



**New England Girls' School and  
St John's Co-Educational Junior School**

**OVERSEAS STUDENTS'**

**HANDBOOK**

**Cricos Provider 02945A**

NEGS Limited trading as  
New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| SECTION A – CODE OF PRACTICE.....  | 4  |
| 1. Education Services for Overseas Students Act and the National Code.....         | 4  |
| The ESOS Framework and VETAB.....  | 4  |
| 2. Overseas Student – Definition.....  | 5  |
| Protection for overseas students.....  | 5  |
| Student responsibilities.....  | 5  |
| 3. About New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School..... | 6  |
| Mission Statement.....   | 6  |
| 4. Educational Standards.....  | 6  |
| 5. Marketing and Recruitment.....  | 7  |
| 6. Information for Students.....   | 7  |
| 7. Refunds.....  | 7  |
| 8. Student Grievances.....   | 8  |
| 9. Student Services.....   | 8  |
| 10. Privacy of Personal Information.....   | 8  |
| 11. Education Agents.....  | 8  |
| 12. Sanction.....  | 8  |
| SECTION B – GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES.....                                  | 9  |
| 1. Accreditation.....  | 9  |
| 1.1 Teacher Registration and Suitability to Work with Children.....                | 9  |
| 2. Courses.....  | 9  |
| 2.1 Academic Standards and Pathways.....   | 10 |
| 2.2 Student Suitability.....   | 10 |
| 2.3 National Benchmark Standards.....  | 10 |
| 2.4 Monitoring Course Progress.....  | 11 |
| 2.5 Completion (of Course) within the expected duration of study.....              | 11 |
| 2.6 Monitoring attendance.....   | 12 |
| 3. Entry Requirements for Overseas Students.....                                   | 13 |
| 3.1 Entry Requirements Years 10-12.....  | 13 |
| 3.2 Entry Requirements K-9.....  | 15 |
| 4. Student Care and Accommodation.....   | 16 |
| 4.1 Procedures for enrolling families.....   | 17 |
| 4.2 External home stay providers.....  | 17 |
| 4.3 Home Stay Guidelines (if boarding is not available).....                       | 18 |
| 4.4 Students living with a parent or close family relative.....                    | 19 |
| 5. Formalisation of Enrolment.....   | 19 |
| 5.1 Financial Administration.....  | 19 |
| 5.2 Payment Options.....   | 20 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 5.3 Fee Schedule for Overseas Students.....   | 20 |
| 5.4 Refund Policy (National Code – Standard 3).....                                       | 20 |
| 5.5 Summary of Fees and Charges.....  | 22 |
| 6. Student Support Services.....  | 23 |
| 6.1 Orientation on arrival.....   | 23 |
| 6.2 Assistance and information about academic progress.....                               | 23 |
| 6.3 Information regarding entry to further study.....                                     | 23 |
| 6.4 Ongoing counselling as required in relation to health and family matters.....         | 23 |
| 6.5 Serious Incidents.....  | 24 |
| 7. Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.....                                     | 24 |
| 7.1 Deferment commencement of study - requested by student.....                           | 25 |
| 7.2 Suspension of study - requested by student.....                                       | 25 |
| 7.3 Assessing requests for deferment or suspension of studies.....                        | 25 |
| 7.4 Suspension from studies – provider initiated (1 – 28 days).....                       | 25 |
| 7.5 Suspension from studies – provider initiated (28 days +).....                         | 26 |
| 7.6 Cancellation of enrolment.....  | 26 |
| 7.7 Complaints and Appeals (deferment, suspension and cancellation).....                  | 26 |
| 7.8 Suspension/Cancellation of Enrolment – Future Action.....                             | 27 |
| 8. Complaints and Appeals Policy.....   | 27 |
| 8.1 Policy overview.....  | 27 |
| 8.2 Complaint and Appeal Process for Overseas Students, their Parent/s or Guardian/s..... | 28 |
| 9. Transfer Policy to and from other Education Providers.....                             | 29 |

## SECTION A – CODE OF PRACTICE

### ***1. Education Services for Overseas Students Act and the National Code***

New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School (NEGS/SJC) will be bound by the provisions of the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code, 2007.

The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 is the primary Australian Government legislation governing international student education in Australia. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Reforms administers the ESOS Act and provider compliance with the Act.

The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (The National Code) provides nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their courses. These standards set out specifications and procedures to ensure that providers of education and training courses can clearly understand and comply with their obligations under The National Code.

Under the provisions of the ESOS Act 2000, students, their parents and guardians should be aware that:

- The CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of the New South Wales Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board - VETAB has the power to suspend or cancel the registration of NEGS/SJC or a course offered by NEGS/SJC.
- Students concerned about the conduct of NEGS/SJC may contact officers of VETAB which is the New South Wales State Government department involved in the administration of the ESOS Act.

Within the State of New South Wales, provider compliance, registration, response to breaches by providers is monitored by the Department of Education and Training through VETAB (web: <http://vetab.nsw.gov.au> or email [vetab@det.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vetab@det.nsw.gov.au) ).

For general information on how to study in Australia, go to the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) under 'Visas and Immigration'.

### **The ESOS Framework and VETAB**

**THE ESOS Framework - ensures the provision of quality education for and the protection of the rights of overseas students.** The Australian Government wants overseas students in Australia to have a safe, enjoyable and rewarding experience. Australia's laws promote quality education and consumer protection for overseas students. These laws are known as the ESOS framework and include the Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 and The National Code.

Under The National Code 2007, New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School is required to provide students with a description of the ESOS framework prior to enrolment. The Framework is summarised below and is also available at: [http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS\\_FrameWork\\_pdf](http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS_FrameWork_pdf)

## **2. Overseas Student – Definition**

For students wishing to study for longer than three months, the Australian Government operates an Overseas Student Program that allows people who are not Australian citizens or Australian permanent residents to study in Australia provided they undertake a registered course or part of a registered course on a full-time basis.

The National Code of Practice defines an overseas student as ‘a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations. Where the student is under 18 years of age and the student is required to exercise rights or enter obligations as a legal person, this term may refer to the student’s parents or legal guardian’.

The assessment level attached by DIAC to each student’s country of origin will determine whether a student is able to apply for a student visa on-shore and off-shore or off-shore only. Overseas students should be aware of age and minimum year of entry conditions applying to registered courses when they are applying for entry to Australian Schools. These conditions may also differ according to the student’s country of origin. Overseas students are required to pay fees which fully cover the cost of providing their education including a capital component.

### **Protection for overseas students**

As an overseas student on a student visa, you must study with an education provider and in a course that can be found on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) at <http://cricos.dest.gov.au> CRICOS registration guarantees that your chosen course and the education provider meet high standards.

#### **Student rights**

The ESOS framework protects your rights, including:

- Your right to receive, before enrolling, current and accurate information about the courses, fees, modes of study and other information from your provider.
- If you are under 18 years of age, to ensure your safety, you will be granted a visa only if there are approved arrangements in place for your accommodation, support and welfare while studying in Australia (Public Interest Criterion 4012A and Visa condition 8532).
- Your right to sign a written agreement with your provider before or as you pay fees, setting out the services to be provided, fees payable and information about refunds of course money.
- Your right to receive the education you paid for. The ESOS framework includes consumer protection that will allow you to receive a refund or to be placed in another course if your provider is unable to teach your course.
- Your right to know:
  - how to use your provider’s student support services;
  - who the contact staff members are who will assist you while you are studying
  - if you can apply for course credit; when your enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled;
  - your provider’s definition of ‘satisfactory progress’ in the courses you study;
  - if attendance will be monitored for those courses;
  - what will happen if you want to change providers; and
  - how to use your provider’s complaints and appeals process

#### **Student responsibilities**

As an overseas student on a student visa, you have responsibilities to:

- Satisfy your student visa conditions;
- Meet the terms of the written agreement with your provider;

- Inform your provider within seven days if you change your address;
- Maintain satisfactory course progress;
- As attendance in your course is recorded and monitored, follow your provider's attendance policy; and
- If you are under 18, maintain your approved accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements as directed by your provider.

*Please note that students of New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School are required to maintain the conditions listed in this section for the duration of their period of study, irrespective of their age.*

### **3. About New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School**

New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School is located in Armidale, in the State of New South Wales, Australia, on 50 hectares of land positioned on the rural outskirts of the city. Armidale is renowned for its education institutions which include the highly respected University of New England.

