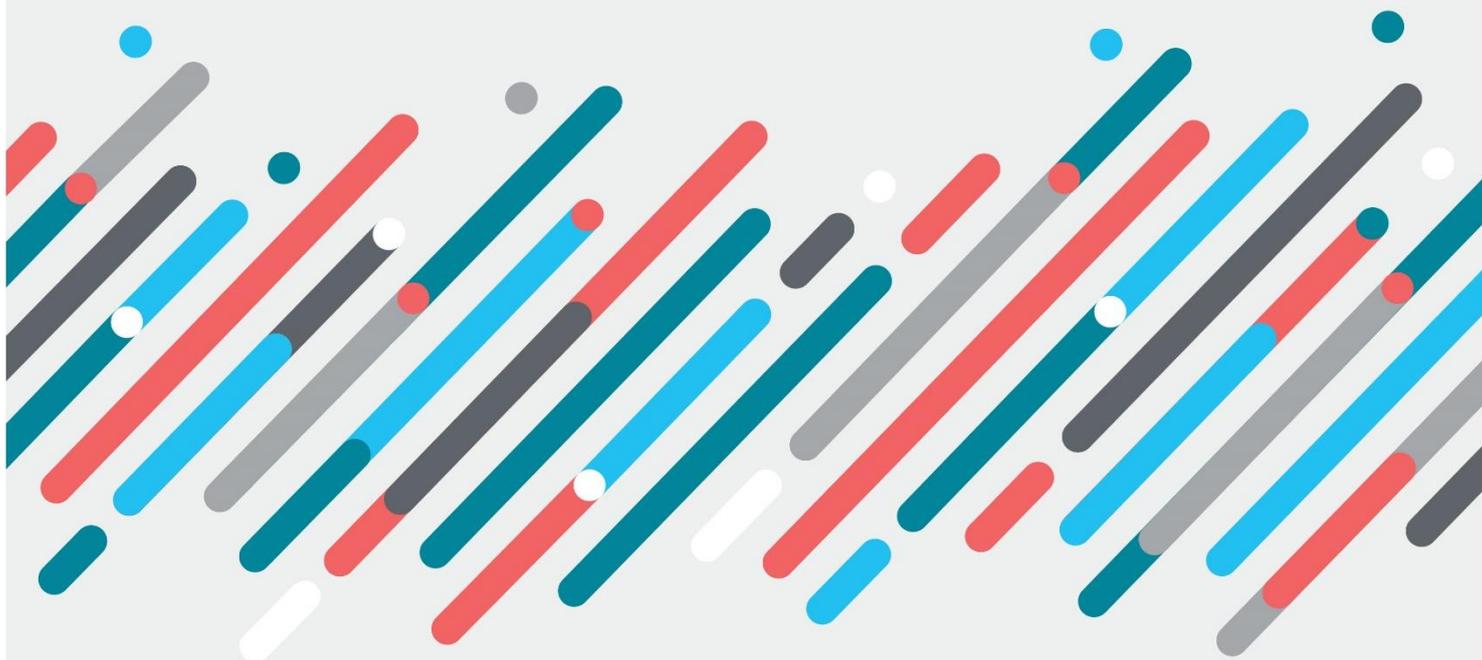




Australian Government
Department of Education

2025 Census Special Circumstance Handbook



Copyright



With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, the Department's logo, any material protected by a trade mark and where otherwise noted all material presented in this document is provided under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) licence.

The details of the relevant licence conditions are available on the Creative Commons website (accessible using the links provided) as is the full legal code for the [CC BY 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>)

The document **must** be attributed as the (2025 Census Special Circumstance Handbook)

Version	Date	Revision
1.00	03/06/2025	2025 Census special circumstance handbook approved for publication
2.00	24/06/2025	Minor grammatical amendments
2.10	25/06/2025	Updated image on Page 11 and Page 16

Contents

2025 CENSUS SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE HANDBOOK	1
Purpose	4
Census reference period for 2025	4
Due date	4
Finding the application	4
Who should read this handbook?	4
Before starting	5
2025 census special circumstance application	5
Who to include in an application	5
Who not to include in an application	5
Conditions of assessment	6
Privacy notice	6
Supporting documentation	7
Suggested supporting documentation	8
Outcome process	9
Appeal process	9
Legal obligations	10
Recordkeeping	10
We're here to help	10
How to complete a 2025 application	11
1. Getting Started	11
2. Contact Details	11
3.1. Special Circumstance Form	11
3.2. Application Details (1 to 11)	12
3.3. Student Characteristics (12 to 22)	14
4. Student Information	15
4.1. Format checking	16
5. Location AGEID Lookup	17
6. Help and Support	17

Purpose

This handbook provides guidance for schools submitting a census special circumstance application (special circumstance) for a student who **did not** attend during the census reference period and/or **did not** have a pattern of regular attendance at a school during the year but otherwise meet the Non-government schools census (the census) eligibility requirements. Schools can apply to have a student individually considered for inclusion in the census through a special circumstance application.

