

*Hawkesbury Sister City Association Inc.*  
*Student Exchange Program*

# ***Policy & Regulations***

## **Contents**

- 1 Explanation of HSCA Student Exchange Program – page 3**
- 2 Policy on use of telephones and computers – page 4**
- 3 Policy on behaviour of exchange students – page 6**
- 4 Information & Regulations for outbound Hawkesbury Exchange Students – page 7**
- 5 Regulations for Hawkesbury Host Families – page 10**
- 6 Information & Regulations for inbound Kyotamba and Temple City Exchange Students – page 11**

## **Introduction**

The Hawkesbury Sister City Association Incorporated (HSCA) has developed policies and regulations in respect to the student exchange program it runs with Temple City, USA and Kyotamba, Japan.

In organising the student exchange program the main concern of HSCA is the safety of the students undertaking the visitations. Other areas of consideration are that the program is run in a fair and equitable manner, and that students are fully aware of their responsibilities whilst participating in the program.

The policies, regulations and guidelines within this document have been developed to ensure all involved in the program are aware of their responsibilities. This includes certain regulations that students are required to follow, and what will happen if the rules are not followed.

In addition to the policy and regulations HSCA has also developed some 'tips & guidelines' to assist exchange students, their parents and host families when participating in the program.

## **1 Explanation of HSCA Student Exchange Program**

The Student Exchange Program should meet the objectives of the Association and work in conjunction with the nominated Sister Cities to:-

- Promote international understanding at all levels of the local community on a continuing long term basis
- Develop sporting, youth and cultural exchange programs to people of all ages and walks of life

The aims and objectives of the Student Exchange Program are to work in conjunction with the nominated Sister Cities to:-

- Provide a safe environment and an opportunity for youth to experience a mixture of educational and cultural activities whilst immersed in the lifestyle of another community
- Prepare outbound Hawkesbury exchange students for their exchange experience
- Have a respectful and professional relationship with the respective Sister City organisations for the benefit of the overall student exchange program.

HSCA expects that exchange students will:-

- Adhere to the rules, regulations and requirements of both the city they represent and the city they visit
- Respect the decisions of the sister city committees
- Act in a manner appropriate to their role as an ambassador of the City they represent
- Recognise the opportunity that has been afforded to them by their City and the local community who support the program.

Tools to manage the HSCA Student Exchange Program are:-

- HSCA Constitution
- Hawkesbury Sister City Inc Student Exchange Program Policy & Regulations Document
- Australian, New South Wales and Hawkesbury City Council laws and regulations as applicable.

## 2 Policy on use of telephones, mobile phones, computers, iPads, iPhones or tablets

The student exchange program provides a unique opportunity for young people to experience another country and another culture. It is important that students immerse themselves as much as possible in the lifestyle experiences as the visitations are relatively short and there are many experiences to be had.

This policy has been devised to encourage interaction by students with their host families and covers the use of telephones and computers by **all exchange students** involved with the Hawkesbury Sister City Exchange Program, including incoming students from Temple City and Kyotamba and outgoing Hawkesbury students.

Use of telephones –

1. Students are responsible for the cost of their international telephone calls during their exchange visit. Hawkesbury Sister City Association will provide all incoming students with a pre-paid telephone card with which they can make international telephone calls to their family from their host family telephone. The card should be adequate to cover these calls for the duration of the visit.
2. The maximum period for telephone usage is 30 minutes per day, with a maximum of 2.5 hours per week. Students should seek permission prior to using the telephone.

Use of mobile phones –

1. Students provided with a mobile phone by their host family should adhere to the conditions of its use as instructed by the host parents. Students should not abuse the privilege of being provided with a mobile phone.
2. Students using their own mobile phone should be aware of the costs of using it when they are overseas. Students taking their own mobile phone must comply with maximum period for telephone usage as stipulated above.

Use of computers, iPads or tablets / internet –

1. **Students are not allowed to take computers, iPads or tablets on their exchange visitation.** If they have documents they must work on during their absence they should bring the information on a usb stick and confirm with their host family that they will have a compatible computer available for them to complete their work.