The School is the oldest non-government school in northern NSW and was established in 1895 as a boarding school for girls by Miss Florence Green.

In time, more land was bought and an extensive building program was implemented to provide facilities for increasing enrolments and educational needs. Miss Green sold the school in 1907 to the Anglican Diocese of Grafton and Armidale.

In 2007 another chapter in the history of NEGS/SJC was written when the assets and liabilities of the school were sold by the Anglican Diocese to a private company, Vercot Limited. The School is now run by NEGS Limited, a company limited by guarantee. It now functions with membership of the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales.

Day students have been enrolled since 1970 and there are a growing number of overseas students. In earlier years, all the enrolments were from New South Wales and Queensland but today the school has students from all states of Australia. The total enrolment is approximately 260 students, including 60 in the Junior School, with some 50% of the population being boarders. Boarding is offered to girls only from grades 6 – 12.

While NEGS/SJC has a non-selective enrolment policy, students applying for placement should provide evidence of the completion of an International English Language Test (or approved alternative) and evidence of satisfactory conduct and attendance at the student's previous school.

St John's Junior School is co-educational, sharing all the school facilities such as the Equestrian Centre, Library, Computer Centre, Dining Room and Chapel.

### **Mission Statement**

New England Girls' School and St John's Co-Educational Junior School aim to develop accomplished, educated individuals with active, passionate and creative minds.

Respect and compassion for others and the courage to act on their beliefs are developed within a Christian ethos.

### **4. Educational Standards**

NEGS/SJC is contemporary, visionary and globally focussed, preparing its students to embrace the challenges that await them beyond their school years.

The educational program commences in the co-educational junior school where students are equipped with sound learning foundations. The educational journey matures through developing the values of self-worth, respect, integrity, and faith. Each student is special and the aim is to develop their full potential in a caring environment where they love to learn, enjoy challenges and contribute to the wider community. The partnership between staff, parents and the student encourages each student to grow intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially, emotionally, physically and creatively.

The School acknowledges the privilege of guiding each young person towards personal achievement in an environment where students are secure in positive relationships and eager to extend the boundaries of knowledge and performance. The holistic approach to education equips students to meet the challenges of change and grasp the opportunities it presents.

NEGS/SJC aims to develop and adopt world class programs in Girls/Boys' Education complemented by an authentic Gifted and Talented program.

At NEGS/SJC the secondary curriculum includes a co-operative program (Years 11 and 12) with other non-government schools which has ensured the ability to offer the broadest possible curriculum leading to the external Higher School Certificate examination.

## **5. Marketing and Recruitment**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will market its programs with integrity, professionalism and accuracy. Students will be given accurate information about the courses offered and the facilities provided.

Recruitment of students will be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner at all times, consistent with the requirements of The National Code, (July 2007). Appropriately qualified staff will assess the extent to which the applicant is likely to achieve the outcomes of the course based on the applicant's level of English and previous academic results.

NEGS/SJC will not actively recruit a student from another provider prior to the student completing six months of the student's principal course.

## **6. Information for Students**

This document provides a thorough overview of the School's policy and entry requirements. Parents or Guardians are encouraged to contact the Enrolments Department for further assistance prior to or during their daughter's/son's application for registration into NEGS/SJC.

Students interested in applying for entry to NEGS/SJC are provided with comprehensive information and advice on:

- the School's Code of Practice, policies and general procedural information;
- information on course fees and what is included in those fees;
- information regarding the Higher School Certificate and University entry requirements;
- copies of the School's prospectus;
- the accommodation policy including advice on guidelines and requirements for student guardians;
- a copy of the ESOS Framework, also available electronically at:  
[http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS\\_FrameWork\\_pdf.pdf](http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS_FrameWork_pdf.pdf)

## **7. Refunds**

**(see Section B, Part 5.4)**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School has a fair and transparent refund policy. Please note any refunds will be made in Australian currency.

## **8. Student Grievances**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School has a fair and transparent process for dealing with student grievances. In the event that such grievances cannot be resolved internally, NEGS/SJC will at no charge, advise students of the appropriate bodies from which they can seek further assistance (see Section B Part 8: Complaints and Appeals Policy).

## **9. Student Services**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will ensure that students are provided with:

- orientation when they commence
- advice on School policy relating to their accommodation and welfare
- periodical information about their academic progress
- information regarding entry to further study
- ongoing access to counselling services as required
- advice on the designated overseas student officer and other staff of NEGS/SJC who will assist the student
- to adjust to life and study in Australia and to offer assistance and advice in the event of problems
- advice on School's "Grievance Policy – Student/Parent/Caregiver".

## **10. Privacy of Personal Information**

Your privacy is important to us. New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School respects your rights to privacy and abides by the National Privacy Principles laid down in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000. The School's Privacy Policy is posted on NEGS/SJC website or is available on request from the Principal's Personal Assistant.

Information is collected during your enrolment in order to meet our obligations under the ESOS Act and the National Code 2007 to ensure student compliance with the conditions of their visas and their obligations under Australian immigration laws generally. The authority to collect this information is contained in the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, the Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 and the National Code of Practice 2007. Information collected about you during your enrolment can be provided, in certain circumstances, to the Australian Government and designated authorities and, if relevant, the Tuition Assurance Scheme and the ESOS Assurance Fund Manager. In other instances information collected during your enrolment can be disclosed without your consent where authorised or required by Australian law.

## **11. Education Agents**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School maintains commercial relations with a limited number of overseas agents who have been identified on the basis of their integrity, honesty and commitment to placing students in the appropriate setting. The names of these agents are listed on the School's website.

## **12. Sanction**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School acknowledges that if it should not meet the obligations of The National Code of Practice or supporting regulatory requirements, it may have its registration as a provider withdrawn.

# SECTION B – GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

## 1. Accreditation

NEGS/SJC is run by NEGS Limited, a public company limited by guarantee, and is a registered company under the Corporations Act (2001). The School is accredited and registered with the NSW Board of Studies to offer courses of study from Kindergarten through to Year 12. NEGS/SJC is registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). The CRICOS Provider Number is 02945A.

### 1.1 Teacher Registration and Suitability to Work with Children

All teachers at New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School are registered teachers. This means that they hold full registration, provisional registration or permission to teach from the New South Wales Institute of Teachers.

As part of School's Child Protection responsibilities, all staff and those who assist on a voluntary basis complete the 'New Working With Children Check' as mandated by the Office of the Children's Guardian under Child Guardian Act 2000 for people working in Child Related Employment.

[www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au)

## 2. Courses

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School provides a clear and coordinated academic pathway for boys (Kindergarten to Year 6) and girls (Kindergarten to Year 12) ranging in age from approximately 5 to 18 years. The School seeks to implement a broad yet balanced curriculum and students are assisted towards achieving their full potential through the provision of appropriate teaching and learning experiences. Programs for the Gifted and Talented are complemented by support mechanisms for those students experiencing learning difficulties. Our teachers are highly qualified in their subject areas and are supported by a high level of professional development. Technology is readily integrated into teaching programs.

Vocational Education courses are offered in Years 11 and 12 and are able to be undertaken as a Higher School Certificate course as well as providing credit towards a nationally recognised qualification within the Australian Qualifications Framework. Such courses are delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or a school in partnership with an RTO. For NEGS/SJC, the partner RTO is the NSW Association of Independent Schools (AIS).

Details of all the secondary courses offered are contained in the relevant handbooks available from the Director of Studies.

The School Year is divided into two semesters each of two terms. There are two main reporting periods (semester 1 and semester 2), with the academic year commencing late in January and concluding early in December. Vacation periods occur between each term.

Detailed academic reports are generally issued to parents at the completion of each semester. External credentials (Year 10 School Certificate and Year 12 Higher School Certificate) are issued by the NSW Board of Studies and may be required as documentary proof by post-secondary school institutions.

In all year levels, the basic requirements of all overseas students include:

- Satisfactory completion of all coursework
- Ability to undertake the academic program
- 100% attendance to classes except in the case of illness or approved absence. Under condition 8202 of the student visa, student attendance is closely monitored. Where attendance falls below 80% in a reporting period (one semester) or a student records five

consecutive days absent without approval, NEGS/SJC is required to notify DIAC. Please note that lateness will be included in this attendance quota. Students will be informed in writing and advised of the appeals process which they may access. They have 20 days in which to lodge this appeal. In limited cases, NEGS/SJC may not report attendance breaches exceeding 80% to the DIAC where compelling and compassionate circumstances exist and where the student will still achieve 70% attendance for that reporting period.