Census reference period for 2025

Under subsection 5(6) of the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (the Regulations), the census reference period is the period of 20 school days for the school that ends at the end of the census day for the school for the year.

For 2025, the census day for a non-government school is **Friday 1 August 2025**.

The Department of Education (the department) considers a school day to be a day when the school is open for a student to attend school (as applicable), excluding school holidays, public holidays, weekends, and pupil free days of any kind.

Due date

Under subsection 9B(6)(a) the Regulations, a special circumstance application is due within 14 days of the school's census day for the year.

A special circumstance application **cannot** be submitted until the conclusion of the 20 school day census reference period (Friday 1 August 2025) and **must** be emailed to specialcircumstances@education.gov.au by **11:59 pm (AEST) Friday 15 August 2025**.

Finding the application

The special circumstance application form is available to download on [SchoolsHUB](#).

Who should read this handbook?

This handbook is for approved authority representatives completing a special circumstance application for the 2025 Non-government schools census. This handbook supports:

- completing an application
- submitting an application
- understanding the required supporting documentation.

Before starting

Before commencing an application, download the [2025 Non-government schools census guide](#) to check the eligibility criteria for reporting a student in the 2025 Non-government schools census. Under subsection 9B(1) of the Regulations, a student is eligible to be reported in the census if they:

1. are enrolled at the school on [census day](#) (Friday 1 August 2025); and
2. are enrolled in a year level the school is approved to provide at that location; and
3. have a pattern of regular attendance at the school, or at school generally, during the year; and
4. attend the school for at least one day during the [census reference period](#).

If a student meets all the criteria above, the student is eligible to be included in the census.

Under subsection 9B(3) of the Regulations, if the first 2 criteria are met and one or both of the third and fourth criteria are not met, a special circumstance application may be submitted for a student.

2025 census special circumstance application

In 2025, minor updates were made to the handbook and application form, based on user feedback.

Who to include in an application

Under subsection 9B(3) of the Regulations, a special circumstance application can be submitted for determination by the Minister (or their delegate) for a student who:

- is enrolled at the school on [census day](#) (Friday 1 August 2025)
- is enrolled in a year level the school is approved to provide at that location; and either
- **did not have** a pattern of regular attendance at the school, or at school generally, during the year; and/or
- **did not** attend the school for at least one day during the [census reference period](#) (for a student who did not attend for at least one day, equivalent to their usual full-time equivalent [FTE] during the [census reference period](#)).

Who not to include in an application

A special circumstance application is for a student who **did not have a pattern of regular attendance** at a school during the year and/or **did not attend** the school during the [census reference period](#) for at least one day but are otherwise eligible for the census.

This **does not** include a student who:

- unenrolled prior to [census day](#)
- is not eligible to enrol at a school, based on relevant state and territory requirements
- did not study school level subjects (from foundation [Year 1 minus 1] to Year 12) in 2025
- did not study any school subjects and only participate in apprenticeships, English as a second language courses, TAFE courses, tertiary subjects, work placements, or a combination thereof.

Conditions of assessment

Subsection 9B(4) of the Regulations sets out the basis for assessing a special circumstance application. In summary this is:

- the period or periods of attendance by the student at the school, or at school generally, during the year
- the pattern of attendance by the student at the school, or at school generally, during the year
- whether the student is, or will be included in the [census day](#) enrolment of another school for the year
- for any period of non-attendance by the student – the steps taken by the school to engage the student in the relevant level of education
- any other matter the Minister (or their delegate) considers relevant.