Should a student consider it is imperative to bring their computer, iPad or tablet then they must apply to their sister city association for special permission. Such requests will be decided jointly by the respective sister city associations and if students are granted permission to bring their computer, iPad or tablet then they will be expected to adhere to any conditions outlined on the use of the computer, iPad or tablet. If students do not adhere to the conditions their computer, iPad or tablet will be confiscated and returned

to them at the end of the visitation. **It is only under exceptional circumstances that permission will be granted.**

2. Students will use social networking sites in an appropriate and responsible manner and will not engage in cyber bullying. Any actions deemed by both the hosting and home sister city to be antisocial, offensive or defamatory when using social networking sites, prior to the visit or during the visit, will result in the removal of the student from the program.
3. The maximum period for internet usage is 30 minutes per day, with a maximum of 2.5 hours per week. When using the host family computer students should seek permission prior to using the internet.

### **3 Policy on student exchange behaviour**

This policy covers the behavior of **all exchange students** involved with the Hawkesbury Sister City Exchange Program, including incoming students from Temple City and Kyotamba and outgoing Hawkesbury students.

1. Students will adhere to the HSCA policy on the use of telephones, mobile phones, computers, iPhones, iPads and tablets.
2. Hawkesbury students will adhere to the student exchange requirements agreement form signed by themselves and their parent /guardian.
3. Incoming students from Kyotamba and Temple City will adhere to the laws of Australia and not engage in any illegal activities.
4. Incoming students from Kyotamba and Temple City will adhere to the rules explained during their orientation. Furthermore they will abide by the rules and requests made by their host parents and the executive members of the Hawkesbury Sister City Association. Hawkesbury student will adhere to the rules explained during their orientation / arrival and abide by the rules and requests made by their host parents and executive members of the hosting sister city association.
5. Inappropriate behavior may result in an exchange student being removed from their host family or the student exchange program.
6. Any costs in removing students from the program will be the responsibility of the student and / or their parent / guardian.

## **4 Information & Regulations for outbound Hawkesbury Exchange Students**

The following regulations and guidelines govern the participation and conduct of Hawkesbury exchange students during the program and their international travel as ambassadors for the Hawkesbury.

1. Exchange students must attend the preparation sessions, and exchange students visiting Japan must attend the Japanese language and culture sessions run by the HSCA.
2. Students must abide by the laws of the country they are visiting and not engage in any illegal activities.
3. Students are not permitted to operate a motor vehicle outside Australia.
4. Students, while overseas, must not travel in a vehicle driven by a person under 21 years without the written permission of their parent/guardian, host parents and the hosting sister city association indicating the specific circumstances.
5. Students must not hitchhike.
6. Students must not smoke.
7. Students must not purchase or drink alcohol.
8. Students must not take illegal drugs. (Prescription medicines must have an accompanying letter from the prescribing doctor.)
9. Students must wear appropriate dress for an ambassador, especially at official functions and outings. Dress should be of a style so as not to cause offence to host families, schools, committee and country. This includes the wearing and display of piercings and tattoos. The inability to adhere to this rule may exclude a student from the program due to their inability to fully participate in the program during the visitation.
10. Student must not engage in sexual activity and promiscuity.
11. Students may not travel alone. If a student, prior to leaving Australia, wishes to do something outside the host sister city's program, Hawkesbury Sister City Association must be notified well in advance of the student's departure from Australia so that it can decide whether this extra curricula activity can be accommodated.
12. Whilst staying with the host family, students are required to participate in family life. Students will abide by all host family's rules and requests and where possible they are to assist with any household tasks or chores. While under the care of their host family, students are not to go out without the knowledge and permission of their host family.

