

# Information for *Youth Members*

We are so excited you are taking part in the Legal Studies Youth Parliament.

## Key details

**Legal Studies Youth Parliament**

**Date:** Friday 15 May 2026

**Location:** Legislative Assembly Chamber • Parliament House, Brisbane

**Arrival time:** 8.30am for a 9.00am start

**Departure time:** Approximately 1.30pm

Time	Program	Detail
8.30am to 9.00am	Registration opens	Meet your teacher at the Parliament House entry—George Street
9.00am to 9.25am	Student briefing	
9.25am to 9.30am	Whole Chamber Photograph	Legislative Assembly Chamber
9.30am to 10.45am	Youth Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening of Legal Studies Youth Parliament</li><li>• Leaders' Statements</li><li>• Introduction and First Reading</li><li>• Second Reading</li><li>• Private Members' Statements</li></ul>
10.45am to 11.30am	Morning Tea	Speaker's Green
11.30am to 12.45pm	Youth Parliament <i>continues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consideration-in-Detail</li><li>• Third Reading</li><li>• Adjournment Debate</li><li>• Close of Legal Studies Youth Parliament</li></ul>
1.00pm to 1.30pm	Official Photographs	Grand Staircase—order arranged according to distance travelled (furthest first)

## Other important information

- When you enter, you'll undergo **security screening**.
- Wear **full school uniform** (unless you are a non-uniform school).
- **Mobile phones must be turned off** and put away during the session.
- There will be **storage facilities** available for any bags.
- You can have a water bottle with you in the Chamber.

## Important dates to mark in your diary

What	Due date
Get your parent or legal guardian to complete the photo consent form (MS Form). Your teacher will provide you with a link.	COB Monday 30 March 2026 (Week 10, Term 1)
Provide your parents or legal guardians with the link to book <a href="#">their free ticket</a> to watch you in action.	COB Friday 30 April 2026 (Week 2, Term 2)
Write and print your speech.	Prior to Friday 15 May 2026 (Week 4, Term 2).
Legal Studies Youth Parliament	Friday 15 May 2026 8.30am for a 9.00am start.

## Parliamentary etiquette

### Key term

#### Speaker

The Speaker is the Presiding Officer of the Legislative Assembly. The Speaker enforces the rules of parliament (Standing Orders).

As in any other forum for debate, there are certain rules that each Youth Member of Parliament **must follow**.

- Always address the Speaker or Deputy Speaker when speaking and refer to them by their correct title (i.e. Mr or Madam Speaker, Speaker)
- Show respect by bowing to the Speaker or Deputy Speaker when entering or leaving the Legislative Assembly Chamber. When leaving or returning to the Legislative Assembly Chamber don't walk in front of the Speaker or Deputy Speaker.
- Sit when the Speaker or Deputy Speaker is speaking.
- Those in leadership positions are to be referred to as *the Honourable Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister for...* All other Members are referred to by the name of their electorate, for example, the *Member for Barcoo*.
- Any interjections and language must be respectful.
- Applause is not permitted. Instead say 'Hear, hear!'
- Deliver your speech from your seat.

## Interjections

### Key term

#### Interjection

An interjection is when other Members of Parliament (MPs) call out their support to disagreement when another MP is speaking.

In the Legal Studies Youth Parliament, you can interject during the **Second Reading** or **Consideration in Detail**.

When interjecting:

- Be respectful and focus on the content, not the person.
- If a Youth Member looks nervous or stressed, do not interject.
- Keep your interjection short and sharp—do not continue to interject.
- An interjection should add to the debate.
- A Youth Member interjects from his/her own seat. Do not use the microphone.

For example—

MP 1: We are the first government to put real money on the table for what will be the biggest ever investment in public transport on the Sunshine Coast, the Sunshine Coast direct rail line.

MP 2 (Interjected): It'll turn Caloundra into a car park.

MP 1: The backdrop and the context to this whole debate revolves around the fact that there are simply not enough houses or homes in Queensland

MP 2 (Interjected): No planning, no commitment.

MP 1: The minister owned it in her speech by saying, 'We make no apologies for this. We mucked it up.'

