

EDUCATION, ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
REPORT No. 2 on the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025
QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Introduction

On 14 March 2025, the Minister for Education and the Arts introduced the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025 (the Bill) to the Queensland Parliament.

The Bill was referred to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee (the Committee) for review, with a report back date of 2 May 2025.

The Bill sets out amendments to the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act) and other legislation to reduce red tape, and to protect students and school communities. The Bill also makes minor technical amendments to ensure accuracy of Queensland statutes.

The Bill includes reforms for approved online services; age eligibility for home education; the delegation of the telling of suspension decisions for state school principals; streamlines enrolment transfers between state special schools; supports the operations of Parents and Citizens' Associations; clarifies the provision of information by non-state school principals or governing bodies to the chief executive of the Department of Education; supports accessibility to eKindy; mandates the use of transfer notes when students move between Queensland schools and makes minor technical amendments to update legislative cross references in Queensland statutes.

On 2 May 2025, the Committee tabled Report No. 2 on the Bill. The Queensland Government response to the recommendations made by the Committee is set out below.

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025 be passed.

Government response to recommendation 1

The Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Bill and notes the Committee's recommendation that the Bill be passed.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends further consideration around the extension of the age eligibility of students in home education by 6 months, to 31 December in the year the student turns 18 *and 6 months*.

Government response to recommendation 2

The Queensland Government supports in-principle the recommendation, subject to further consideration.

The extension of age eligibility to 31 December of the year in which a student turns 18 years of age has been strongly supported by home educating families in Queensland.

Depending on when a child is first registered for home education, a person born in the first half of the year would be between 18 years and six months, up to potentially 18 years and 11 months old by 31 December. For persons born in the second half of the year, they would be from 18 years and five months to 18 years by 31 December.

The Bill provides eligibility for an overall 13 years of education while being registered for home education, equivalent to the Preparatory Year through to Year 12 in a school.

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It is critical that the Government deliver the proposed legislative change in a timely way, in order to realise ongoing access to continued registration and supports and resources for home educating families with students who may turn 18 before 31 December 2025.

The Government understands that it is essential to meaningfully engage with all home educating families on any changes to the legislative framework that supports home education in Queensland.

There is a wide range of reasons or circumstances that may lead to a family choosing to home educate their child. Amendments to the legislative framework for home education in Queensland must reflect these needs in order to deliver equitable and meaningful outcomes for all home educating families.

To date, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal to further extend age eligibility to 18 years and 6 months is the most appropriate option to holistically address the varied needs and circumstances of all home education families, nor how this would be assessed and implemented.

When a decision is made in a school environment by a principal or the chief executive to provide a student with additional time to complete their education, the decision is subject to extensive consideration of the needs of the student and how these may be met. There is currently no mechanism to manage this approach for home educated children.

This is why further engagement with the home education sector is required to inform any future options.

Queensland Legislative Assembly	
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Clerk's Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	