Examples of situations the department considers a student is ineligible to be included in the census through a special circumstance application is where the student:

- will not be returning to school after [census day](#)
- will not be returning to school until 2026 or later
- has had a significant number of absences, an irregular pattern of attendance and there is insufficient evidence provided to demonstrate the school has engaged the student in the relevant level of education during the absence
- is on a visa which prohibits them from engaging in studies as a condition of their visa
- is on a visitor visa and in Australia for less than 6 months
- is an exchange student attending the school for less than 6 months
- is an exchange student who has completed their formal schooling in their own country.

A special circumstance application will need to meet the conditions of assessment with [supporting documentation](#).

Privacy notice

As personal information is being provided to the department for a special circumstance application, a school **must** provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate), with a copy of the department's [privacy notice](#). The privacy notice sets out how the department will manage the personal information collected in a special circumstance application.

The department's [privacy policy](#), referred to in the privacy notice, provides further information about how the department manages personal information, including information about how individuals can make a complaint and seek access to and correction of their personal information.

The department will only use personal information for secondary purposes when able to do so in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*. For queries and information about privacy-related matters, email privacy@education.gov.au.

Supporting documentation

The most important component of each special circumstance application is the supporting documentation to demonstrate why it is appropriate for a student to be considered for inclusion in the census.

Providing supporting documentation is highly recommended for each student to corroborate the details provided in a special circumstance application.

When considering the type of supporting documentation, the department is seeking evidence to demonstrate a student has and will continue to be engaged in education by the school for the year, whilst meeting the [conditions of assessment](#).

Supporting documentation should include the relevant [student identifier](#) from the application form. A student identifier can be any set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information.

As each circumstance is different, supporting documentation should be provided for each student and page 8 provides [suggested supporting documentation](#) for a special circumstance application.

Supporting documentation should be **de-identified**. Under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations this means removing or redacting information that could explicitly identify a student, such as their name, contact information, photographs, court orders etc.

Suggested supporting documentation

Student circumstance	Suggested supporting documentation
Student on a family holiday over the census reference period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorised signed leave form • student attendance report • records demonstrating regular schoolwork engagement during the absence • communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) outlining the dates the student will be absent and whether permission has been granted for the school to engage with the student in education during the absence. Note: for longer family holiday absences, more extensive engagement is expected.
Student is temporarily attending another school in Australia for the duration of the census reference period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorised signed leave form • student attendance report • notice from the 'away' school declaring the 'away' school will not report the student in their census • communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) showing a clear intention when the student will return to school after attending the 'away' school.
Student is absent during the census reference period due to an illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical certificate covering the absence • student attendance report • communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) showing a clear intention when the student will return to school • records demonstrating regular schoolwork engagement during the absence • written advice from a medical professional (de-identified under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations) outlining the circumstance on behalf of the student • an agreed return-to-school plan for the student • evidence supporting the school has regularly engaged with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) in education during the absence.
Student is absent during the census reference period while partaking in sorry business or grief leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student attendance report • written communication with either the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, community representative, leader, principal or the student (where appropriate) confirming when the student is expected to return.
Student is absent during the census reference period while partaking in elite sport or entertainment industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorised signed leave form • student attendance report • communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) showing a clear intention when the student will return to school • records demonstrating regular schoolwork engagement during the absence • if a separate tutor or educational program has been used during the absence, evidence to support the schoolwork engaged in by the student was provided by the school and not the tutor • evidence supporting the school has regularly engaged with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) in education during the absence.
Student is a school refuser/school can't, and has not attended school including the census reference period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student attendance report • communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) showing a clear intention when the student will return to school • records demonstrating regular schoolwork engagement during the absence • an agreed return-to-school plan for the student • evidence supporting the school has regularly engaged with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) in education during the absence.

Outcome process

For each special circumstance application, the department will send a receipt verifying the successful registration of the application. If a confirmation email has not been received within 2 business days, contact specialcircumstances@education.gov.au.

The department may contact an approved authority representative or the school if there are questions about the application, so it is important to provide the contact details of the most appropriate person to contact.

Upon conclusion of assessment of the special circumstance application, the approved authority representative will be advised of the assessment outcome for each individual student. During this time, there is no need to make contact until an outcome is provided.