## **2.1 Academic Standards and Pathways**

NEGS/SJC offer the following registered courses – the duration includes the vacation periods in each school year:

- 063620F Primary School Courses (Years K-6) 364 Weeks
- 063621E Junior Secondary (Years 7-10) 208 Weeks
- 063622D Senior Secondary (Years 11-12) 104 Weeks

## **2.2 Student Suitability**

The Head of Junior School, the Deputy Principal (Senior School), the Director of Studies, the relevant Year Advisor and the Careers Officer are available to assist overseas students with the selection of suitable subjects and courses.

NEGS/SJC sets and expects high standards in its academic program. The course undertaken in Years 7-10 culminates in students receiving the New South Wales Board of Studies 'Record of Achievement' (ROSA). Courses in the final two years at NEGS (Years 11 and 12) lead to the award of the New South Wales Board of Studies 'Higher School Certificate' from which students may qualify for an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Courses for overseas students are full-time courses, which may be delivered on site at the School by face to face delivery in classrooms and other subject specific on-campus facilities. Alternatively, students will undertake Year 11 and 12 courses of study at two other non-government schools in Armidale through our combined line program and some VET courses will be delivered through Armidale College of Technical and Further Education (TAFE).

## **2.3 National Benchmark Standards**

National Benchmark Standards have been defined by the Ministerial Council of Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in the "National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century". NSW syllabuses contain a standards framework of outcomes at different years of schooling. The stages relate to years of schooling as follows:

- Early stage 1 Kindergarten
- Stage 1 Years 1 and 2
- Stage 2 Years 3 and 4
- Stage 3 Years 5 and 6
- Stage 4 Years 7 and 8
- Stage 5 Years 9 and 10
- Stage 6 Years 11 and 12

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 participate in an Australia-wide assessment program known as NAPLAN (National Assessment Plan – Literacy and Numeracy) each May.

Please note that for overseas students, the minimum age for entry to Australian Primary School Courses is six years. At NEGS/SJC, the minimum age of entry for boys and girls seeking entry to Kindergarten is 5 years of age by no later than 1<sup>st</sup> July in their year of entry.

## 2.4 Monitoring Course Progress

NEGS/SJC will 'systematically monitor students' course progress'. The School will be 'proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet their course progress requirements'. NEGS/SJC will 'report students, under Section 19 of the ESOS Act who have breached the course progress requirements' (National Code: Standard 10).

This will be achieved by:

- The School monitoring, recording and assessing the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled;
- The course progress of all students will be assessed at the end of each semester of enrolment by the relevant Year Advisor. In the case of newly-enrolled students the School will issue an interim report after one term of attendance;
- Students who have begun part way through a semester will be assessed after one full period of attendance;
- Satisfactory course progress will be measured against the level of achievement defined by the relevant National Benchmark Standards;
- Where a student is determined to be at risk of not achieving satisfactory progress in an assessment period, staff will meet the student to develop an intervention strategy for academic improvement. The intervention co-ordinator may include the Year Advisor, Head of House, Subject Teacher, Director of Studies and Head of Department. Intervention strategies might include:
  - additional supervised study periods
  - short term tutorial assistance
  - other strategies deemed appropriate.
- The provision for Parent/Teacher interviews either on a face-to-face basis or by electronic means;
- A copy of the student's improvement plan and progress reports will be forwarded to parents;
- If the student does not improve sufficiently academically and achieve satisfactory course progress by the end of the next assessment period, the School will advise the student in writing of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that she/he has 20 working days in which to access the school's appeals process;
- The School will notify DEEWR via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress where the student does not access the appeals process within 20 days; withdraws from that process; or, the appeals process results in favour of NEGS/SJC;

## 2.5 Completion (of Course) within the expected duration of study

NEGS/SJC will "monitor the enrolment load of students to ensure they complete the course within the duration specified in the CofE and do not exceed the allowable portion of on-line or distance learning". The School will only "enable students to extend the expected duration of study for the course through the issuing of a new CofE in limited circumstances (National Code Standard 9).

- As outlined in 2.3 above the School will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- The assessment of course progress at the end of each semester will include an assessment of whether the student's progress is such that they are expected to complete their course within the expected duration of the course.
- The School will only extend the duration of the student's study where there are compassionate or compelling circumstances; the student is involved in an intervention strategy as detailed in 2.3 above; or an approved deferment or suspension of study has

been granted in accordance with the School's "Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy".

- The student will undertake no more than 25% of the student's total course by distance and/or online learning.

## 2.6 Monitoring attendance

NEGS/SJC will "systematically monitor students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance". The School will be "proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet course attendance requirements" and will "report students under Section 19 of the ESOS Act who have breached the attendance requirements" (National Code Standard 11).

- Satisfactory course attendance at NEGS/SJC is defined as 95% of scheduled course contact hours;
- Student attendance is checked and recorded daily by the relevant Year Advisor and ongoing monitoring occurs on a regular basis. Students are counselled and warning letters are placed in the student file where breaches occur;
- Late arrival at School will be recorded and will be included in the monitoring process;
- Absences from school should be supported by a medical certificate, relevant correspondence from the student's parent or guardian or evidence that leave has been approved by the Principal;
- Absences from the School without approval will be recorded and investigated further;
- The satisfactory attendance threshold will be calculated using the equation of number of study days x contact hours x 20%. In this example, a student with 5 contact hours daily, enrolled in an 18 week semester, would attend their course of study for 90 hours (any period of exclusion from class for suspension will be included in student attendance calculations);
- Students at risk of breaching the School's attendance requirements will be counselled and offered necessary support when they have absences exceeding an 80% threshold during any assessment period;
- If the student's absences have exceeded the 80% threshold for the study period, NEGS/SJC will advise the student of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, after which the student has 20 days to access the School's appeal process unless mitigating circumstances exist;
- The School will notify DEEWR via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance where the student does not access the appeals process within 20 days; withdraws from that process, or, the appeals process results in favour of NEGS/SJC;
- If a student is assessed as having failed to reach the 80% threshold for attendance; the Principal will determine whether a suspension of studies is appropriate in the interests of the School's "Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy";
- If a student does not obtain a suspension of studies under the School's "Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy", and falls below the 80% threshold, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance (breach of visa condition 8202) will occur as outlined previously.

The following definitions are provided to assist families/students further understand Section 2.2-2.4.

1. Compassionate or compelling circumstances - circumstances beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student's progress through a course. These could include:
  - serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
  - bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
  - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on their studies
  - traumatic experience which has impacted on the student
  - where NEGS/SJC was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit

- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.
2. For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the student's progress through a course.
  3. Expected duration – the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full-time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.
  4. School day – any day on which NEGS/SJC has scheduled course contact hours. Students are advised of Term Dates for each Year well in advance. It should be clearly understood therefore, that students are required to attend from the first scheduled day of each term and to attend for the whole of the last day of each term.

### **3. Entry Requirements for Overseas Students**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will consider enrolment applications from students wishing to apply for a student visa, subject to compliance with conditions set by the School, and with legislative requirements of the State of New South Wales and the Commonwealth of Australia.

Entry into any course is subject to the assessment of the student by the school. In line with The National Code: Standard 12, course credit may only be offered as outlined below:

- For students transferring from interstate into Year levels from K-10, the school does not offer course credit and entry into any course will be subject to the assessment of each student by NEGS/SJC.
- For students transferring from interstate in Year 11 and the beginning of year 12, the student may receive course credit for units completed based on the guidelines provided by the New South Wales Board of Studies.

Applications from Overseas Students are processed according to established policy and procedures. All of the programs at NEGS/SJC are conducted in the English language. All applicants should note that if their English language proficiency is below that outlined below, they may be required to undertake an intensive English language course (at their own cost) before beginning a registered course at NEGS/SJC. The student must be aged at least six years to qualify for entry to Australian courses. Suitability for entry will also include an evaluation of reports from previous schools in the applicant's home country.

The Director of Studies, Head of Junior School, Deputy Principal and Careers Advisor are available to assist overseas student with the selection of suitable subjects and courses.

To ensure to the best of our ability that overseas students who do not have English as their first language are not impeded by English language ability incompatible with their nominated courses and to assist them to enjoy the full benefits of School life, the following entry criteria apply.

