**Standard Operating Procedure**

**Undertaking an assessment for accreditation - Schools**

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| **Purpose** |

The purpose of this document is to provide a procedure for Actmart Schools staff to ensure safety and quality standards are met when undertaking accreditation assessments.

**Actsmart Schools** has 5 focus areas in which schools can gain accreditation:

1. Energy,
2. Curriculum,
3. Biodiversity/School Grounds,
4. Water, and
5. Waste.

Schools become accredited in a focus area when they have adequately followed the appropriate Actsmart Schools Best Practice Guide,implementedrecommendations from environmental audits and achieved positive environmental outcomes. Schools must have reduced water and energy consumption and waste going to landfill. Sustainability education should be integrated across the curriculum.

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| **Scope** |

This procedure applies to all employees and contractors in the Sustainability Programs Branch of the ACT Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD).

Employees and contractors are responsible for being familiar with this SOP and applying it in practice. New employees and contractors are taken through the accreditation processes by the Schools Manager at the commencement of their employment. Employees are responsible for identifying, mitigating and reporting potential and real risks and hazards. These should be reported to the Schools Manager.

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| **Procedure** |

A school is identified for accreditation assessment through one of the following:

* Data generated from the Actsmart Schools database (Action List) identifies when a school is due for accreditation assessment,
* The school requests an assessment for a particular focus area,
* The Actsmart Schools Waste and Education officer identifies through face-to-face visits that the school has reduced its waste to landfill, is actively working to improve recycling rates or has introduced measures to reduce energy consumption,
* Actsmart Schools staff is aware that the school has been working towards a particular focus area for over a year,
* One year after the teacher attends an Actsmart Schools professional development workshop in one of the five focus areas or the school receives a best practice guide in one of the areas,
* Data generated from Enterprise Sustainability Platform (ESP) demonstrates that the school has reduced its energy or water consumption.

**1.1 On-site School Visit Procedure:**

On-site visits are required for waste, school grounds and curriculum accreditation assessments. Assessments for energy and water only require a phone call.

Contact is made with the Sustainability Coordinator or the Business Manager to confirm a date for a visit. (Actsmart Officer should have a Working with Vulnerable People card).

* Check car availability and book car on-line.
* Google address and ensure you have correct address and contact number details before leaving.
* Write the school name, time and expected return time on the staff whiteboard prior to leaving the ACT Government office. Ensure that someone else in the Actsmart team knows which school you are visiting.
* Always park in the school car park and enter the school via the main Administration office. Sign in as a Visitor at the school front desk.
* If you are in contact with students, ensure you are never left alone with students.
* If taking photos of students, ensure you take the EPSDD Photo Permission form and ask the teacher to return the forms to you. Objective ID: A12189312 (*Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Promotion > EPD Photo Consent Form)*

**1.2 Undertake Energy Assessment:**

1. Access the Schools Database: *(R:\SustainabilityPrograms\Schools\Database\Workstation\SSD)*: Access the entry for chosen school. Navigate to the Energy tab, and select “Consumption Overview”. By clicking “Print Energy Accreditation”, an Excel spreadsheet of consumption data tables and graphs will open. You will need to populate these tables with data from ESP.
2. In the ESP platform (*http://envizi.com/*): Choose the Education Directorate. Click “View BI Dashboard”. In the “Filter” window on the left side of the screen, filter out your chosen school in the “Locations” tab. Click “Refresh”. Choose the correct time frame using the slider bar at the top of the screen. Ensure that when you choose to view electricity data, you view the data using the correct units, kWh. Change the units to MJ when you view the gas data. Obtain monthly data for electricity (kWh) and gas consumption (MJ) at the chosen school by clicking the csv. file in “Activity by Period”. This will generate an Excel spreadsheet of monthly data.
3. In the benchmark spreadsheet (from Schools Database): populate the data tables for the chosen school. Ensure that your data from ESP is in the correct units, i.e. kWh for electricity and MJ for gas. Update the school population for the current year (found in the Schools Database). Analyse the graphs to determine if the school sits above or below school best practice for energy consumption.
4. If the school consumption data sits above the school typical practice benchmark, then it is not ready for accreditation. If consumption is excessive contact the school to discuss reasons, offer recommendations and send them the ‘Tips to Reduce Energy’ information sheet (Objective ID A11286763) and the ‘Feed in Tariff’ information sheet if the school has PV panels (Objective ID A10107739).
5. The school needs to be better than the typical practice benchmark to be eligible for accreditation assessment.
6. If the school has previously received an energy audit report, find the report in the Actsmart Schools files and read through the given recommendations. During the assessment, ask if the school has implemented the recommendations.
7. Obtain the Energy Assessment Sheet: Objective ID A10086463

