**Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee**

Meeting 19 (9 July 2021)

**Communiqué**

The nineteenth meeting of the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee (VHEAC) was held on 9 July 2021. Due to ongoing COVID-19 related restrictions, the meeting was held using video-conferencing technology.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) provided an update on VRQA regulatory activity regarding home education. VHEAC members also discussed a range of issues including progress on opportunities to mitigate the challenges facing students transitioning from home education to TAFE and accessing funded TAFE places, progress on the independent evaluation of the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* and education options for victims of family violence.

**VRQA Update**

VRQA provided an update on application numbers for the year to date. VRQA advised that there was continued growth in the number of new applications received during Quarter 1 for 2021; however, this has eased somewhat in subsequent period.

VRQA advised that 65% of reviews for the 2020 year period had now been completed, and the remainder were on track to be finalised in the coming month. VRQA noted that many parents had demonstrated very positive examples of practice through the review process. VRQA clarified that reviews for the 2021 year period will commence in September.

VHEAC home schooling representatives provided comment on the 10% review target and review process.

VRQA discussed a proposal to survey home schooling community members about their reasons for choosing to home school and sought input from VHEAC home schooling representatives.

**Transition to TAFE and TAFE funding options**

In order to address the challenges facing students who are seeking to transition from home schooling to TAFE, the Department has identified that a change is needed to the current Ministerial Order (MO 705). The Department updated VHEAC that the next milestone for amending MO 705 is for Legal Division to commence drafting of the amended MO, within 4-6 weeks.

In May, the Department also convened an out of session workshop with VHEAC members and representatives from the Senior Secondary Pathways Reform Taskforce to discuss the ongoing challenge of home schooling students not being able to access TAFE and VET funding. The Taskforce has advised that they will organise another meeting with VHEAC representatives in August to discuss detailed proposals.

**Evaluation of home schooling regulations**

Regulatory Impact Solutions has provided the Department with a draft report. The Department will circulate this to the VHEAC sub-committee and call a sub-committee meeting in the coming weeks to gain feedback and input.

Regulatory Impact Solutions will finalise their report by the end of July for the Department’s consideration.

**Education options for victims of family violence and family separation**

VHEAC members raised the issue of education options for victims of family violence. VHEAC also raised the issue of options for families in situations where a family separates and one parent does not agree with home schooling.

The Department will bring together relevant policy and program areas for an out of session workshop on these issues before the next VHEAC meeting.

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