#### **3.1 Entry Requirements Years 10-12**

Overseas Students seeking to enter Years 10-12 are required to:

1. Complete and return the NEGS/SJC 'Application for Enrolment – International Students' and Visa Compliancy Information' forms with the nominated Registration Fee signed by their parent/s or legal guardian. This does not guarantee a place for the student. It does confirm you have read and understood the general conditions of enrolment at NEGS/SJC and that all questions have been answered honestly and with full disclosure.
2. Supply the School with a certified true copy of school reports from the previous two years together with an explanation of reporting procedures applied at the student's current or most recent school.

3. Where academic reports do not record student behaviour, attendance or commitment to studies, please supply a character reference from the student's Principal or Director of Studies. Cost of any translation of documents not in the English language will be incurred by the applicant.

4. Supply NEGS/SJC with the original certificate of result of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test (Academic Module), an internationally recognised and accepted test, which measures proficiency in the English language (see IELTS web site for details: <http://www.ielts.org/default.aspx>) The Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) test is also accepted by NEGS/SJC – see details and qualifying standards below.

5. Once all information is provided with the Application for Registration and subject to vacancies in the year level requested, a personal interview will be arranged for the student at the School in the company of her parent/guardian at which the applicant will be required to meet with the Principal and complete as requested, an assessment conducted by suitably qualified School Staff or another designated agency. Some students may be required to improve their language proficiency before being accepted to commence their study at NEGS/SJC. In the event the student has not previously had the opportunity to do so, a comprehensive tour of School facilities and boarding accommodation and an introduction to boarding staff (if relevant) will also be provided.

6. If currently studying in Australia, the applicant will be required to present his/her passport for the copying of the photo identification page, student visa page and arrival date stamp page as applicable and evidence of current compulsory Overseas Student Health Scheme membership number and, expiry date of cover and evidence of any previous student visa/s held for study in Australia at time of registration.

7. Where a student is already enrolled in the same course at another Australian Provider, restrictions apply where the student wishes to transfer prior to completing six months of their principal course. A 'Letter of Release' from the current school, together with documentation noted above, must be provided (National Code: Standard 7) to New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School. That letter of release should also provide evidence that:

- the student had demonstrated a commitment to studies in that course
- the student had a good attendance record for that course
- the student had paid all fees for that course.

8. New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will not knowingly enrol students from another Provider unless exceptional circumstances exist as stated in The National Code: Standard 7.1. A request for enrolment from a student transferring from another provider to NEGS/SJC will not be accepted without the authorisation of that student's parent/s or legal guardian/s (National Code 7.3:b-i).

9. Applicant's applying off-shore may be eligible to complete an assessment at the Australian Education Assessment Service (AEAS) office in their country in order to receive a provisional offer of a place. Details of AEAS test centres may also be found at the AEAS web site: [www.aeas.com.au](http://www.aeas.com.au). It should be noted that this assessment will not exclude the need for a formal interview and diagnostic testing following the applicant's arrival at the School. Students undertaking the AEAS Assessment should achieve a minimum total of 60 out of 100, including not less than 12/20 in each of the five assessment criteria.

10. It must be noted that following the interview and assessment, NEGS/SJC may recommend a year level other than the year requested on the enrolment application as more appropriate for the student. If this recommendation is accepted by the student/parents, then no change to the School's recommendation will be considered after the student commences.

11. On receipt of a written offer of a place at NEGS/SJC, return the Enrolment Agreement and other specified documents, duly read and signed by the Parent(s) or legal Guardian(s), accompanied by the nominated non-refundable Enrolment Fee, and any other fees and charges invoiced at that time prior to commencement as outlined in the letter of offer and invoice of pre-enrolment fees and charges.

12. The balance of the year's fees and charges will be payable by the due date as outlined in the letter of acceptance.
13. All fees and charges will be payable on a semester basis in advance thereafter.

The Principal or his representative considering the recommendation of the Head of School may at his discretion waive Points 3 or 7 above.

Details of the IELTS testing and locations of test centres may be found at:

<http://www.ielts.org/default.aspx>

The School accepts the following results of the IELTS Test:

|                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| For entry to Year 11 | 4.5 for each criteria or higher |
| For entry to Year 10 | 4.5 for each criteria or higher |

### 3.2 Entry Requirements K-9

Overseas Students seeking to enter Years 7-9 or St John's Junior School (Years K – 6) are required to:

1. Complete and return the NEGS/SJC 'Application for Enrolment – International Students' and Visa Compliancy Information' forms with the nominated Registration Fee signed by their parent/s or legal guardian. This does not guarantee a place for the student. It does confirm you have read and understood the general conditions of enrolment at NEGS/SJC and that all questions have been answered honestly and with full disclosure.
2. Supply the School with a certified true copy of school reports from the previous two years together with an explanation of reporting procedures applied at the student's current or most recent school.
3. Where academic reports do not record student behaviour, attendance or commitment to studies, please supply a character reference from the student's Principal or Director of Studies. Cost of any translation of documents not in the English language will be incurred by the applicant.
4. Supply NEGS/SJC with the original certificate of result of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test (Academic Module), an internationally recognised and accepted test, which measures proficiency in the English language (see IELTS web site for details: <http://www.ielts.org/default.aspx>) The Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) test is also accepted by NEGS/SJC – see details and qualifying standards below.
5. Where a student is already enrolled in the same course at another Australian Provider, restrictions apply where the student wishes to transfer prior to completing six months of their principal course. A 'Letter of Release' from the current school, together with documentation noted above, must be provided (National Code: Standard 7) to NEGS/SJC. That letter of release should also provide evidence that:
  - the student had demonstrated a commitment to studies in that course
  - the student had a good attendance record for that course
  - the student had paid all fees for that course.
6. NEGS/SJC will not knowingly enrol students from another Provider unless exceptional circumstances exist as stated in The National Code: Standard 7.1. A request for enrolment from a student transferring from another provider to NEGS/SJC will not be accepted without the authorisation of that student's parent/s or legal guardian/s (National Code 7.3:b:1).
7. If currently studying in Australia, applicant's will be required to present their passport for the

copying of the identification page, student visa page and arrival date stamp page as applicable and evidence of current compulsory Overseas Student Health Scheme membership number and expiry date of cover at time of registration.

8. Applicant's applying off-shore may be eligible to complete an assessment at the Australian Education Assessment Service (AEAS) office in their country in order to receive a provisional offer of a place. Details of AEAS test centres may also be found at the AEAS web site: [www.aeas.com.au](http://www.aeas.com.au). It should be noted that this assessment will not exclude the need for a formal interview and diagnostic testing following the applicant's arrival at the School. Students undertaking the AEAS Assessment should achieve a minimum total of 60 out of 100, including not less than 12/20 in each of the five assessment criteria.
9. It must be noted that following the interview and assessment, NEGS/SJC may recommend a year level other than the year requested on the enrolment application as more appropriate for the student. If this recommendation is accepted by the student/parents, then no change to NEGS/SJC's recommendation will be considered after the student commences.
10. On receipt of a written offer of a place at NEGS/SJC, return the Enrolment Agreement and other specified documents, duly read and signed by the Parent(s) or legal Guardian(s), accompanied by the nominated non-refundable Enrolment Fee, and any other fees and charges invoiced at that time prior to commencement as outlined in the letter of offer and invoice of pre-enrolment fees and charges.
11. The balance of the year's fees and charges will be payable by the due date as outlined in the letter of acceptance.

The Principal may at his discretion waive the assessment noted in Point 3 and 6 above.

#### **4. Student Care and Accommodation**

Where students under the age of 18 years are not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, NEGS Limited as the registered provider (New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School) 'will ensure the arrangements made to protect the personal safety and social well-being of those students are appropriate'.

It is the preference of NEGS/SJC, for overseas students to live with a parent or approved relative, or attend the School as full-time boarders. In exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the Principal, permission may be granted for an overseas student to live with a home stay family. Historically, NEGS/SJC families have arranged home stay families via their own network of contacts in the Armidale district.

With the implementation of the reviewed National Code, July 2007 it has also become necessary to ensure that full-time boarding students have access to a Armidale district based guardian to act as a representative for absent parents and if necessary to facilitate the provision of an approved home stay for weekend or vacation leave with an approved home stay family where students are unable to return home for vacations. The School must also ensure that parent appointed unrelated guardians and home stay families also meet the same high standards.