*(Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Accreditation > Energy > Energy Accreditation Assessment Sheet)*

1. Phone the school (Business Manager, Principal or the Sustainability Coordinator) to discuss the questions on the Energy Assessment Sheet. Do not commence the assessment by going through the questions (it is not a test or inquisition!). Take a blank sheet of paper and start by asking the school what actions it has undertaken to reduce energy consumption. Record the information on the blank sheet. Only refer to the questions on the assessment sheet if the school has not answered some of them. Not all questions are relevant to every school. Final assessment is not determined by the scores on the assessment sheet. The scores are a guide for the assessor to be aware of the level of importance given to particular tasks. Assess the overall perception of energy consumption behaviour at the school by staff and students and if activities are linked to the curriculum. Find out if the school has undertaken any major upgrades, demolition, renovations, new onsite works or if the school has a heated pool or any large facilities used by the community that may impact on their energy consumption.
2. If the school consumption data sits below the ACT school best practice benchmark and the phone interview presents a good awareness of low energy consumption behaviours then accredit the school. Some schools are limited in reducing energy consumption due to the schools infrastructure. If they show the right behavioural changes and have implemented actions to raise the awareness of energy use across the school then accreditation can still be granted.
3. If a school gains accreditation contact the school and ask if they would like their accreditation certificate awarded at assembly or delivered by courier to the school.
4. If a school is not successful in gaining accreditation, recommendations are provided and the school informed they will be reassessed in 8-12 months. Send the school ‘Tips to Reduce Energy’ flyer (Objective ID A11286763) and if the school has PV panels send the ‘Feed in Tariff’ information sheet (Objective ID A10107739).
5. Update Schools Database with accreditation date, delivery of the certificate or, if unsuccessful a date for reassessment (Action list-Contact). The accreditation date is the date the Actsmart Schools Officer notified the school that it had gained accreditation, not the date the certificate and teaching resources were awarded.
   1. **Undertake Curriculum Assessment:**
6. Access the Schools Database:

*(R:\Sustainability Programs\Schools\Database\Workstation\SSD)*.

1. Phone the school (Principal or the Sustainability Coordinator) to find out if they think they are ready for assessment. If not, provide advice and recommendations.
2. If ready for accreditation, line up a visit date to go through the Curriculum Assessment Sheet with the staff member who knows the most about curriculum development at the school.
3. Obtain the Curriculum Assessment Sheet: Objective ID A10086521 *(Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Accreditation > Curriculum > Curriculum Assessment Sheet)*
4. The Actsmart officer must comply with the *EPD Standard Operating Procedure, Fieldwork of Sustainability and Climate Change Division* (2016) in planning and attending visits.
5. The school will gain accreditation if: teachers have attended professional learning on sustainability, has an active student engagement in sustainability initiatives (such as food gardens), the school curriculum has embedded sustainability across most subject areas and year levels, and students have participated in special environment events and authentic learning experiences. The assessor should sight examples of curriculum units that address sustainability.
6. If the school gains accreditation ask if they would like their accreditation certificate awarded at assembly or delivered by courier to the school.
7. If unsuccessful provide recommendations for improvement.
8. Update Schools Database with accreditation date, delivery of certificate or if unsuccessful a date for reassessment (Action list- Contact).
   1. **Undertake School Grounds/Biodiversity Assessment:**
9. Access the Schools Database:

*(R:\Sustainability Programs\Schools\Database\Workstation\SSD)*.

