

---

## VICTORIAN HOME EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### COMMUNIQUE NO. 24: 4 APRIL 2023

---

The twenty fourth meeting of the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee (VHEAC) was held in a hybrid format on 4 April 2023.

#### VRQA UPDATE

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) representative provided an update on regulatory activity. Home schooling application and registration trends since 2021 were discussed. The data presented demonstrated that the number of children registered for home schooling continues to grow each year. Registrations growth coincided with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Approved data will be released through the VRQA's publication and communication channels.

An overview of the VRQA's internal complaints process was presented to VHEAC members. It was noted that the VRQA has a separate complaints team that investigates matters associated with home schooling registration requirements. Complaints can be raised directly with the VRQA in writing or by phone. Information about the VRQA's appeals and complaints process is available at: <https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/complaints/Pages/making-a-complaint.aspx>

#### HOME SCHOOLING REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

An overview of the Home Education Network's (HEN) submission to the Senate inquiry into the *National Trend of School Refusal and Related Matters* was presented at the meeting. The inquiry is examining national trends in school refusal affecting primary and secondary school aged children who are unable to attend school regularly or on a consistent basis. School refusal is defined by the Senate Education and Employment References Committee as: difficulty attending school associated with emotional distress and can mean that children have trouble going to school or trouble leaving home.

The HEN submission is available from the Parliament of Australia website at: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Education\\_and\\_Employment/SchoolRefusal/Submissions](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/SchoolRefusal/Submissions)

#### 2023 VHEAC PARENT REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS

The Secretariat provided an update on the 2023 VHEAC parent representatives elections noting that 4 members conclude their term as committee members in October 2023.

#### HOME SCHOOLING OPTIONS

The VHEAC discussed the status of ongoing work associated with 3 items impacting the home schooling community:

1. Transition to full-time study or employment for students under 17 years
2. Registration options for students past the compulsory school age
3. Funded part-time enrolment.

The department is undertaking further investigation of these issues and will provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

#### GUIDE TO HOME SCHOOLING IN VICTORIA

The department's review of the 'Guide to Home Schooling in Victoria' is progressing following feedback received from stakeholders in early 2023. The guide will continue to cater for different audiences including home schooling families, schools, the department and the VRQA.

## 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 (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 3 times each year. 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>

## APRIL 2023 MEETING

The April meeting was attended by the following members:

- Melissa Clark, Executive Director, Portfolio Strategy and Planning Division (PSPD), Policy, Strategy and Performance (PSP), Department of Education (DE), Chair and representative for the department
- Keith Don, Acting Deputy CEO, Students and Services, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
- Chris O'Sullivan, Manager, Home Schooling Unit, VRQA
- Dr Glenda Jackson, Director, Australian Home Education Advisory Service
- Heidi Ryan, Disability Advocate
- Ben Clark, Home Education Representative
- Faye Coker, Home Education Representative
- Megan Fisher, Home Education Representative
- Kamya Foster, Home Education Representative
- Kirsty James, Home Education Representative
- Pavlina McMaster, Home Education Representative
- Sue Wight, Home Education Representative

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

## VHEAC SECRETARIAT

Department of Education

[vheac@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:vheac@education.vic.gov.au)

(03) 7022 1153