Migration Regulations clause 560.225 and Public Interest Criterion 4012A, state that before a student visa can be granted to a student under 18 years of age (and who will not be accompanied by their parents or an approved family relative during their intended stay in Australia), the Education Provider must provide a signed statement to the Minister, confirming that appropriate arrangements have been made for the student's care, accommodation, support and general welfare during their stay in Australia.

The preferred model of NEGS/SJC is to completely separate the function of guardian and accommodation provider (home stay family). **The reason for this is quite simple, there is a conflict of interest if a person or company has a financial interest in where a student resides. The guardian should therefore be totally independent and not linked in any way to**

## **the accommodation provider.**

After considering a range of options and given the absence of accredited home stay providers in the Armidale district, NEGS Limited has made the decision to develop a home stay directory of families who currently or in the past have strong affiliations with the School. We believe this strategy will ensure compliance with Migration Regulations clause 560.225 and Public Interest Criterion 4012A.

The families selected must be able to:

- Satisfy the Principal of NEGS/SJC that they are able to provide a safe, secure and positive environment for international students enrolled at the School.
- Meet the expectations of and are approved by the parents of international students enrolled at NEGS/SJC.
- Provide a range of appropriate experiences for international students who choose the home stay option.
- Meet the conditions determined by DIAC.

While Enrolments staff will provide guidance on the processes involved in arranging home stay or guardians for students, families should deal directly with the relevant families who will invoice fees directly to the family.

## **4.1 Procedures for enrolling families**

- Students applying for entry to Years K – 6 must reside with either their Parent/s or a close family relative over the age of 21 years and approved by the Principal of NEGS/SJC.
- For students enrolled in Years 7-12, it is the preference of New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School that an overseas student is either a boarder at the School (Years 7-12 only) or residing in the Armidale district, with her parent/s or a close family relative (as defined by DIAC) over the age of 21 years and approved by the Principal of NEGS/SJC.
- Boarding students are under the care of experienced staff who have all completed suitability checks as per Section B: 1.1.
- Boarding students are housed in excellent accommodation with senior boarders (Years 11 and 12) generally accommodated in single rooms. Boarders enjoy a liberal weekend leave arrangement while nutritionally balanced meals are provided during term time complemented by the provision of appropriate pastoral care and counselling support.

## **4.2 External home stay providers**

If it is proposed that a student in Years 7-12 will be residing with any person other than the parent/s, legal custodian/s or a close family relative (as defined by DIAC) over the age of 21 years, a request should be forwarded in writing to the Principal of the School providing the name and contact details of the proposed guardian for approval.

- It is expected that such person/s will be a resident of Australia, fluent in the English language and willing and able to represent the student's parents as required by NEGS/SJC.
- It is expected that such person/s is aware that duty of care of the student living with them extends to designated School vacation periods for the term outlined on the Student's confirmation of enrolment certificate except where the student returns home to his parent/s during said vacations.

Recognising the importance of child protection and to ensure that the School is compliant with the Regulations, special conditions exist for students not living with a parent or approved family relative:

- The nominated guardian and home stay host (who may be the same person) and all

permanent residents of the home over the age of 18 years will be required to provide evidence of suitability for working with children by completing the 'Working with Children Check of the New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People'. A home inspection is also required to ensure the student's living conditions meet with guidelines of the Department of Education International Student Centre.

- The School will issue the Student Care Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements (CAAW) letter following the successful completion of the suitability check and site inspection.
- As the boarding facilities are closed during vacation periods, boarding students are required to travel home or to arrange home stay hosts and accommodation approved by NEGS/SJC. This will be the responsibility of the student's parents. The cost is not covered by the tuition and boarding fees charged by New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School.

### **4.3 Home Stay Guidelines (if boarding is not available)**

Where students are in the care of a home stay host or living with any category of 'unrelated guardian/carer' the International Student Centre of the Department of Education, New South Wales provides the following home stay guidelines and expectations:

- The home must be clean and comfortable and the home stay hosts / guardians must reside at the Home stay premises at all times
- Each student is to have their own room, bed, desk or if a shared room no more than 2 persons per room (same sex) each of whom must have separate bed, desk
- Students are not to share rooms with host family members and sharing arrangements will only be provided if the parents of the Student(s) so request
- Students are to be given a key to the home or arrangements made so that the student can gain access to the home at any time
- There must be adequate lighting for study purposes
- There must be heating in winter and some means of cooling in summer
- There must be access to shared bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers (10 minutes)
- There must be access to kitchen and laundry facilities
- There must be use of shared living areas of home
- In most instances, the Home stay Host is to provide 2 meals a day on weekdays and 3 meals on weekends and, in providing meals, the Home stay Host must be aware of and take account of cultural differences;
- House rules are to be discussed and explained to the Student, (including friends visiting, use of phone and incoming calls, cleaning of room or other household tasks, meal times and rules for behaviour such as going out and times for arriving home, manners and courtesy)
- Use of telephone and/or computer facilities are to be at students own expense
- Personal items and their insurance to be at the Student's own risk
- There being reasonable insurance cover by the Home stay Host in respect of the Home stay Premises;
- Students may change Home stay Premises only in certain circumstances. Examples might include:
  - if there is a medical reason to do so
  - a request from parents of the Student or
  - the placement in the particular Home stay Premises is not compatible, in the reasonable opinion of the Student.

NEGS/SJC may seek feedback from students living in Home stay to ensure they are happy and that their home stay host is providing care and service which meets the expectations of their family and the School.

Where students are living with a non-related guardian or home stay host, families will be required to complete the New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School 'Student Residential Agreement' signed by Parent and the nominated Guardian/Home Stay host. This

agreement outlines the School's expectations while ensuring the guardian/home stay host understands their obligations to both your son/daughter and the School in terms of representing you at School activities such as Parent-Teacher interviews and that they are responsible for ensuring the student in their care maintains regular attendance at school, appropriate behaviour at school or at home and appropriate performance and participation in general school life.

Home stay hosts should be aware that while the Principal provides a letter to DIAC stating he has approved the care, accommodation and welfare arrangements for a student, this is on the understanding that:

- The guardian or home stay host is responsible for the student in their care for the entire period reflected on the Confirmation of Enrolment Certificate while ever the student is in Australia. This includes the vacation periods and may include the period between the end of one course and the commencement of the next if the student remains in Australia.
- While NEGS/SJC maintains accurate contact details for each student's family and home stay host in the Armidale district, it is expected that home stay hosts will ensure they maintain current contact details for the students in their care.

#### **4.4 Students living with a parent or close family relative**

Where the parent/s of a student has been granted a Guardian Visa (or similar) for the purpose of caring for a student attending this school as a day student, it is essential that:

- the parent/s is residing with that student at all times.
- the nominated guardian must hold an appropriate visa enabling them to remain in Australia until the student is 18 years of age.
- NEGS/SJC will require a copy of the parent's passport photo and visa page prior to the student commencing.
- NEGS/SJC must be advised of the student's and the parent's residential details prior to the student commencing and thereafter within seven days of any change in these details.

Students moving to a new address, with School approval, must inform the School in writing, forwarding this advice to the Enrolments Office within seven days of taking up residence at that new address. During the enrolment process, students will be asked to complete the 'Visa Compliancy Information' form which draws attention to this and other important visa compliance conditions.

If a place is offered to a student with 'boarding status', NEGS/SJC will only consider a change of status at any time after the student has commenced unless the student's parent/s or an approved close family relative is to reside permanently in the Armidale district.

### **5. Formalisation of Enrolment**

**(National Code: Standard 3)**

The School must enter into a written agreement with the student, signed or otherwise accepted by that student (or the student's parent/s or legal parent/s or legal guardian if the student is under 18 years of age), concurrently with or prior to accepting course money from the parent or legal guardian. No course monies or other payments can be accepted unless they are accompanied by or sent after the School has received the signed 'Enrolment Agreement' (Parent and School Copies), and "Acceptance of Written Agreement and Pre-Enrolment Invoice" from the parent/s or legal guardians.

#### **5.1 Financial Administration**

NEGS Limited is subject to auditing under the requirements of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977*. The School will therefore keep all necessary records that would allow the auditor

to be satisfied about the sources of all monies received for providing courses to overseas students and the ways in which the monies are spent.

## **5.2 Payment Options**

NEGS/SJC requests all Fees, Levies and charges including Enrolment Fees, Tuition Fees and Levies and Boarding Fees be paid in Australian currency. Refunds will be paid in Australian currency where possible.