1. Phone or email the school (Principal or the Sustainability Coordinator) and ask if they are ready for accreditation. If not, provide advice and suggest the Actsmart Schools Horticulturist visit the school to assist.
2. If ready for assessment organise a school visit to go through the School Grounds/Biodiversity Assessment Sheet (Objective ID A10086533 (*Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Accreditation > School Grounds > School Grounds Assessment Sheet)* with the most appropriate staff member at the school.
3. The Actsmart officer must comply with the *EPD Standard Operating Procedure, Fieldwork of Sustainability and Climate Change Division* (2016) in planning and attending visits.
4. Consider the following, has the school/teachers: utilised Actsmart Schools free horticultural services, attended any Actsmart Schools professional learning workshops, created a variety of gardens e.g. food, native plant or indigenous gardens, participated in the Fresh Tastes program, designed school grounds to reduce energy and water consumption, linked activities to the curriculum and actively involved students and the school community. Remember not all questions are relevant to every school. If the school addresses most of the requirements, accredit them.
5. If successful, contact the school and ask if they would like their accreditation certificate awarded at assembly or delivered by courier to the school.
6. If unsuccessful provide recommendations for improvement.
7. Update Schools Database with accreditation date, delivery of certificate or if unsuccessful a date for reassessment (Action list- Contact).

**1.5 Undertake Water Assessment:**

1. Access the Schools Database:
2. *(R:\Sustainability Programs\Schools\Database\Workstation\SSD)*. Access the entry for the chosen school. Select the Water tab and navigate to “Consumption Overview”. By clicking “Print Water Accreditation Assessment Sheet” an Excel spreadsheet of consumption data tables and graphs will open. You will need to populate these tables with data from ESP.
3. In the ESP Platform (*http://envizi.com/*): Choose the Education and Training Directorate. Click “View BI Dashboard”. In the “Filter” window on the left side of the screen, filter out your chosen school in the “Locations” tab. Filter out water in the “Measures” tab. Click “Refresh”. Choose the correct time frame using the slider bar at the top. Ensure that you view the data using the correct units, kL. Obtain monthly data for water usage at chosen school by clicking the csv. file in “Activity by Period”. This will generate an Excel spreadsheet of monthly data.
4. In the benchmark spreadsheet (from Schools Database): populate the data tables for chosen school. Ensure that your data from ESP is in the correct units, i.e. kL. Update the school population for the current year. Analyse the graphs to determine if the school sits above or below school typical practice for energy consumption.
5. Obtain Water Assessment Sheet: Objective ID A10086429 *(Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Accreditation > Water > Water Assessment Sheet)*
6. All ACT schools received a water audit report in 2009-2012. Read the report recommendations before assessing the chosen school.
7. Phone the school (Business Manager, Principal or the Sustainability Coordinator) and go through the Water Assessment Sheet with the most appropriate staff member at the school. Do not commence the assessment by going through the questions (it is not a test). Ask the school what actions it has undertaken to reduce water consumption. Only refer to the questions on the assessment sheet if the school has not answered some of them. Final assessment is not determined by the scores on the assessment sheet. The scores are a guide for the assessor to be aware of importance of particular tasks. Not all questions are relevant to every school.
8. Consider the following: has the school implemented the recommendations from the audit report (e.g. upgraded its infrastructure to include fixtures with low water consumption), are the Business and Facilities Managers aware of the Smart Pulse meter (Public Schools only) to monitor surges in water consumption, has the school participated in events or curriculum activities focusing on water. Assess the overall perception of water usage behaviour by staff and students. Find out if the school has undertaken any major upgrades, demolition, renovations, new onsite works or if the school has a pool or any large facilities used by the community that may impact on their water consumption. Accredit the school if it meets most of the criteria.
9. Contact the school and ask if they would like their accreditation certificate awarded at assembly or delivered by courier to the school**.**
10. If unsuccessful provide recommendations for improvement and email ‘Tips to Reduce Water’ (Objective ID A1017760) and the ‘Feed in Tariff’ information sheet (Objective ID A10107739) if the school has PV panels.
11. Update Schools Database with accreditation date, delivery of certificate or, if unsuccessful, a date for reassessment (Action List - Contacts).
    1. **Undertake Waste Assessment:**
12. Access the Schools Database:
13. *(R:\Sustainability Programs\Schools\Database\Workstation\SSD).*
14. Send the school an Eco Snapshot Sheet (waste audit) to complete and return to Actsmart Schools. Objective ID A12307585 *(Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Focus Area > Waste Focus Area > Eco Snapshot > Waste Eco Snapshot Sheet UPDATED)*
15. Enter Waste Audit data into the Schools Database for the chosen school. Compare this data to previous audit.
16. In the Schools Database: access the entry for the chosen school. Navigate to “Consumption Overview” tab. By clicking “Print Waste Accreditation Assessment Sheet” an Excel spreadsheet of consumption data tables and graphs will open. Check that the data is up-to-date with the most recent Waste Audit data and the school’s population. Analyse the graphs to see if the school has reduced its waste to landfill and where it sits compared to schools best practice.
17. If the school consumption data sits above the school typical benchmark, then the school is not ready for accreditation. If consumption is excessive contact the school to discuss and offer assistance from the Actsmart Schools Waste Education Officer. Send the ‘Feed in Tariff’ information sheet to the school if it has PV panels (Objective ID A10107739).
18. The school needs to be better than the typical practice benchmark to be eligible for accreditation assessment.
19. If ready for accreditation obtain the Waste Assessment Sheet: Objective ID A10086489 *(Sustainability Programs – Programs> Schools > Schools Management > Accreditation > Water > Water Assessment Sheet)*
20. Visit the school following the procedure in step 1.1. The Actsmart officer must comply with the *EPD Standard Operating Procedure, Fieldwork of Sustainability and Climate Change Division* (2016) in planning and attending visits. Organise to meet the Business Manager, Principal or the Sustainability Coordinator and run through the Waste Assessment Sheet with them. Do not commence the assessment by going through the questions. Start by asking the school what actions it has undertaken to reduce waste to landfill. Only refer to the questions on the assessment sheet if the school has not answered some of them. Final assessment is not determined by the scores on the assessment sheet. The scores are a guide for the assessor to be aware of level of importance of particular tasks. Not all questions are relevant to every school. Consider the following, the school: borrowed the Interactive Waste Display, teachers attended Actsmart Schools professional learning workshops, has received advice from the Waste Education Officer, has implemented activities to improve recycling (including teachers, BSO’s and students), has a waste student leadership team, consistent waste stations with signage, linked activities to the curriculum, visited the Materials Recovery Facility and utilised the Actsmart Public Event Recycling Program for school events. Accredit the school if it is engaging with the majority of the items on the Waste Assessment Sheet.
21. If unsuccessful provide recommendations for improvement and suggest the Actsmart Schools Waste Education Officer is available to assist.
22. Update Schools Database with accreditation date, delivery of certificate or, if unsuccessful, a date for reassessment (Action list – Contacts).

