



State Government of Victoria

BRI2184812

1 Treasury Place
Melbourne Victoria 3002
Telephone: +61 3 9651 5000

Ms Pam White PSM
Chair
Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
GPO Box 2317
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Ms White

We are pleased to provide the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) with this Statement of Expectations (SOE), which applies from 1 July 2021 onwards until renewed.

As Minister for Education, Minister for Training and Skills and Minister for Higher Education, and together with the Minister for Trade, we are responsible for administering the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act), which provides for a high standard of education and training for all Victorian students, including by setting out the functions and powers of the VRQA. This SOE should be read in the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in the Act.

We acknowledge the critical role that the VRQA plays as the regulator of education and training providers and apprenticeships and traineeships in Victoria. We recognise the VRQA's achievement in progressing the expectations set out in the previous SOE issued on 2 September 2019, including the ongoing improvements to the regulation of home schooling and work towards lifting the quality of apprenticeships and traineeships. Additionally, we acknowledge the work of the VRQA in responding to the Victorian Auditor-General's Office report into *School compliance with Victoria's child safe standards*, and in supporting the transition to the new Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Based on consultation between the Department of Education and Training and the VRQA regarding the Government's priorities and emerging risks, our expectations for the VRQA are outlined in **Attachment A** of this letter. The VRQA should incorporate appropriate milestones and actions into its business plans to implement these expectations and provide us with an indicative timeframe of when it expects these to be delivered and updates on progress achieved.

I further request the VRQA to undertake a regular review of the expectations in this letter as part of its annual reporting obligations and to advise us if there are any refinements recommended when the letter needs to be updated or renewed.

We thank you for your ongoing, important work in supporting Victoria to build a world-class education and training system.

Kind regards

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education

Attachment A – Ministerial Expectations

Home schooling	
Compliance Related Assistance and Advice	
1.	We expect the VRQA will increase home schooling parents' understanding of requirements for registration and review. The VRQA should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. continue to co-create policies, guides, advice and general communication with the home schooling community, through the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee b. strengthen its resource library to help families address the learning areas and enrich their educational programs c. ensure the VRQA can contribute to future evaluations of the new regulations, including the evaluation of new home school regulations over 2018-20, by working with DET to develop evidence of the longer-term educational attainment of home schooled students as outlined in the Regulatory Impact Statement (2017).
Timeliness	
2.	We expect the VRQA to provide clarity about the scheduling of home schooling reviews and publish the amount of time taken to complete a review (across all methods) in its Quarterly Home Schooling Reporting.
Schools	
Compliance-related assistance and advice	
3.	We expect the VRQA to support the goal of improving compliance with, and understanding of, the minimum standards across all Victorian schools. We expect the VRQA will contribute to this outcome by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. providing effective, practical and ongoing assistance and advice on compliance with the minimum standards to schools. The VRQA should regularly review and update guidance based on feedback from school reviews and other relevant reports and reviews. b. continue to work with DET to facilitate the Government's commitment to build new schools and reduce regulatory burden for all government schools by identifying departmental policies that can be universally applied for new and ongoing school registration, where it is appropriate to do so.
Clear and consistent regulatory activities	
4.	We expect the VRQA to support effective and consistent application of the minimum standards across and within sectors by taking a leadership role in simplifying compliance for schools. To support this expectation, the VRQA should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. clearly define the evidence to be used by school reviewers to assess and determine compliance and provide review bodies with VRQA policies, checklists and other assistance to drive consistency in reviews (including identifying the essential elements required in school documentation such as policies). The VRQA should support consistent reviewer training across sectors on how reviewers assess compliance with the minimum standards b. consider any other issues or themes raised in relevant reports and reviews that will inform improved practices with respect to clear, supportive and consistent regulation of Victorian schools. c. further develop the Review Body Assurance Program, including a mechanism for evaluation which will support effective and consistent application of the minimum standards.
Apprenticeships and Traineeships	
Compliance-related assistance and advice	
5.	We expect the VRQA to enhance confidence in the administration and quality of the apprenticeship and traineeship system and encourage the participation of apprentices, trainees and their employers. To meet this expectation, the VRQA should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. improve employer, apprentice and trainee awareness and understanding of the VRQA's role and responsibility in the administration and enforcement of apprenticeship and traineeship obligations b. support the expansion of A&T options into new and emerging industries and consult, as necessary, with DET and other agencies, including the Victorian Skills Authority and industry stakeholders in approving training schemes to ensure appropriate durations and relevance to industry c. continue to recognise and monitor Group Training Organisations against National Standards and report on compliance d. continue to support the implementation of relevant budget initiatives.
Timeliness	
6.	We expect the VRQA to ensure the timing and scope of regulatory activities relating to apprenticeships and traineeships are clear and efficient.
Risk-based strategies	
7.	We expect that the VRQA will continue to lift the quality of apprenticeships and traineeships in Victoria by administering consistent and reliable monitoring and assessment with a particular focus on high-risk apprenticeship cohorts. To contribute to these outcomes, the VRQA should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. collaborate with WorkSafe in relation to employers of apprentices and trainees (regarding the suitability of employers) and report on actions and outcomes in its acquittal of actions under this statement of expectations b. focus monitoring and compliance activities in relation to employers with consistently poor outcomes (such as low levels of completion, high cancellations, dissatisfaction and safety concerns) and ensure that all Regulatory Assessments and campaign work is informed by a risk-based approach c. continue to work with DET on reforms to school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.