The School provides a range of options for the payment of fees and charges. You may pay your fees using cheque, credit card (Visa or Mastercard), BPay, International Bank Draft or by direct deposit. Please refer to the School fee statement for details concerning payment of fees and conditions.

## **5.3 Fee Schedule for Overseas Students**

School Fees are reviewed each year. The Board has endeavoured to set fees which will cover, as far as possible, all expenses except uniforms, laptop computer, books and other incidental expenses (eg. equestrian activities, excursions and private music tuition).

The Fee Schedule is available on request from the Enrolments Office and is attached as an appendix to this handbook. While it is expected that there will be no change to the fee structure during the course of the year, the Board of NEGS Limited reserves the right to make alterations in the event of unforeseen substantial changes in running costs. In addition, parents should be aware fees will increase from one year to the next.

Sibling discounts apply where brothers/sisters are attending the School at the same time. These are outlined in the fee schedule.

The tuition fees for overseas students are higher than the fees for Australian resident students because NEGS/SJC is not entitled to receive government grants for overseas students. There are also additional administration costs for overseas students.

Boarding Fees are not included in our total course costs outlined on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students – CRICOS.

Overseas Students are required to pay a registration fee and an enrolment fee as outlined on the invoice of pre-enrolment fees and charges. They may also be required to pay one half (a semester) of the annual tuition fee or in the case of a boarding student, one half (a semester) tuition and one half (a semester) of the annual boarding fee prior to commencement as outlined in the invoice of pre-enrolment fees.

Overseas students are required to pay the semester tuition and the semester boarding fees if the student is to attend as a boarder, by the end of the first week of Term 1 and by the end of the first week of term 3 each year. Any other sundry charges will be payable by the due date outlined on the monthly invoices.

## **5.4 Refund Policy (National Code – Standard 3)**

This section sets out the School's policy about refunding fees, describing conditions for eligibility and guidelines for applying for a refund. Please read this section carefully prior to entering into any contract with the School or making any payments in relation to a registered course.

All applications for a full or partial refund of course money should be made in writing to the Principal of the School by the person/s who has the signed agreement with NEGS/SJC. The Principal should receive the refund application within seven days of either the student's failure to start the course or withdrawal from the course. Payment of any refund due will be made within four weeks of receiving

the written application for refund. If a refund is due, but no written application is received within two months of the agreed starting date or withdrawal date of the student, a cheque for the amount owing in Australian currency will be sent to the person who has a signed agreement with NEGS/SJC, at their last known address.

If there are exceptional circumstances for a student's failure to start a course or withdrawal from a course, a written explanation of the circumstances, with supporting documentary evidence (if applicable), should be made to the Principal. In some cases, the Principal may approve a greater amount of refund than defined below. Each individual case will be decided on merit.

Unless there are approved exceptional circumstances, enrolment costs and course money paid to the School will be refunded in the following manner:

#### 5.4.1 Registration Fee

The Registration Fee paid with each Application for Registration is non-refundable and does not guarantee a place at NEGS/SJC.

#### 5.4.2 Enrolment Fee

Overseas students are charged an Enrolment Fee payable upon acceptance of an offer of a place. These fees have a non-refundable component which is currently set at approximately one sixth of the Year 12 Annual Tuition Fee. These amounts will be refunded in full only where the student produces evidence that the application made by the student for a student visa has been rejected by DIAC. The non-refundable component is likely to increase in the future as insurance against unpaid fees or to pay the cost of airfares home in unforeseen circumstances.

#### 5.4.3 Tuition and Boarding Fees

Overseas students may be required to pay one half (one semester) of the tuition fee or in the case of a boarding student, one half (one semester) tuition and one half (one semester) boarding fee prior to commencement as outlined in the letter of offer and invoice of pre-enrolment fees and charges. This payment will generally only be refunded in the event that a visa application is rejected (ESOS Act Amendment: Section 28: 1 January 2007). A small amount may be retained to cover administration costs.

Overseas students are required to pay one half (one semester) tuition fees and the one half (one semester) boarding fees if the student is to attend as a boarder, seven days after the issue of the first invoice of the year. Any other sundry charges will be payable by the due date as outlined on the monthly invoices.

This payment will only be refunded in full where the student produces evidence that the application made by the student for a student visa has been rejected by DIAC. If the student cancels their enrolment prior to commencement at NEGS/SJC for any reason other than Visa rejection, notice is required in accordance with the Enrolment Agreement signed by the Parent/s or legal guardian/s. In the event of insufficient notice, then one (1) quarter of the annual tuition fee or in the case of a boarding student, one quarter of the annual tuition and one quarter of the annual boarding fee will be retained and the balance refunded. If the student cancels after commencement the Tuition Fees will be refunded on a pro-rata basis, with one term's notice required. (See 'Enrolment Agreement: Sections 3 and 4).

Where a student's enrolment is cancelled for any of the following reasons, a cancellation fee of 100% of the current semester fee is applicable.

- Failure to maintain satisfactory course progress (visa condition 8202)
- Failure to maintain satisfactory attendance (visa condition 8202)
- Failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532). Alternatively, schools may decide that this will not be a condition for cancellation of enrolment
- Failure to pay course fees
- Any serious behavioural breach identified as resulting in grounds for expulsion from the

School community as outlined in NEGS/St John's Co-Educational Junior School Family Handbook (Section 6 – Rules, Procedures and Policies) and in the Student Diary (Sections on Bullying, Safety and Schools Rules and Use of the Diary).

Any default by the school will be covered by the provisions of the ESOS Act 2000 (amended 2010) and the ESOS Regulations 2001. These include:

- If for any reason the school is unable to offer a course, a full refund of fees paid will be made within 14 days of notification of course cancellation.
- If for any reason the school is unable to continue offering a course after commencement, a full refund of fees paid will be made within 14 days of notification of course cancellation.

This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

#### 5.4.4 Overseas Student Health Cover Levy

It is a condition of the Student Visa that overseas students maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). This should be arranged prior to the student commencing studies at NEGS/SJC and must be maintained for the period covered by their visa. Medibank Private is the preferred provider for OSHC for the School.

The School is able to arrange Overseas Student Health Cover on behalf of the student in advance. Medibank Private will provide each student with a membership card, clearly indicating that the student is covered by the OSHC. The cost will be invoiced to each family prior to their child's commencement at NEGS/SJC.

- New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School recommends whole of visa length cover to eliminate the need for students to re-register each year and ensure that students will not have to pay any premium increase for the length of their visa.
- It is the responsibility of the student's family to seek a refund from the medical insurance authority in the event the student leaves the School prior to the completion of his course or visa expiry.

## **5.5 Summary of Fees and Charges**

**(All fees, levies and charges are payable in Australian Currency)**

The attached appendix, titled, "Summary of Fees Schedule", details the current fee schedule for overseas students.

#### Miscellaneous Charges:

Years 9-10 Open High School Courses - Charges set annually by the Department of Education and Training) Year 11 and 12 TVET, Open High School and Community Languages Courses - charges set annually by the Department of Education and Training.

**Please note:** the Tuition Fees and Levies and Boarding Fees do not cover the cost of uniforms, laptop computer, equestrian activities, textbooks, stationery, boarding pocket money or excursions. Pocket money is at the parent/s discretion. Parents must take into consideration extra costs for accommodation and care during term holidays if the student is not returning home during vacations, air travel to and from Australia and any additional health costs above the Overseas Students Health Cover mandatory to the student visa issue.

**It should also be noted that overseas students do not qualify for free travel to and from school under the New South Wales 'School Student Transport Scheme'.**

A Uniform list may be obtained from the Enrolments Office. Prices may vary as new and pre-owned uniform items are available for purchase.

## **6. Student Support Services**

*New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School 'undertakes to support students to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of their course' (The National Code: Standard 6).*

### **6.1 Orientation on arrival**

On arrival in Armidale students are met at the airport, railway station or coach terminal. Orientation will be organised by the Overseas Liaison Officer (OSLO), Enrolments Registrar, Year Advisor, Head of Boarding and School Sister on arrival at NEGS/SJC. A student "buddy" is identified and will also be involved in the orientation program.