Assessment will result in one of 3 outcomes for each student subject to an application:

- **Accepted:** the department has determined a special circumstance application applies, and the application has been accepted. The department will update the school's census for any accepted student.
- **Not accepted:** the department has determined a special circumstance application does not apply, and the application has not been accepted. Reasons for this decision will be provided to the approved authority representative. The most common reasons for this are:
 1. insufficient information
 2. unclear return date of the student to the school
 3. no confirmation the 'away' school did not report the student in the census
 4. no pattern of regular attendance at the school, or at school generally, during the year and insufficient documentation describing the steps taken by the school to engage the student in the relevant level of education.
- **Eligible for census:** the department has determined a special circumstance application is not required as the student was initially eligible for inclusion in the census. The department will update the school's census for any eligible student.

Appeal process

If the approved authority disagrees with the delegate's decision, an approved authority representative may request an internal review of the decision pursuant to subsection 118(2) of the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). If the approved authority representative wishes to seek an internal review, an application in writing **must** set out the reasons for the application within 30 days from the date of the outcome letter.

All internal reviews are conducted by an independent internal review officer who was not involved in the original decision. There is no standard format for an internal review application; however, there is an opportunity to provide additional supporting documentation.

An internal review application should include:

- information on why the original decision is incorrect
- the original application and its supporting documentation
- any new supporting documentation.

Any internal review application **must** be sent to internalreview@education.gov.au.

Legal obligations

Providing false or misleading census information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence and may result in prosecution under subsection 137.1 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

Recordkeeping

Approved authorities **must** maintain records verifying the eligibility of a student reported in the census and any special circumstance application for a minimum of 7 years. This is a requirement under subsection 37 of the Regulations.

We're here to help

For any questions:

- email specialcircumstances@education.gov.au
- call 1800 677 027 (select option 3, then option 1)
- submit a help and support request through [SchoolsHUB](#)
- visit [SchoolsHUB](#).

How to complete a 2025 application

The special circumstance application form is a multi-tab Excel spreadsheet, available to download on [SchoolsHUB](#). The application has the following tabs:

1. Getting Started	4. Student Information
2. Contact Details	5. Location AGEID Lookup
3. Special Circumstance Form	6. Help and Support

1. Getting Started

This tab provides basic instructions and useful links that do not require any added information.

2. Contact Details

This tab provides details of the most appropriate person the department can contact in relation to a special circumstance application. Image 1 shows a screenshot of the *Contact Details* tab.

A data declarer's name **must** be entered who is the person legally accountable for all information submitted in a special circumstance application and who **must** take responsibility for the declaration of data to the department. This person does not need to be the same as the contact person for the application.

The screenshot shows the 'Contact Details' tab within the 'Schools HUB' interface. It includes the Australian Government Department of Education logo and a title bar with 'Contact Details' and 'Schools HUB'. The main content area has a yellow callout box stating: 'This tab provides details of the most appropriate person the department can contact in relation to a special circumstance application.' Below this, there are input fields for 'Email Address', 'Given Name (First Name)', 'Surname (Last Name)', 'Data declarer's name authorising application', 'Position', and 'Phone Number'. A note at the bottom states: 'Note: A data declarer's name must be entered who is the person legally accountable for all information submitted in a special circumstance application and who must take responsibility for the declaration of data to the department. This person does not need to be the same as the contact person for the application.'

Image 1: Screenshot of the Contact Details tab

3.1. Special Circumstance Form

This tab is where the application is completed. Enter the location AGEID in cell A4 and fill out [Application Details \(1 to 11\)](#) and [Student Characteristics \(12 to 22\)](#). All 22 columns **must** be completed before submitting to the department. Image 2 shows a screenshot of the *Special Circumstance Form* tab.

The screenshot shows the '2025 Special Circumstance Application' form. It features the Australian Government Department of Education logo and 'Schools HUB' branding. A warning message states: 'A special circumstance application cannot be submitted until the conclusion of the 20 school day census reference period (Friday 1 August 2025) and must be emailed to specialcircumstances@education.gov.au by 11:59 pm (AEST) Friday 15 August 2025. Please read the 2025 Census special circumstances handbook, which is available to download on SchoolsHUB, before proceeding with an application.' The form is divided into sections: 'Location AGEID' (with a dropdown showing '0'), 'APPLICATION DETAILS (1 to 11)', and 'STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS (12 to 22)'. The 'APPLICATION DETAILS' section includes fields for 'Privacy notice', 'Student identifier', 'Confirm student is enrolled on Census Day 1 August 2025', 'Date the student first attended school in 2025', 'Date the student last attended school in 2025', 'How many school days was the student absent between the dates in columns 4 and 5?', 'Date the student returns to school in 2025', 'Confirm supporting documents have been included in the application', 'Is the student expected to attend another school during their absence?', 'Confirm the 'away' school did not report the student or that the combined FTE does not exceed 1.0', and 'Confirm the student has NOT been reported in this location's 2025 Census'. The 'STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS' section includes fields for 'Gender', 'Age as at 1 July 2025', 'Year level', 'Study load', 'Indigenous', 'Education type', 'NCCO - category of disability', 'NCCO - level of adjustment needed', 'Eligible for (ODTP or Supplementary or Substantial or Social Emotional or Home)', 'Students service number', and 'Overseas student'.

