENT STATEMENT

I verify that the above representation is for a school-based activity at a state/national/international level and that the costs stated will be incurred.

Signature of Principal/Head of Department: _____

Name (please print): _____ Date: _____



Appendix C – Example Advertisement for School Newsletter



Appendix D – Example Facebook Post