### **6.2 Assistance and information about academic progress**

- On arrival at NEGS/SJC overseas students will have their English language assessed by qualified staff. If necessary, they will be offered additional ESL support services.
- Private tutoring is available and can be organised through the relevant Year Advisor. It is normally conducted on the school premises following the cessation of daily classes.
- Parent-Teacher evenings are scheduled during the school year allowing parents and students to meet with staff to discuss their progress formally.
- School reports are issued twice yearly, with interim reports also issued mid-semester in some year levels.
- Students are encouraged to meet with their classroom teacher, Year Advisor, Tutor Support Person or specific Heads of Department for short-term advice and assistance.

### **6.3 Information regarding entry to further study**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School maintains a dedicated Careers Centre. Our mission is to provide girls and parents with the best information, knowledge and skills to plan future careers and tertiary training.

### **6.4 Ongoing counselling as required in relation to health and family matters**

- The School Chaplains, Year Advisors, Tutor Support Staff, Mentors and classroom teachers are all available to provide pastoral support to our boys/ girls.
- A qualified nursing sister is available to provide on-site support during the school day.
- NEGS/SJC is located a short distance from the Armidale Hospital for access to emergency medical assistance 24 hours a day.
- Boarding Students also have access to a local General Practitioner, dental and other health services. (Please note, there may be additional payment required for these services not covered by their Overseas Student Health Cover.)
- Staff are available to assist and processes are in place where a student wishes to lodge a complaint or appeal against unjust treatment. This will be discussed by the Principal (or his representative) during the enrolment process.
- Emergency procedures are displayed prominently in the boarding houses and are also located at strategic locations around the School.
- Study Skills advice is a segment of the Tutor Support Program while specific short courses may be offered during the school year. Some of these may incur a small cost to the

student.

## 6.5 Serious Incidents

- In the event of a student being involved in a critical incident the School has a documented “Critical Incident Policy” which is activated in the event of major emergencies, on or off campus.
- All external excursions require a current risk assessment to minimize the possibility of a critical incident occurring.
- College employees undertake regular professional development to ensure they are able to evaluate activities undertaken by NEGS/SJC students and able to respond according to the best practice guidelines of the School's Serious Incident Policy.
- It is essential that we are able to maintain contact with our families during these times. Please ensure you advise NEGS/SJC should any of your contact details change at any time. This is also a condition of the student visa..
- NEGS/SJC maintains current embassy contact details for students who are foreign nationals.

## 7. *Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy*

### (National Code: Standard 13)

To ‘defer’ or ‘suspend enrolment’ means to temporarily put studies on hold (adjourn, delay, postpone). NEGS/SJC does this by notifying the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Reforms (DEEWR) using the Provider Registration and International Student Management (PRISMS) of the deferment or suspension of enrolment.

- A student may request a temporary deferment or suspension of his/her enrolment on the grounds of ‘compassionate or compelling circumstances’.
- A Provider may also initiate suspension of a student’s enrolment due to misbehaviour of the student.

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School employs a fair and transparent process for dealing with student grievances and for the management of student behaviour at NEGS/SJC. This may include detention, suspension of and/or termination of enrolment, after each individual case has been carefully considered and students counselled individually. Conditions for termination or expulsion are further outlined in Section 9 of the Enrolment Agreement: ‘Discipline and Expulsion’.

Prior to commencing at NEGS/SJC, students will receive the School's Anti-Bullying Policy. Students will also be advised of behaviour expectations for students as outlined in the Family Handbook – Section 6.4 Discipline Levels.

NEGS/SJC may suspend or terminate the enrolment of a student at its discretion for failure to comply with the conditions of entry, or other serious breaches of the School's rules and regulations. In the event of termination under such circumstances, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will be notified immediately through PRISMS, and arrangements will be made for the return of the student to parental/custodial care as soon as possible, with expenses to be met by the person/s with whom NEGS/SJC has a signed Enrolment Agreement.

Outcomes of any request by the student for deferment, suspension or cancellation of studies or imposition by the School on the student of suspension or cancellation of studies will be notified to the student in writing and documented in the student’s file.

**Students are advised that deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment can have an effect on a student’s visa as a result of changes to enrolment status. Students will therefore be directed to contact the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for advice.**

## **7.1 Deferment commencement of study - requested by student**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will only grant a deferment of commencement of studies for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

- illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on studies
- a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student

Applications for deferment, suspension or cancellation should be made by completing the 'Application for Deferment of Commencement or Suspension of Studies' form available from the Director of Studies office.

The final decision for assessing and granting a deferment of commencement of studies lies with the Principal.

## **7.2 Suspension of study - requested by student**

Once the student has commenced the course, New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will only grant a suspension of study for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

- illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on studies
- a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student.

Applications for deferment, suspension or cancellation should be made by completing the 'Application for Deferment of Commencement or Suspension of Studies' form available from the Director of Studies Office for the Application.

The final decision for assessing and granting a deferment of commencement of studies lies with the Principal.

## **7.3 Assessing requests for deferment or suspension of studies**

Students deferring from their studies will not automatically be granted re-entry, which will be subject to vacancies in the relevant year level. Requests for deferment or suspension of studies will take into account the student's attendance record and commitment to studies and will be considered within 10 working days.

## **7.4 Suspension from studies – provider initiated (1 – 28 days)**

- New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School may exclude a student from class studies on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Suspension will occur as the result of any inappropriate behaviour outlined in the Drug Policy, Discipline Levels protocols and Anti-Bullying policy.
- Suspended students must abide by the conditions of their exclusion from studies which will depend on the welfare and accommodation arrangements in place for each student.
- Where the student is provided with coursework for the period of the suspension, the student

- must continue to meet the academic requirements of the course.
- Suspensions from class will not be recorded on PRISMS.
- Periods of 'suspension from classes' will not be included in attendance calculations for the School's Progress and Attendance Policy.

## **7.5 Suspension from studies – provider initiated (28 days +)**

- New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School may exclude a student from class studies on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Suspension will occur as the result of any inappropriate behaviour outlined in the Drug Policy, Discipline Levels protocols and Anti-Bullying policy.
- Suspended students must abide by the conditions of their exclusion from studies which will depend on the welfare and accommodation arrangements in place for each student
- Students who have been suspended for more than 28 days are required to return to their home country by DIAC unless special circumstances exist (e.g. the student is medically unfit to travel).
- If special circumstances exist, the student must abide by the conditions of his or her suspension which will depend on the welfare and accommodation arrangements in place for each student
- Suspensions will be recorded on PRISMS.
- The period of suspension will not be included in attendance calculations.

## **7.6 Cancellation of enrolment**

NEGS/SJC will cancel the enrolment of a student under the following conditions:

- Failure to pay course fees
- Failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532)
- Any behaviour identified in 7.4 and 7.5 above which justifies cancellation
- Failure to maintain satisfactory course progress and failure to maintain satisfactory attendance as required by DIAC

## **7.7 Complaints and Appeals (deferment, suspension and cancellation)**

- Student requested deferment and suspension are not subject to the School's "Complaints and Appeals Policy". A suspension from class is subject to NEGS/SJC Complaints and Appeals Policy. A suspension from class is subject to the policy, as is a School initiated suspension where the suspension is to be recorded on PRISMS.
- For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain his enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal. The Deputy Principal will determine if participation in studies will be in class or under a supervised arrangement outside of classes.
- If students access NEGS/SJC complaints and appeals process for a school initiated suspension where the suspension is recorded in PRISMS, or school initiated cancellation, the suspension or cancellation will not be reported in PRISMS until the complaints and appeals process is finalised, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply. Extenuating circumstances may include:
  - the student refuses to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (for students under 18 years of age)
  - the student is missing
  - the student has medical concerns or severe depression or psychological issues which lead the school to fear for the student's wellbeing

- the student has engaged or threatened to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others
- Is at risk of committing a criminal offence, or
- the student is the subject of investigation relating to criminal matters
- The use of extenuating circumstances by NEGS/SJC to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment prior to the completion of any complaints and appeals process will be supported by appropriate evidence.
- The final decision for evaluating extenuating circumstances lies with the Headmaster or his representative.

## **7.8 Suspension/Cancellation of Enrolment – Future Action**

Where a student has been suspended from studies by New England Girls' School/St John's Co-educational Junior School which involves a cancellation of his/her enrolment (under the terms of 7.5 and 7.6 above) the school's executive will continue to monitor the suitability of arrangements for that student until:

- a) the student is accepted by another registered provider and that registered provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements;
- b) the student leaves Australia;
- c) other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations, or;
- d) the registered provider reports under Standard 5.1d that it can no longer approve of the arrangements for the student.