Image 2: Screenshot of the 2025 Special Circumstance Form tab

3.2. Application Details (1 to 11)

Application Details (1 to 11) assesses the eligibility of a student for a special circumstance application.

1. Privacy notice

As the application potentially includes sensitive personal information, parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate), **must** be provided a copy of the department's [privacy notice](#) before the application is submitted. The notice provides parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) with information about how the personal information will be handled by the department, including how it will be used and shared. Answer **must** be 'Y' (yes).

2. Student identifier

Each student in the application requires a student identifier that can be any set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information. The student identifier should be **de-identified**. Under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations this means removing or redacting information that could explicitly identify a student, such as their name, contact information, photographs, court orders etc.

For each student, title each piece of supporting documentation with the corresponding student identifier. This ensures the department can correlate each document with the corresponding student application. If the supporting documentation does not include the student identifier, the application will be returned to amend and resubmit.

3. Confirm student is enrolled on Census Day, Friday 1 August 2025

If a student is not enrolled on [census day](#), the student is **not** eligible for a special circumstance application or to be included in the census. In column 3, confirm 'Y' (yes) if the student is enrolled at the school on [census day](#) (Friday 1 August 2025).

4. Date the student first attended school in 2025

The date the student first attended school in the year. This date **must** be in 2025 and before [census day](#). Answer in a DD/MM/YYYY format (e.g. '28/01/2025'). Refer to [education type](#) for further information on a distance education student.

5. Date the student last attended school in 2025

The date the student last attended school prior to [census day](#). This date **must** be before the [census reference period](#) and after the date provide in column 4. Answer in a DD/MM/YYYY format (e.g. '28/04/2025'). Refer to [education type](#) for further information on a distance education student.

6. How many school days was the student absent between the dates in columns 4 and 5?

The number of school days the student was absent **between the dates in columns 4 and 5**. This excludes school holidays, public holidays, weekends, pupil free days of any kind, days absent prior to first attending school in 2025, or days absent since last attending. Refer to [education type](#) for further information on a distance education student.

7. Date the student is expected to return to school in 2025

The first day the student is expected to return to school following their current period of absence. This date **must** be after [census day](#). Answer in a DD/MM/YYYY format (e.g. '17/08/2025') or 'Unknown'. Refer to [education type](#) for further information on a distance education student.

8. Confirm supporting documents have been included in the application

Supporting documentation should be provided for each student to corroborate the details provided in a special circumstance application. When considering the type of supporting documentation, the department is seeking evidence to demonstrate the student has and will continue to be engaged in education by the school for the year while meeting the [conditions of assessment](#). Page 8 provides [suggested supporting documentation](#) for a special circumstance application.

When submitting an application, all supporting documentation should be **de-identified** and correctly titled with the corresponding [student identifier](#). Under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations, this means removing information that could explicitly identify a student, such as their name and contact information. Answer 'Y' (yes) or 'N' (no).

9. Is the student expected to attend another school during their absence?

If a student is attending another school registered for Australian Government recurrent funding contact schools@education.gov.au for any school registration queries. If a student regularly attends both schools, their combined full time equivalent study load (FTE) **must not** exceed 1.0 (Column 15). Answer **must** be 'Y' (yes) or 'N' (no).

10. Confirm the 'away' school did not report the student or that the combined FTE does not exceed 1.0

If answering 'Y' (yes) in column 9, supporting documentation about the attendance of the student at the 'away' school should be provided. These documents should clarify if the 'away' school reported the student in their census.

10.1 For a student temporarily attending another school during the census reference period

The student cannot be reported at both locations if the student is only temporarily attending. The schools **must** decide who reports the student. Supporting documentation from the 'away' school confirming the student was not reported in their census is required as supporting documentation.