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| **Related Legislation, Policies and Standards** |

**Legislation**

*Work Health and Safety Act*

http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35/default.asp

*ACT Public Service Management Act 1994*

<http://www.psm.act.gov.au/legislation/psm>‐act/PSM‐1994‐37.pdf

*ACT Public Service ‐ Best Practice Notes Injury Prevention and Management* <http://www.psm.act.gov.au/legislation/bpn/bpn.htm>

*ACT Human Rights Act 2004*

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/act/consolact/hra2004148/>

Privacy Act

<http://www.environment.act.gov.au/about/privacy>

**Policies**

*Environment and Planning Directorate – Fieldwork Safety and Security Policy and Framework*

<http://epdintranet.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/52966/S_-_Fieldwork_Security_Policy_and_Framework09sep.pdf>

*Motor Vehicle Policy Handbook*

<http://epdintranet.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/98615/ESDD_Motor_Vehicle_Policy_Handbook.pdf>

*Privacy policy*

<http://www.environment.act.gov.au/about/privacy>

**Standards**

<http://www.nohsc.gov.au/OHSLegalObligations/>

Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Specialisation with guidance use. AS/NZ 4801:2001.

Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – General guidelines on principles, systems and supporting techniques. AS/NZ 4804:2001.

Risk Management AS/NZ 4360:2004.

**Other documents of direct relevance**

*EPD Security Incidents Operating Procedure*

<http://epdintranet.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/52964/P-Q_-_Security_Incidents_-_Security_Operating_Procedure.pdf>

Sustainability Programs Risk Register



*EPD Standard Operating Procedure, Fieldwork of Sustainability and Climate Change Division* (2016)

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| **References** |

**Cross Reference and Further Reading**

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