
Immersion Policy

Approved by the EREA Board February 2016

- Rationale:** EREA is committed to developing positive and mutually beneficial relationships with communities in the Majority World and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities through immersions. The Catholic call to solidarity and the quest for justice and peace for all is at the heart of these experiences. EREA believes that immersions provide a powerful transformational experience for those involved and have the ability to further develop the mission of the educational community of the participants. EREA recognises that these experiences achieve their optimal outcomes when immersions and partnerships are developed in accord with key principles of best practice.
- Principles:** The following are principles which provide a framework for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition involved in Immersions:
1. **Development Principles:** Immersions follow developmental principles and model an ethic of partnership, solidarity and a quest for justice.
 2. **Quality Education:** Immersions are underpinned by the principles of educating for justice and peace and provide opportunities for students to participate in appropriate action and reflection.
 3. **Faith Formation:** Immersions are part of the faith formation program of EREA and enable participants to reflect on their own faith journey through regular debriefing, reflection and prayer.
 4. **Risk Management:** Appropriate risk management strategies are put in place in order to ensure the safety of all participants and the host community.
 5. **Child Protection:** Appropriate strategies are put in place to ensure the safety of both participants and children from the hosting community.
 6. **Continuing and Mutual Partnership:** Structures are put in place to ensure the longevity of the relationship and opportunities for mutual benefits.
 7. **Environmental and Sustainable Travel:** Immersions model sustainable travel principles and the care and concern for the environment.
 8. **Advocacy and the Quest for Justice:** Immersions include learning about and reflection on global and local justice issues that affect communities visited and encourages advocacy for structural change that ensures justice for these partners.

Policy Statement:	Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) supports and encourages participation in approved immersions to the Majority World and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, and sees these as an integral experience in the life and formation of participants. EREA aspires to best practice in the conduct of all immersions informed by the <i>Guidelines for Immersions</i> . All Senior Leaders of EREA are expected to participate in an immersion.
Key Responsibilities:	<p>EREA Board The EREA Board has the responsibility to ensure that appropriate support and resourcing is provided for immersions.</p> <p>EREA Executive Director The Executive Director has the responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented and that procedures are developed within the framework of this policy and that appropriate support and formation is provided to enable quality local and global immersions to occur.</p> <p>School Principals Principals have the responsibility to ensure that this policy and its procedures are implemented and are integrated into the core mission of the school.</p> <p>School Boards School Boards have the responsibility to support the implementation of this policy.</p>
Review:	Consideration will be given every 2 years to determine if this policy requires review earlier than 2019.
Related Information:	EREA Immersion Policy Guidelines