10.2 For a student regularly attending multiple schools throughout the year

If a student regularly attends multiple schools throughout the year and is **only** attending the 'away' school during their absence over the [census reference period](#), the school may include the student in an application. The supporting documentation for this student **must** confirm how the 'away' school reported the same student FTE in their census. The combined FTE **must not** exceed 1.0. Census information from both schools will be checked and the department may seek further confirmation. If 'N' (no) was answered in column 9, enter 'N/A' (not applicable).

11. Confirm the student has NOT been reported in this location's 2025 census

A student **must** be excluded from the school's census if a special circumstance application has been submitted. The department will not accept an application or the school's census if a student has been included. Answer 'Y' (yes).

3.3. Student Characteristics (12 to 22)

Student Characteristics (12 to 22) provides specific cohort information under subsection 50 of the Regulations. Further information about these characteristics is available in the [2025 Non-government schools census guide](#).

12. Gender

This is the gender the student identifies with. Answer **must** be 'M' (Male), 'F' (Female) or 'X' (Indeterminate, Intersex or Unspecified).

13. Age as at 1 July 2025

The age of the student as at 1 July 2025. This age **must** be a whole number and not a birth date.

14. Year level

The year level of the student at the school's location. If a student is in foundation (the year level prior to Year 1), enter '0'. This **must** be a whole number between 0 and 12.

15. Study load

This measures the full-time equivalent study load (FTE) for a student. To include a student as full-time (1.0 FTE), they must be undertaking a full-time study load at the location for an approved year level. A part-time student has an FTE less than 1.0. For example, if a student is attending school full time but only undertaking half a study load, they must be reported as 0.5 FTE.

This **must** be a number to one decimal place between '0.1' and '1.0'.

16. Indigenous

The Indigenous column is where to report a student of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who self-identifies as and/or are acknowledged by the community as being of that descent. If parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) have chosen not to identify as being Indigenous or non-Indigenous, report the student as Indigenous non-stated. Answer **must** be 'Y' (yes), 'N' (no), or 'N/S' (non-stated).

17. Education type

Education type is specifying whether a student is a day, boarding, or distance education student.

For a student to be defined as distance education, this can **only** be used for a school who is approved by the relevant state or territory for distance education. A student who participates in remote learning or online learning is not defined as a distance education student. Answer **must** be 'D' (day), 'B' (boarding), or 'DE' (distance education).

If the student has not attended school physically in the school year because of engaging in distance education, provide the [first date \(column 4\)](#) the student engaged with the school, the [last date \(column 5\)](#) the student engaged with school, and the [return date \(column 7\)](#) of the student.

18. NCCD – category of disability

The category of disability is the main driver or focus of the adjustments being provided for the student to support their learning. If 'None' was answered in column 18, also answer 'None' in column 19. For more information on reporting a student with disability, refer to the [NCCD Guidelines](#). Answer **must** be 'Cognitive', 'Physical', 'Sensory', 'Social-Emotional', or 'None'.

19. NCCD – level of adjustment needed

If the student has a disability, this measures the level of adjustment the school makes to address the functional impact of the disability. For information on reporting a student with a disability, refer to the [NCCD Guidelines](#). Answer **must** be 'QDTP', 'Supplementary', 'Substantial', 'Extensive', or 'None'.

20. Student on visa

Any student who is not an Australian citizen is a student on a visa. This includes both permanent residents and New Zealand citizens. Answer **must** be either 'Y' (yes) or 'N' (no).

21. Visa subclass number or N/A

Visa subclass is the subclass number of a visa in effect on [census day](#) for a student. Answer **must** be a whole number (for example '800') if the student is on a visa. A visa subclass number should be provided in column 21 if answered 'Y' (yes) in column 20. Answer 'N/A' (not applicable) if the student is an Australian citizen and 'N' (no) was answered in column 20.

22. Overseas student

An overseas student is a student on a visa who is permitted to travel to Australia for undertaking education. An overseas student is a student on a visa within the visa subclass range of 500-599.

Refer to the [2025 Non-government schools census guide](#) for information on visa and overseas reporting requirements. Answer **must** be 'Y' (yes) or 'N' (no). If answering 'Y' (yes) in column 22, column 20 **must** be 'Y' (yes).

4. Student Information

For each student, there are 2 questions to answer. Information **must** be entered into the *Special Circumstance Form tab* prior to answering these questions. The [student identifier](#), which is a set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information, will prefill in the *Student Information tab* with empty fields to be completed.

