
VICTORIAN HOME EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMUNIQUE NO. 23: 18 OCTOBER 2022

The twenty third meeting of the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee (VHEAC) was held in a hybrid format on 18 October 2022.

VHEAC ACTION REGISTER

Members were provided with comprehensive updates to the status of items on the Action Register.

VRQA UPDATE

The Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA) has met with VHEAC home education representatives to discuss impacts of court orders and subsequent education options for victims of family violence. The VRQA noted it is unable to overrule a Family Court Order. The VRQA outlined additional information on flexible learning options that will be provided to parents who cannot register their child for home schooling due to court orders.

The VRQA also reported on the review of home education families and the 2023 process for confirming continuation or cancellation of home schooling registrations. The continuation and cancellation process will enable a clearer picture of total home education registrations.

HOME EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

An overview of the supports the Home Education Network (HEN) can provide to home schooling families to assist them during the VRQA review was discussed. The annual survey has been forwarded to the home education community. The survey will collect data about the experience of home education for students with a disability or different learning needs. A home education representative shared their family's home education experience.

GUIDE TO HOME EDUCATION IN VICTORIA

The Secretariat provided an update on the review of the 'Guide to home education in Victoria' (the Guide). Progress to date included feedback from VHEAC home education representatives, VRQA and the Department of Education and Training (the department). The Guide will continue to cater for different audiences. It will provide comprehensive information across a broad range of home education topics with shorter, plain English fact sheets and a frequently asked questions document to be developed following the update.

DATA COLLECTION PROJECT

The Secretariat provided an update on the project which seeks to address a key finding from the Report: Evaluation of Part 6 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 that notes '*There is a lack of baseline data or longitudinal data collection on outcomes of home schooling students*'. Scoping of the data collection project will continue into 2023.

VHEAC TERMS OF REFERENCE

Amendment to the Terms of Reference (ToR) were discussed with members noting that up to eight home education representatives may be present on the VHEAC. The ToR will be circulated to members out of session for endorsement.

TRANSITION TO FULL TIME STUDY OR EMPLOYMENT

When a student is seeking to transition from home education to full time tertiary study or employment, prior to age 17, they must receive an exemption from home education registration from the relevant regional office. The department continues to explore options regarding the exemption process for home education students.

REGISTRATION OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS PAST THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

The department continues to explore registration options for home education students past the compulsory school age. A paper submitted to the VHEAC in July by the home education representatives to illustrate key issues for the home education community continues to inform the department regarding the development of post compulsory registration options for home education students.

FUNDED PART-TIME TAFE ENROLMENT

An options paper addressing funded part-time TAFE enrolments for home education students has been developed.

ABOUT

VHEAC was established in the context of the regulatory changes to home schooling that commenced in Victoria on 1 January 2018.

VHEAC provides guidance, information and feedback to the Department of Education and Training (the department) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) on the operation of the home education regulations and on home education matters in Victoria.

VHEAC meets at least three times each year and Communiques are shared publicly after each meeting. The department provides Secretariat support to the VHEAC.

Previous Communiques can be found online on the department's website:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/structure/Pages/vheac.aspx>

OCTOBER 2022 MEETING

The October meeting was attended by the following members:

- Eleanor Donovan, Executive Director, Partnerships and Sector Support Division, Department of Education and Training (DET), Chair and representative for the department
- Chris O'Sullivan, Manager, Home Schooling Unit, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
- Sue Wight, Home Education Representative
- Ben Clark, Home Education Representative
- Faye Coker, Home Education Representative
- Pavlina McMaster, Home Education Representative
- Kirsty James, Home Education Representative
- Megan Fisher, Home Education Representative
- Kamy Foster, Home Education Representative
- Heidi Ryan, Disability Advocate
- Dr Glenda Jackson, Director, Australian Home Education Advisory Service

To receive this information in an accessible format, please phone (03) 03 7022 1153 or email vheac@education.vic.gov.au

VHEAC SECRETARIAT

Department of Education and Training

vheac@education.vic.gov.au

(03) 7022 1153