13. Students must not participate in any activity that is not covered by their travel insurance policy.
14. Students are responsible for the cost of their international telephone calls during their exchange visit. In the event of a host family indicating they will pay for a student's international telephone call, students are not to accept this generous offer as HSCA requires students to pay for their own calls. Should the host family insist on the student making a call to home on their arrival, then this should be a short call of no more than five minutes duration. The only other exception is when a member of the hosting sister city association gives permission for a student to make a telephone call back to Australia.
15. In the event of any problems, if appropriate, the student will discuss this problem with their host family. If they cannot discuss their problem with their host family then they are to contact the host sister city's nominated contact. If a student is not comfortable discussing any problem with their host family or host sister city contact, they can contact a member of the HSCA.
16. Students must participate fully in the organized program. Inability to participate will be discussed with the appropriate organizer and the student will abide by the decision of the organizer.
17. Students must be prepared to make speeches (both formal and informal) at functions in Hawkesbury and also in your host city.
18. Students will be expected to make a small presentation including the singing of Australia's national anthem at a function both in Hawkesbury and overseas.
19. Students will be asked to jointly prepare a short report depicting some aspect of their host city/country's culture/life style/customs to be presented to our committee/council or newspaper.
20. As students are participating in a student exchange program, students are to attend school, participate in school activities and to get acquainted with other students. Students are to behave in class and are not to be disruptive.
21. In the event of illness, students are to advise their host family.
22. Students are responsible for obtaining a valid passport and for keeping it secure during the time they are out of Australia. It should be carried with the student only when necessary. Students are advised to make several copies of their passport details in case it is lost or stolen.
23. Students must have travel insurance and a copy of the policy cover sheet is to be provided to HSCA at least 7 days prior to the student's departure.

24. **AT ALL TIMES**, both within Australia and while overseas, students/and or their parents are responsible for their airline tickets.
25. Students are responsible for obtaining any visas required to enter the country they are visiting. Students will be visitors to the schools they attend while overseas so they will enter their host country as tourists, not exchange students (as they are not officially enrolled).
26. Students are responsible for all their own costs including airfare, insurance, passport and visas, excess luggage, medical expenses, and incidentals such as telephone calls, gifts, souvenirs, sightseeing (with host family), transfers to/from Sydney airport, ISIC card where necessary, etc. The hosting committee will cover the cost of return transfers from the airport to the host family, excursions on the official program run by the hosting committee including the cost of entries, meals and travel (excluding souvenirs and any other personal costs). In regard to sightseeing costs when students are with their host families, it is appropriate to offer to pay for your own entry and costs, but if the host family offer to pay these costs for students it is appropriate to politely accept.
27. Families of outbound exchange students are required to home host an inbound student.
28. Students are not allowed to take a computer with them. If a student has a particular need to take a computer they must apply in writing to HSCA. If a student is given permission to take a computer they must adhere to the conditions of use outlined by HSCA.
29. Students should not engage in cyber bullying. Any actions deemed to be antisocial, offensive or defamatory when using social networking sites, prior to the visit or during the visit, will result in the removal of the student from the program.
30. Any actions by students deemed to be antisocial, unlawful, defamatory or offensive, at any time before or during their exchange visit, may result in the student being removed from the program.
31. Students are required to provide a written report of their visit.
32. Students and their parents / guardians must complete, sign and provide HSCA with the original copy of the Hawkesbury Exchange Student Code of Conduct and Participation Agreement and the Medical Authorisation and Student Information form as requested.

**Should any student fail to adhere to these requirements HSCA and the host sister city reserves the right to remove the student from their host family, and/or disqualify them from the program, and/or send them home. The student and/or their parent/guardian will be responsible for any costs incurred in HSCA or the host sister city undertaking any of these actions including the early return home of the student.**

## 5 Regulations for Hawkesbury Host Families

The HSCA Student Exchange program is run by a team of volunteers. Unlike many other exchange programs no financial support is given to host families. To facilitate the hosting of the inbound students HSCA requires families of outbound exchange students to home host an inbound student.

Each family operates differently and the HSCA expects the visiting student to 'fit it' with the host family household routine. However, there are a few regulations that all host families are required to adhere to, as follows –

- In line with the NSW Children's and Young Persons Act, all members of the host family aged 18 years and over must complete an appropriate declaration form. Other persons who are not permanently part of your household but may on occasions be the responsible/supervising adult for the student you are hosting, such as grandparents, may also be required to complete a declaration form.
- The visiting student is not to travel in a vehicle driven by a person under 21 years of age and all drivers must have held a licence for at least 12 months.
- Students are not allowed to drive, drink alcohol, smoke, take illegal drugs, hitchhike, perm or colour their hair, get tattoos or any body piercing (including earrings) or undertake any activity that is not covered by their travel insurance policy.
- Students are not to travel / go out after dark without adult supervision.
- It is expected that the inbound students will be accompanied by a responsible person aged 21 years and over when in unfamiliar locations.
- In the event of the student becoming ill, please inform either the President or Secretary of HSCA.
- Students are expected to participate in the organised program. When the student attends school please provide their meals; when the student attends excursions organised by HSCA their meals will be provided unless indicated on the itinerary. Please direct your student on suitable clothing for school and the excursions.