All explanations provided and any supporting documentation should be **de-identified**. Under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations this means removing or redacting information that could explicitly identify a student, such as their name, contact information, photographs, court orders etc.

1. Briefly explain the circumstance surrounding the absence of the student?

Provide a brief (maximum 100-word) explanation of the absence of the student and why the student did not attend during the [census reference period](#). This explanation will help the department assess a special circumstance application to identify key factors surrounding the absence of the student.

2. Describe the steps taken by the school to engage the student in education during this absence?

Provide a brief description of how the school engaged the student in education during the absence. This information is a key part of the [conditions of assessment](#) to determine the eligibility of the student for a special circumstance application. For longer absences, more extensive engagement is expected.

For both explanations, it is recommended to type the response in Microsoft Word then paste into the *Student Information tab* to minimise formatting technicalities. Image 3 shows previous year examples of the type of responses expected from schools to explain the circumstance of an absence and how the school engaged with the student during this absence. The department has created these as support.



For each student, there are 2 questions to answer. Information must be entered into the *Special Circumstance Form tab* prior to answering these questions. The student identifier, which is a set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information, will prefill in the Student Information tab with empty fields to be completed.

All explanations provided and any supporting documentation should be **de-identified**. Under subsection 50(4) of the Regulations this means removing or redacting information that could explicitly identify a student, such as their name, contact information, photographs, court orders etc.

In each field, provide a brief description to explain the circumstance of an absence and how the school engaged with the student during this absence. For both explanations, it is recommended to type the response in Microsoft Word then paste into the *Student Information tab* to minimise formatting technicalities.

Student Identifier Briefly explain the circumstances surrounding the students absence?
Describe the steps taken by the school to engage the student in education during this absence?
(Note: For longer periods of absence, more extensive engagement is expected)
Attach any supportive documentation for each student via email

Student 1	Student on holiday from 1st July 2022 - 4th September 2022. An authorised leave form has been signed by the parent/guardian and the principal.	The school created an education pack for the student to work through while on holiday. Evidence of this is contained in an email to the parent/guardian and the signed authorised leave form (both attached).
Student 2	This student has not attended school physically since March 2022 when they were involved in a motor vehicle accident. The student is still in hospital and a long-term recovery plan has been created for the student's return to school. The student is currently still enrolled at the school and has participated in a few classes remotely from the hospital.	The school has been in regular contact with the parent/guardian to get updates on the student's recovery and to develop an education plan to continue the student's engagement in education when their health allows. Recently a plan was created for weekly schoolwork to be completed by the student at the hospital on a school laptop and a teacher reaches out to the student every Friday to check the student's progress. This plan is being re-evaluated after the student's next doctor's consultation. See medical certificate to demonstrate the student is unable to return to school until further notice.
Student 3	This student last attended school on 27th May 2022 and is expected to return October 2022. The student is absent due to sorry business and has returned to country.	See attached email from parent/guardian. It is culturally respectful not to contact the student or family during sorry business time.
Student 4	The student has had sporadic attendance throughout 2022 and last attended school physically on 1st May 2022 and is currently refusing to attend school.	The school has been in regular contact since May 2022 with parent/guardian to discuss strategies to reengage the student at school (see attached email communication with parent/guardian). The school regularly offered a variety of services for the student to engage, such a learning support officer, referral to an educational psychologist and a self-paced remote learning online module (see email attached). The school is proposing a gradual return to school plan (see attached) with the parent/guardian however the student has not yet agreed to a return.

Image 3: Examples of responses expected from schools under Student Information tab

4.1. Format checking

In the *Special Circumstance Form tab*, all rows between 9-58 have been coloured in GREY. Image 4 shows a screenshot of the *Special Circumstances Form tab*.

