
VICTORIAN HOME EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMUNIQUE NO. 31: 22 July 2025

The 31st meeting of the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee (VHEAC) held on 22 July 2025.

VICTORIAN REGISTRATION AND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY UPDATE (VRQA)

The VRQA provided an update on home schooling registrations, partial enrolments, continuations, unregistered schools and reviews.

Members were provided with information on the changes to the home schooling application form in relation to item 2.8 (court orders). The new form asks parents to submit any orders relating to the child, thereby shifting the onus of assessment to the VRQA. The new form also advises that some orders will require the consent of both parents, while others may require the child to be enrolled in mainstream schooling. The VRQA assesses all orders for their impact on a new home schooling application. This may result in requests for more information being issued. Some orders may prevent a child being registered for home schooling.

The form is on the VRQA website https://www2.vrqa.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/Home-Education-Registration-Form-June-2025_0.docx

UPDATE ON POLICY ISSUES RAISED BY VHEAC

Members discussed the issue of home education students aged 15-17 years being unable to access funded part-time TAFE, noting that students in schools are also ineligible for funded part-time TAFE unless they are enrolled in a senior secondary certificate. Members heard that a strong case would be needed to consider a change to the education policy settings designed to keep young people in schooling until 17 years.

Members heard that home education students may seek a partial enrolment in school to undertake VET Delivered in Secondary Schools (VDSS), noting this would not contribute to a Senior Secondary Certificate. A VHEAC out-of-session meeting will be convened to further discuss the issue of part-time funded TAFE for home education students.

Members noted that the Department of Education (the department) has commenced planning for the 2027 sunset of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 and that home education representatives will be consulted for this review.

HOME EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Members noted a presentation on 'Mythbusting Home Education and Finances' provided by the Home Education Network.

HOME SCHOOLING PROPOSED RECORDS RETENTION

The department is conducting a major review and update to the Education and Early Childhood Development Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA), which is set to expire on 30 June 2026.

Members discussed the proposed retention periods for records created and collected by VRQA to facilitate home schooling registration, the justification for the proposed retention periods and the VRQA's records management retention responsibilities relating to these records.

Formal external consultation on the proposed changes will occur in late 2025. The Home Education Network and VHEAC will be notified when the consultation period is open and invited to provide feedback.

HOME SCHOOLING EXEMPTION PROCESS

Members noted the new exemption process for home education students that will be implemented by the department's regional offices.

The new process provides a clear decision and communication pathway following an application for an exemption and includes follow up by the regions with the pathway provider to confirm the student is still engaged, consistent with the process for all students.

Home education families will also be provided with information on the new Victorian Early Leaver Connection Initiative (VELCI) Career Advice Service when an exemption is approved, and if a student ceases in an exemption pathway. More information is available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-early-leaver-connection-initiative>.

The department is undertaking work to review Ministerial Orders 705 (exemption to an approved pathway) and 715 (exemption in the best interests of the child) and to recognise the circumstances of home schooling students.

MEETING ATTENDEES

The meeting was attended by the following members:

- Linda Vaughan, Executive Director, International Education and Partnerships Division, Department of Education (Chair)
- Keith Don, Deputy CEO, Students and Services, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
- Chris O'Sullivan, Manager, Home Schooling Unit, Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
- Kirsty James, Home Education Representative
- Pavlina McMaster, Home Education Representative
- Annie Regan, Home Education Representative
- Joanna Bindon, Home Education Representative
- Kate Croft, Home Education Representative
- Heidi Ryan, Disability Advocate
- Dr Glenda Jackson, Director, Australian Home Education Advisory Service

ABOUT VHEAC

VHEAC provides guidance, information, and feedback to the department and VRQA on the operation of the home education regulations and on home education matters in Victoria. VHEAC was established in the context of the regulatory changes to home schooling that commenced in Victoria on 1 January 2018.

VHEAC meets at least 3 times each year and a communique is published after each meeting. The department provides secretariat support to VHEAC. Communiqués from previous VHEAC meetings can be found online on the department's website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-home-education-advisory-committee>.

VHEAC SECRETARIAT

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To receive this information in an accessible format, please contact the VHEAC Secretariat.