



STUDENT DRIVERS IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

Principals may authorise secondary students participating in agricultural education programs to drive vehicles and machines on the school property.

2 BACKGROUND

Secondary students participating in agricultural education programs at some schools learn how to drive vehicles and tractors on the school property as a part of the practical activities. Most students are not eligible, because of age, to obtain a Western Australian drivers licence whilst at school.

All schools with student drivers in agricultural education programs should have structured driver-training programs and formal student driver permit arrangements in place.

3 RELEVANT LEGISLATION/LEGAL AUTHORITY

School Education Act 1999, Section 63(1)(b) & (c)

Occupational Safety & Health Regulations 1996, specifically Reg. 4.44(7) & (8) and Reg. 4.55

3.1 RELATED DET POLICIES

The policies listed below are also applicable to students driving vehicles in agricultural education programs and will assist staff to meet their duty of care responsibilities in a range of circumstances:

Duty of Care for Students

Occupational Safety and Health

Risk Management

Workplace Learning Procedures and Guidelines

4 PROCEDURES

In the management of student drivers in agricultural education programs in schools the principal shall ensure that the staff member approving the student to drive/operate the vehicle/machine will:

4.1 ASSESS AND MINIMISE POTENTIAL RISKS RELEVANT TO THE ACTIVITY

The staff member must take into account the:

- suitability of the driving environment in relation to the student's level of ability and the planned activities;
- student's aptitude and level of experience in using a particular vehicle/machine; and

- the complexity and skill level required to complete the task.

4.2 DETERMINE AND ESTABLISH SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

Students are only permitted to drive vehicles on the school property under staff supervision. The staff member approving the student to drive/operate the vehicle/machine must assess the risks and determine the appropriate level of supervision required in a particular situation.

As a general guide students learning to drive should be under direct supervision with the staff member in the vehicle or in close proximity. Post-compulsory students who have demonstrated a responsible attitude and competency with the vehicle may be permitted to undertake supervised driving tasks without a staff member in the vehicle. The level of supervision must be deemed to be reasonable under any circumstances.

4.3 ENSURE PARENTAL CONSENT IS OBTAINED BEFORE STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Information must be provided to parents or guardians to enable them to make informed decisions about allowing their children to participate in driving activities and travel as a passenger in a vehicle driven by another student. Written consent must be obtained before allowing students to participate in driving activities.

4.4 ENSURE STUDENT DRIVING AND PERMIT PROCEDURES ARE FOLLOWED

All staff allowing students to drive vehicles must take reasonable steps to ensure that students are at least 14 years of age, hold the appropriate permit, obey school driving rules and observe safe driving practice.

4.5 COMPLETE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The staff member approving the student to drive/operate the vehicle/machine must ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that these procedures are clearly understood by the student.

4.6 ENSURE THAT STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS WITH REGARD TO DRIVING SCHOOL VEHICLES

The staff member approving the student to drive/operate the vehicle/machine must ensure that all relevant information about responsibilities and obligations is clearly communicated to students and other staff involved. Topics that must be covered are:

- school driving rules;
- driving permit procedures;
- appropriate use of vehicles/machines; and
- accident and emergency procedures.

5 STUDENT DRIVING PERMITS

5.1 CONDITIONS

- a) Students must be at least 14 years of age to participate in driving activities.
- b) Students are issued with Driving Permit badges after meeting assessment requirements. The permits issued to students are not valid on public roadways.
- c) Students can only drive vehicles with the express permission of and subject to the instructions of a staff member.
- d) Students must always carry their current student driver's permit when driving school vehicles.
- e) Before obtaining any permit students must pass a written or oral test, a formal driving test and have any impairment related to medical or physical condition assessed for its influence on driving capability. (Assessment, including any special requirements, must be appropriately documented.)
- f) Student drivers must ensure all passengers in the vehicle are inside the cab and are wearing seat belts. Student drivers are not allowed to drive any vehicle with passengers on any part of the vehicle outside of the cab unless a staff member is present and students are engaged in work that requires travelling on the back of the vehicle, e.g. loading bales of hay onto a moving truck. In these circumstances the vehicle must be driven on predominantly flat terrain at a speed less than 20 km per hour.
- g) Breach of school driving rules or careless damage to school vehicles or property may result in suspension of driving permission for periods appropriate to the offence.
- h) Records of student driver attainment and suspensions are to be maintained by the school. Repeat breaches of driving rules will result in removal of driving rights.

5.2 LEVELS OF DRIVING PERMITS

5.2.1 PROBATIONARY PERMIT

All students commencing an agricultural program, who have parental consent to drive, are eligible to be assessed for a probationary permit. This permit enables students to 'drive under instruction' by a staff member. This permit does not allow the student to drive with other students as passengers. Students must achieve at least a Stage 1 permit before they are permitted to drive with other students as passengers.

5.2.2 STAGE I PERMIT

Stage 1 Permits allow students to drive light utility type vehicles and operate/drive a basic tractor. Students can be tested when they are confident to do so subject to an authorised staff member determining that they have had the necessary training. Motorcycles may be included on this permit. Students must wear appropriate clothing and protective helmets when operating any motorcycles including All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs).

5.2.3 STAGE II PERMIT

Stage II Permits allow students to drive a range of farm vehicles and machines relevant to the agricultural educational program. Students holding Stage II Permits may be endorsed to drive light trucks, large tractors, front-end-loaders, forklifts, LR classified buses and combine harvesters.

Industrial lift trucks are restricted to student drivers over 17 years of age. However, loaders (earthmoving equipment) with the bucket removed and forks fitted are not classified as "industrial lift trucks".

Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 Reg 4.55 specifies a minimum age requirement for operators of industrial lift trucks ("industrial lift truck" means powered mobile plant designed to move goods, materials or equipment and which is equipped with an elevating load carriage and which usually has a load-holding attachment but does not include a mobile crane or earthmoving machinery.)

Students can be tested for this permit and endorsements when they are confident to do so subject to an authorised staff member determining that they have had the necessary training and can meet any additional legislative or other requirements for operating a particular vehicle or machine.

Stage II permits do not allow students to drive any school buses with passengers.

5.3 ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Assessment of student driving is to be conducted by a staff member who is a qualified teacher or workplace assessor and who is a competent driver/operator relevant to the vehicle/machine type.

Staff members must hold appropriate licences where applicable. All instruction and assessment procedures and results must be documented.

5.3.1 PROBATIONARY TESTING PROCEDURE

Student must have parental permission to participate and be made aware of basic rules relevant to driving on the school property.

Procedure must involve assessing for medical/physical impairments affecting driving ability.

5.3.2 STAGE I TESTING PROCEDURE

Formal Driving Test

Student must demonstrate:

- Responsible attitude to driving.
- Competence at driving and handling vehicle/tractor.
- Safe driving practices.
- Basic maintenance checks.

Written or Oral Test

Test to include:

- School rules on vehicle/student safety, speed limits and restricted areas.

- Basic road safety rules.
- Vehicle driving techniques and safety checks.
- Routine maintenance requirements.

Student achievement is to be recorded.

5.3.3 STAGE II TESTING PROCEDURE

Formal Driving and Machine Operation Test

Student must demonstrate:

- Responsible attitude to vehicle/machine operation.
- Competence at driving and handling the vehicle/machine.
- Ability to hitch and use towed or linkage equipment if relevant.
- Safety and operational checks.

Written and Oral Test

Test to include:

- Vehicle/machine operation and safety requirements.
- Vehicle/machine driving and safety techniques.
- Safety and maintenance checks.

Student achievement is to be recorded.

6 CONTACT INFORMATION

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