APPLICATION DETAILS (1 to 11)											STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS (12 to 22)										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Privacy notice	Student identifier	Confirm student is enrolled on Census Day 1 August 2025	Date the student first attended school in 2025	Date the student last attended school in 2025	How many school days was the student absent between the dates in columns 4 and 5?	Date the student is expected to return to school in 2025	Confirm supporting documents have been included in the application	Is the student expected to attend another school during their absence?	Confirm the 'away' school did not report the student or that the combined FTE does not exceed 1.0	Confirm the student has NOT been reported in this location's 2025 Census	Gender	Age as at 1 July 2025	Year level (If the student is in Foundation enter 0)	Study load	Indigenous	Education type	NCCD - category of disability	NCCD - level of adjustment needed	Student on visa	Visa subclass number	Overseas student
Confirm a copy of the privacy notice has been provided to parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) [Y]	A student identifier can be any set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information	[Y]	[dd/mm/yyyy]	[dd/mm/yyyy]		[dd/mm/yyyy] or "Unknown"	[Y or N]	[Y or N]	[Y or N/A]	[Y]	[M or F or X]	[0-12]	[0.1-1.0]	[Y or N or N/S]	[D or B or DE]	[Cognitive or Physical or Sensory or Social-Emotional or None]	[QDTP or Supplementary or Substantial or Extensive or None]	[Y or N]	[number or N/A]	[Y or N]	

Image 4: Screenshot of the Special Circumstances Form tab

Once data has been entered successfully into each column for each row, the cells will be coloured GREEN. Each row for each student **must** be GREEN prior to submitting an application. Image 5 shows a screenshot of successful formatting.

APPLICATION DETAILS (1 to 11)											STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS (12 to 22)										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Confirm a copy of the privacy notice has been provided to parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, or the student (where appropriate) [Y]	A student identifier can be any set of numbers best suited for the school to identify the student without providing any identifiable information	[Y]	[dd/mm/yyyy]	[dd/mm/yyyy]		[dd/mm/yyyy] or "Unknown"	[Y or N]	[Y or N]	[Y or N/A]	[Y]	[M or F or X]	[0-12]	[0.1-1.0]	[Y or N or N/S]	[D or B or DE]	[Cognitive or Physical or Sensory or Social-Emotional or None]	[QDTP or Supplementary or Substantial or Extensive or None]	[Y or N]	[number or N/A]	[Y or N]	
Y	1	Y	27-Jan-2025	1-Jul-2025	5	1-Sep-2025	Y	N	N/A	Y	M	5	0	1.0	N	D	None	None	N	N/A	N

Image 5: Screenshot of successful formatting

If any data is missing, the department will return the application and request the application form to be resubmitted before the due date.

5. Location AGEID Lookup

The location AGEID is the **only** AGEID that can be used in a special circumstance application. If the school AGEID is known and not the location AGEID, use the *Location AGEID Lookup tab*. This tab **does not** need to be completed for submission and is **only** used to identify the location AGEID.

Schools with multiple locations **must** submit a separate application for each location AGEID.

Enter the school's AGEID into the *Location AGEID Lookup tab* and this will show up to 19 location records. If there are more than 19 locations in the school's structure and the AGEID number is unable to be found, email specialcircumstances@education.gov.au. Image 6 shows a screenshot of the *Location AGEID Lookup tab*.

School AGEID

Instructions

Note: This tab does not need to be completed for submission and is only used to identify the location AGEID.

The location AGEID is the only AGEID that can be used in a special circumstance application. If the school AGEID is known and not the location AGEID, use the *Location AGEID Lookup tab*.

Enter the school's AGEID into the *Location AGEID Lookup tab* and this will show up to 19 location records.

If there are more than 19 locations in the school's structure and the AGEID number is unable to be found, email specialcircumstances@education.gov.au

Once the location's AGEID number is known, enter the location AGEID into cell A4 of the *Special Circumstance Form*

Please enter a valid school AGEID number in the box to the left

Location AGEID	Name	Suburb
Please enter a valid school AGEID number in the box to the left		

Image 6: Screenshot of the Location AGEID Lookup tab

Once the location's AGEID number is known, enter the location AGEID into cell A4 of the *Special Circumstance Form tab*. If the location has a match, the location name will show in cell C4 with a green tick in column W. Image 7 shows a screenshot of the *Special Circumstance Form tab* - Location AGEID Input.

Location AGEID	State	Location Name
AGEID	STATE	Location

Image 7: Screenshot of the Special Circumstance Form tab – Location AGEID Input

If the school's location does not match, a 'this is not a valid AGEID' message will appear in cell C4 and a red cross in column W. Image 8 shows a screenshot of the *Special Circumstance Form tab* - Location AGEID Input.

Location AGEID	State	Location Name
0	---	That is not a valid location AGEID

Image 8: Screenshot of the Special Circumstance Form tab – Location AGEID Input

6. Help and Support

This tab provides instructions that do not require any added information.