To assist host families HSCA will provide a booklet with some tips on hosting an exchange student. In addition host families are welcome to contact any member of HSCA for hosting advice or assistance.

## **6 Information & Regulations for Kyotamba and Temple City Students**

During their orientation visiting Kyotamba and Temple City students will be provided with information about their stay in Hawkesbury City. This will include the following regulations which incoming students are required to follow.

- 1 Students must follow the Hawkesbury Sister City Association (HSCA) policy on the usage of telephones, mobile phones, computers, iPads and tablets.
- 2 Students must follow the HSCA policy on student behaviour.
- 3 Respect and follow the rules of your household, even though they may be different from those back home. Some rules you are required to follow have been passed on by HSCA.
- 4 Your host parents are responsible for you. Most host parents worry about their exchange student more than their own children. If you have a problem, don't expect your host family to just know; please talk to them and share your problems.
- 5 Show respect to your host parents and other members of your host family.
- 6 Do not travel in a vehicle driven by anyone under 21 years of age.
- 7 Host parents will suggest suitable clothing for school, excursions and social outings. Please follow their suggestions so that you are comfortable in our Australian conditions and weather. At school enclosed shoes or sneakers must be worn (open sandals and heeled shoes are not acceptable). Students may be required to wear school uniform depending on the school you attend.
- 8 When going on excursions organised by HSCA travel expenses, entry fees and meals are provided. When sightseeing with host families it is appropriate to offer to pay for your own entry and costs, but if the host family offer to pay these costs for students it is appropriate to politely accept.
- 9 Students will be required to speak at welcome and farewell functions during your stay in Hawkesbury City.
- 10 Please keep your identity card (issued by HSCA during your orientation) with you at all times as it contains emergency contact details. You can use these contact details if you get lost or if you need to contact a member of HSCA if you have a problem or there is an emergency situation.
- 11 When travelling in a car you must wear a seat belt. This is the law in Australia and if you are caught without a seatbelt the driver will be fined and have demerit points against their drivers licence.

- 12 Students are not allowed to take illegal drugs, purchase or drink alcohol, smoke, hitchhike, engage in sexual activity and promiscuity, drive a motor vehicle (except recreational activities with the permission of either HSCA or your host family).
- 13 Students are responsible for ensuring their bags comply with their airlines weight restrictions when returning home as excess baggage charges are very high. If students have excess baggage that they want to send home by mail they must pack it up and send it prior to their departure. Host families or HSCA will assist students as required.
- 14 Students must have travel insurance in place during their stay and must not participate in any activity not covered by their travel insurance.
- 15 Inbound students and their parents / guardians must complete, sign and provide the original copy of the HSCA Medical Authorisation & Student Information form, and the Inbound Exchange Student Code of Conduct and Participation agreement to HSCA two weeks prior to the arrival of the inbound student delegation.
- 16 Any concerns or allegations made by a student in regard to their host family, or any member of that family will be managed as follows –
  - a. An issue that contravenes any Australian law, especially in regard to allegations of indecent exposure, assault or molestation will be managed in accordance with requirements of the NSW Child Protection Act or appropriate Australian legislation.
  - b. An issue in regard to any other concern or claim by the student will be by mediation with a meeting between the student and their host parents being held as quickly as possible with a representative of HSCA acting as mediator.

**The safety and welfare of visiting exchange students is the priority of HSCA.** Issues such as homesickness, fitting in with a host family, and what to do if a student has a problem will be discussed during the orientation session held by HSCA when students arrive in Hawkesbury City. In addition students will be issued with a booklet with tips to help them during their visit.

**Visiting students are required to follow the policies, regulations and guidelines set by HSCA.** Should any student fail to adhere to these requirements HSCA reserves the right to remove the student from their host family, and/or disqualify them from the program, and/or send them home. Such action would be taken in liaison with the student's 'home' sister city association. The student and/or their parent/guardian will be responsible for any costs incurred in HSCA or the host sister city undertaking any of these actions including the early return home of the student.