## **8. Complaints and Appeals Policy**

(National Code: Standard 8)

### **8.1 Policy overview**

This policy also takes into account the National Code: Standard 13: which outlines policies and procedures for deferment, suspension or cancellation of studies. It should therefore be noted that:

- NEGS/SJC complaints and appeals processes are independent, easily and immediately accessible and inexpensive for the parties involved.
- NEGS/SJC undertakes to ensure the complaints and appeals process 'commences within ten working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as possible' (National Code: Standard 8.1 (e)).
- While attending NEGS/SJC all students are expected to comply with the expectations of the School outlined in the Student Diary and the Enrolment Agreement. The Diary is issued to students and/or parents prior to commencement at the School.

NEGS/SJC offers a comprehensive and documented internal process to address complaints and appeals. While the School recognises that the National Code states that a student 'may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings' (National Code 8.1,c) it should be noted that this internal process exists as a conciliatory and non-legal process. It is therefore requested that during the internal process this support person will not include lawyers or education agents.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a student or parent(s)/legal guardian with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint. NEGS/SJC will ensure students are given information about the complaints and appeals process prior to or during their Orientation process (National Code: Standard 6)

- Unless a dispute involves extenuating circumstances, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal for the duration of the appeals process.
- If an appeal is against the School's decision to report a student for unsatisfactory course progress (National Code: Standard 10) or unsatisfactory course attendance (National Code: Standard 11), a student's enrolment will be maintained (i.e. not reported for unsatisfactory attendance or progress) until the external complaint process is complete and has supported NEGS/SJC's decision to report.
- While a student may choose to access more than one external appeals process, New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will allow one external appeal only before exercising its right to report a student for unsatisfactory attendance or progress. It is recommended that students discuss further appeals with DIAC.
- If an appeal is against NEGS/SJC's decision to defer, suspend or cancel a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour (National Code: Standard 13), NEGS/SJC will on completion of the internal process supporting the decision to defer, suspend or cancel, notify the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Reforms (DEEWR) through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment status. Once DEEWR has been notified of the deferment, suspension or cancellation, the student will have 28 days in which to:
  - Leave Australia
  - Show DIAC a new CofE or
  - Provide DIAC with evidence that he/she has accessed an external appeals process.
- In the first instance, the School requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue. If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution of the matter, New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School undertakes to commence the internal formal complaints handling procedure within ten working days of receiving a formal written complaint or appeal from the student.
- The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.
- If the student or parent(s)/legal guardian remain dissatisfied with the outcome, NEGS/SJC will provide advice (at no charge) on how the student may obtain access to an independent external appeals process.
- Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the School's Grievance Policy – Student/Parent/Caregiver.
- For conditions which apply to handling of a complaint or appeal arising from the School's suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment, students should refer to the Grievance Policy – Student/Parent/Caregiver.

## **8.2 Complaint and Appeal Process for Overseas Students, their Parent/s or Guardian/s**

It is recommended that financial disputes be addressed by contacting the Business Manager who, if required, will refer the matter to the Principal.

For complaints and appeals for all other issues:

*Stage 1:* In the first instance, students should contact the appropriate staff member for an appointment to discuss the issue at an informal level. The staff member who handles the student's concern may hold discussions with the student, the student's parents or guardians, other students, other staff members and any other relevant persons for clarification and to obtain further information relevant to the student's complaint. The staff member will make written notes of all discussions and any actions taken. All attempts will be made to resolve the complaint at this level. Notes taken will be placed on the student's file. These notes may be used for reporting to the Year Advisor, Deputy Principal, Director of Studies, Head of Junior School, Principal or the student's parents or guardians.

Suggested guidelines for whom to contact in the first instance include:

- Academic matters: Subject teacher or Head of Department.
- Personal Problems: Year Advisor, Tutor Support person, Head of Boarding or Chaplain.
- Boarding Problems: Head of House or Director of Boarding.

*Stage 2:* As NEGS/SJC undertakes to action a formal written complain within ten days of receipt, it is recommended that if there is no resolution from Stage 1 discussions within seven days, the student should make an appointment to discuss the issue with the Year Advisor, Director of Studies or Head of Junior School. The student should take a written statement to this meeting outlining the complaint and any particular issues and concerns. Reference will be made to previous notices from the student's record and if there is a resolution details will be noted on the student's record.

*Stage 3:* If there is no resolution from Stage 2 action after a further seven days, the student should make an appointment to discuss the issue with the Deputy Principal. If there is a resolution, details will be noted on the student's record.

*Stage 4:* If there is no resolution from Stage 3 action after a further seven days, the student should make an appointment to discuss the issue with the Principal. If there is a resolution from discussion between the Principal and the student, details will be noted on the student's record. If it is not possible to resolve the dispute internally within 30 days via the above process, the student will be made aware of other steps available to him/her, and their rights under legislation in the State of New South Wales and the Commonwealth of Australia.

Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the student will be informed immediately in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome of the appeals process. If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the student, NEGS/SJC will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.

If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student or the student is dissatisfied with the result of the internal complaints process, outside assistance may be requested to resolve the dispute. In this case, the student may discuss further options with the Principal or approach the Dispute Resolution Branch, Department of Justice and Attorney-General. They will be informed of external complaints and appeals processes available at minimal or no cost.

If all other attempts at resolution prove unsuccessful the student may also approach the Registering Authority at the following address:

The Manager  
CRICOS Registration  
NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board  
Locked Bag 21  
DARLINGHURST NSW 1300

## **9. Transfer Policy to and from other Education Providers**

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will not actively recruit a student from another provider prior to the student completing six months of the student's principal course. The School is also mindful of responding to a request for release within a reasonable period of time (14 days) with accurate records being maintained on the student's file of all requests, assessments and decisions regarding the request for release.

Where a student is found to have made application for enrolment to NEGS/SJC without release from their course provider, the School staff will report the matter to DEEWR.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship requires Overseas Students to stay with their principal education provider for the first six months of their course. This also applies to preliminary courses undertaken prior to enrolment in a principal course of study (unless shorter than six months duration). If a student is granted early release from the preliminary course, the student is still required to stay with their principal course for six months unless they meet the conditions for

early transfer above.

If the course is less than six months, they must stay with their main education provider for the duration of the course unless a letter of release is provided.

It is recommended students contact the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to seek advice on whether or not a new visa is required following release.

Exceptions to the guidelines below apply where:

- The original school or course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be CRICOS registered;
- The original school has provided a written letter of release;
- The original school has had sanctions imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or state or territory government that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course;
- Any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

An Overseas Student wishing to transfer from New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School to another educational institution or school prior to completing six months of their course:

- Should apply for consideration using NEGS/SJC 'Application for Student Transfer – Letter of Release' form available from the Enrolments Office.
- Must provide to NEGS/SJC written confirmation that the student's parents or legal guardian supports the transfer.
- Will be provided with a 'Letter of Release' detailing attendance, payment of fees and a summary of the student's application and behaviour while attending NEGS/SJC. This letter of release will only be provided where the student has provided a letter from the school to which he is transferring confirming that a valid offer has been made.
- Must provide evidence via this valid enrolment offer that the receiving school will accept responsibility for approving the students accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements where the student is not being cared for in Australia by a parent or approved relative as per 'Standard 5: Younger Students'.
- Will not be charged for providing the letter of release.
- Will not be provided with a letter of release where it is seen to be detrimental to the welfare of the student.
- Will be provided with written advice outlining the reasons for refusal in writing where NEGS/SJC refuses to release the student. Students have the right to appeal the decision using NEGS/SJC Complaints and Appeals process (Section 8 above).
- May expect a level of understanding from NEGS/SJC where they are found to be experiencing personal difficulty or educational problems that can not be addressed by NEGS/SJC's resources.
- Should be aware of financial penalties which apply where students withdraw without sufficient notice as outlined in their Enrolment Agreement with NEGS/SJC.

New England Girls' School/St John's Co-Educational Junior School will not accept enrolment of a student during that student's first six months with that provider where:

- The student is unable to provide a 'Letter of Release' from their current provider confirming that she has demonstrated commitment to her studies, has a good attendance record and has paid all required fees.
- NEGS/SJC is unable to approve the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements.
- All other enrolment conditions apply as outlined in Part B: Section 3 above.