Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017

Government schools fact sheet

On **25 June 2017,** the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* take effect. These Regulations replace the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007*.

This fact sheet provides an overview of the changes that affect Government schools.

# Changes to the Regulations

All changes apply from 25 June 2017 unless otherwise stated.

## Temporary closure of schools

With the approval of the Secretary, the principal of a Government school (instead of a school council) may temporarily close the school due to an emergency. *Regulation 14(2)*

## Age requirements

There is a new upper age limit for enrolment outside the metropolitan area solely for the purpose of completing a senior secondary course. Students turning up to 20 years of age during the year of enrolment do not contravene the age for school enrolment if there is no TAFE institute or other registered training organisation (other than a Government school) within:

* a distance of 50 kilometres (rather than 45 minutes travel time) of that school offering an accredited senior secondary course; or
* offers an accredited senior secondary course through a distance education program that the person is eligible to enrol in. *Regulation 17(2)(c)*

## Age requirements (cont.)

The Minister can exempt a student from the maximum age requirements as long as the exemption is granted before the student turns 21. The length of the exemption is at the Minister’s discretion. *Regulation 20*

The Minister may exempt a person from the maximum age requirements if the exemption will enable the person to transfer from an English language Government school or centre into year 10 at a Government school. *Regulation 20(3)(b)*

### The Minister can no longer exempt a child from the minimum age requirements on the basis that they require ‘extra support or assistance’.

## Student engagement policy

‘Student behaviour’ policies now fall under the heading of ‘student engagement’.

 A principal (not the school council) is responsible for developing a student engagement policy that:

* is developed in consultation with the school community and
* is consistent with any Ministerial Order about suspension or expulsion of a student from a Government school. *Regulation 23*

## School councils

If the President of a school council is unable to preside at a council meeting, the Vice-President (if one has been appointed and they are available) must preside. *Regulation 28(2)*

A community member on school council has the same rights, duties and obligations as parent and department employee members. *Regulation 32(5)*

## Parents’ clubs

Clarification to explain that the sole purpose of an interim committee is to develop a constitution for the parents’ club and obtain the Minister’s approval for that constitution. The committee is dissolved following this process. *Regulation 53*

Require all parents’ club funds to be kept within a subprogram of the school’s official account (rather than being held in an external account). *Regulation 54(3)*

Automatic dissolution of parents’ clubs in instances of school closures or mergers. *Regulation 57*

*Note that schools with parents’ clubs which hold external bank accounts will be contacted prior to the commencement of the regulations. See the Parents’ Clubs Fact Sheet for more information*.

## Fundraising

This provision more clearly provides that the purpose of any fundraising activity should be agreed by the school council before the fundraising activity is undertaken. *Regulation 58*

## Registration of schools

Changes to school registration requirements **apply from 1 January 2018 for new schools opening in 2018** and from **1 July 2018** for existing schools.

Note: Principals should continue to submit any applications to amend the registration of your school to the Integrated Provision and Design Unit (RSG) for lodgement with the VRQA no later than 30 June in the year before the year in which the school intends to implement the change. *Regulation 68(1)*

The changes to the minimum standards for registration include:

* Minimum Standard 12 - addition of the definition for ‘attending the school’ (see *Definitions* section of the Regulations)
* Minimum Standard 16 – addition of the words ‘and be able to demonstrate how the school’s philosophy is enacted’
* Minimum Standard 17 – change in the definition of not-for-profit (see *Definitions* section of the Regulations).

## Registration of schools (CONT.)

* Minimum Standard 21 – additional requirement for schools to have suitable arrangements in place to comply with guidelines issued by the VRQA.
* See Schedule 4 for the full list of Minimum Standards.

## Home schooling

Changes have been made to the regulations relating to home schooling which will **commence on 1 January 2018**. See the *Home Schooling Fact Sheet* for more information.

## SUPPORT FOR pRINCIPALS

Principals can find further information about how these changes will affect their government school from 26 June in the School Policy and Advisory Guide (SPAG) and relevant pages of the Department’s website.

## further information

For further information about the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017,* see: [Education and Training Reform Regulations](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/legislation/Pages/act2006regs.aspx)