



## School: Dress Codes

Each school (whether government or private) will have a 'dress code', which is a standard of what is acceptable clothing that must be worn by students and includes headwear and footwear. The school will also have standards of what are acceptable aspects of the student's personal presentation (e.g. hair colour, hairstyle, jewellery, piercings, etc.). Most schools have a standard school uniform that students are required to wear as part of the dress code.

When a student is enrolled at a school, the student and their parents must be informed about the requirements of the school's dress code.

The Principal of the school may make exemptions for a student from complying with the school's dress code. Such grounds for exemption may be due to the student's health, religious beliefs or cultural background.

### How can the school dress code be enforced?

If you are a student at a non-government school, then there may be different consequences that arise for you to that of a student attending a government school. Students at private schools will need to refer to their school's code of conduct and dress code.

If you are a non-complying student at a government school, there are different consequences depending on whether you are at Primary School or Secondary School.

#### **Primary School**

You may be prevented from attending any activity where the school is represented (inter- school sports carnival) or prevented from attending or participating in any school activity which is not an essential part of your education (e.g. excursions, incursions, etc.).

#### **Secondary School**

You may be committing a breach of school discipline and subject to the school's discipline procedure such as being restricted in participation in a school activity or activities, or detention (but not suspension or exclusion). You will, however, not be prevented from attending or participating in any school activity which is an essential part of your education.



## What if there are safety concerns?

If your personal presentation is likely to pose a risk to your safety or that of anyone else participating in the school activity, the Principal has the power to prevent you from participating in that activity. This may be because of the particular footwear or headwear you are wearing, the length of your hair, your hairstyle, your jewellery, your fingernails, or other adornments you are wearing such as rings, studs or other things attached to your body. This action can be taken if you do not remove the item, even if you are otherwise complying with the school's dress code.

The Principal of a government school may prevent you from participating in a school activity if, because of your clothing, it is likely to constitute a hazard to the student or others. If this occurs the Principal must advise your parent or responsible adult of the action taken and seek their assistance in dealing with the situation.

## More Information

YouthLaw Australia: <https://yla.org.au/wa/topics/school/school-uniforms/>

**Please note:** Laws are subject to change. Last updated July 2020.

**Important:** The information provided in this infosheet is for information only.

It should not be relied on as legal advice.

Please seek legal advice about your particular circumstances.