Guidelines for use of the National Student Number by schools

1 Purpose of this guide
The National Student Number (NSN), is a unique identification number given to every student. The NSN will make it easier for the education sector to manage and share information about students in a way that protects their privacy. This guide explains the background to the NSN including how and when it can be used.

2 Legal background
Changes to the Education Act in 2006 authorised the use of NSNs by schools, the Ministry of Education, NZQA and other agencies. The Act states that NSNs can only be used for:
- monitoring and ensuring student enrolment and attendance;
- ensuring education providers and students receive appropriate resourcing;
- statistical purposes;
- research purposes;
- ensuring that students' educational records are accurately maintained.

3 When can the NSN be used?
The NSN can be used to share student information for any of the purposes allowed by the Education Act (see section 2 above). Any information sent to the Ministry or other education agencies about a student should be linked to the NSN.

Processes and systems that the NSN should be used for include:
- collecting student data for reporting purposes by education agencies (e.g. March and July roll returns, NZQA results reporting, entering entries for external examinations, NQF registration, STAR and gateway funding);
- analysis of student data over time (e.g. assessment data);
- analysis of student data in clusters, where the NSN identifies students in the cluster;
- moving data between software applications (e.g. moving data between a SMS and a learning management system);
- issuing documentation students need to present to other schools or education providers.

4 When can’t the NSN be used?
The NSN cannot be used for purposes that are outside those listed in the Education Act. For example, the NSN cannot be used:
- for school identity cards;
- as a primary key or index within a student database;
- for most pastoral or health care information (Note: hearing and vision test information is allowed as this is collected in the enrolment record in ENROL);
- administration of activities not with NCEA or similar educational records (such as sports and extra-curricular activities);
- administration of school fees, accounts, or library usage;
- general communication with parents or students.
5 Why is the use of the NSN limited?
School's use of the NSN is limited to the purposes listed in the Education Act. These purposes enable information to be shared within the sector but restrict the possibility of the NSN becoming used indiscriminately.

6 NSN use for statistics or research
The NSN is stable and unique to each student. This has real benefits for research and statistical analysis.

The NSN will enable research and statistical work to be carried out without reference in raw data to student names. This will ensure that student data remains private. The NSN also enables longitudinal analysis of students who transfer between the schools in a cluster and of students' progress through these schools.

Note: Normal ethical codes apply for research and statistics that use the NSN.

7 Can contractors or service suppliers to schools use the NSN?
Contractors or suppliers who provide services on a school's behalf act as an agent of the school and are able to use the NSN. This includes research companies, consultants, SMS vendors or bureaus.

8 Do parents or students need to use the NSN?
Parents or students will only need to use the NSN during the NCEA process. The NCEA process uses the NSN as the registration number to link it to students' Record of Achievement maintained by the NZ Qualifications Authority.

Otherwise the NSN will not affect students and parents directly, and will be seen infrequently. For example it will appear on an ENROL record if this is given to students when they transfer to another school.

Students have the right to use or disclose their NSN for any purpose. They may choose to use their NSN as proof of their identity, as can be done with a bank statement.

A form is available online for anyone who wants to request their NSN details. The form is available from http://nsi.education.govt.nz/survey/moe2.asp It may also be requested from a school.

9 Is consent needed from students or parents in order to use the NSN?
Schools do not need consent to use the NSN if it is being used for one of the purposes specified in the Education Act.

We recommend students or parents who have concerns regarding the NSN discuss it with their School Principal. Alternatively they can call the Ministry of Education e-Admin contact centre:
Phone: (04) 463 8383
e.admin@minedu.govt.nz
10 **How can NSNs be accessed?**
All schools can access NSNs for their students through ENROL. Other software you use may also use the NSN.

In ENROL every record shows the NSN on the screen.

Student Management Systems (SMS) can import and store NSNs. The NSN is stored in an SMS as one of the student details, allowing you to run a report of the NSNs for students enrolled in your school. Some SMS systems can check NSNs in ENROL in real-time, so information is extremely accurate and up-to-date.

11 **Using NSNs in the school's SMS**
If your school has an SMS and you have not imported the NSNs from ENROL into your School database please follow the instructions available on the ministry web site.

The NSN becomes a data element within the SMS record for each student, along with a school's own unique identifier or the SMS generated student number.

A project is underway to include NSNs in ENROL and integrate ENROL with SMS.

**For more information**

If you would like background information on NSN it can be found on the Ministry of Education website: http://www.minedu.govt.nz/educationSectors/Schools/SchoolOperations/NationalStudentNumber/InformationForParentsAndStudents/FrequentlyAskedQuestions.aspx

If you have questions you can call or e-mail the e-Admin contact centre:

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