MP 2 (Interjected): You voted for it.

MP 1: These amendments may well leave residents paying more than they otherwise would have.

MP 2 (Interjected): Rubbish.

MP 1: It is not rubbish; it is true.

# Speech planning

1. Identify whether you are part of the government or opposition.

Government

Opposition

2. Identify your role.

Youth Premier

Youth Member

for: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Leader of the Opposition

Youth Minister

3. **Highlight** your place in the program below. Take note of the topic and speech length.

## Key terms

**Adjournment debate**

A debate that occurs at the end of the sitting day.

**Amendment Bill**

A proposed change to a Bill or an Act.

A proposed law.

**Private**

A short statement about:

**Members' Statement**

- a matter of concern to the Member's electorate or constituents; or
- some other matter concerning the Member's electorate or constituents.

Program	Who?	Topic	Speech length (per person)
Leaders' Statements	Youth Premier and Youth Leader of the Opposition	A Vision for Queensland— <i>what Queensland will you create as leader?</i>	2 minutes maximum
Introduction and First Reading	Youth Attorney-General	Introduce and move the first reading of the Bill.	NA—this is scripted (no prior preparation required)
Second Reading	Youth Attorney-General	<b>At the start—</b> Outline the key <u>benefits</u> of the Bill.	2 minutes maximum
		<b>At the end—</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the debate.</li> <li>• Thank Youth MPs for their input.</li> <li>• Argue <u>against</u> any key Opposition ideas that have been brought up during the session (<i>ad lib</i>).</li> </ul>	1 minute maximum

	Youth Shadow Attorney-General	Outline the reasons the Opposition is <u>against</u> the Bill.	2 minutes maximum
	Youth Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Youth Members speak <b>for</b> the Bill.</li> <li>Opposition Youth Members speak <b>against</b> the Bill.</li> </ul> <p><b>TIP:</b> Focus on 1 clause.</p>	1 minute maximum
<b>Private Members' Statements</b>	Youth Members	<p>Speak about anything that falls into the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queensland jurisdiction, or</li> <li>Local jurisdiction.</li> </ul> <p><b>TIP:</b> Focus on 1 issue.</p>	1 minute maximum
<b>Consideration in Detail</b>	Youth Minister for Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move Amendment 1.</li> <li>Outline the key <u>benefits</u> of Amendment 1.</li> </ul>	1 minute maximum
	Youth Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Youth Members speak <b>for</b> Amendment 1.</li> <li>Opposition Youth Members speak <b>against</b> Amendment 1.</li> </ul>	1 minute maximum
	Youth Shadow Minister for Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move Amendment 2.</li> <li>Outline the key <u>benefits</u> of Amendment 2.</li> </ul>	1 minute maximum
	Youth Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opposition Youth Members speak <b>for</b> Amendment 2.</li> <li>Government Youth Members speak <b>against</b> Amendment 2.</li> </ul>	1 minute maximum
<b>Third Reading</b>	Youth Attorney-General	Move the third reading of the Bill.	NA—this is scripted (no prior preparation required)
<b>Adjournment Debate</b>	Youth Members	<p>Speak about anything that falls into the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queensland jurisdiction, or</li> <li>Local jurisdiction.</li> </ul> <p><b>TIP:</b> Focus on 1 issue.</p>	1 minute maximum

### Additional tasks you may need to do:

- The Youth Leader of the House will also move a motion for the House to adjourn (this will be provided on the day in the script).
- The Youth Government Whip/Deputy Whip and Youth Opposition Whip/Deputy Whip will count votes in a division and report the results to the Speaker (this will be provided on the day in the script).



## Speech FAQs

### What should my speech be about?

- If you are the Youth Premier or Youth Leader of the Opposition, you will share your vision for Queensland. Some possible guiding questions to structure your speech include:
  - What 2 – 3 areas will you prioritise?
  - What 2 – 3 things would you do if you were the Premier for a day?
  - What would Queensland feel, look or sound like under your leadership?
- All other Youth Members will either:
  - speak in the Second Reading or Consideration in Detail, or
  - speak in an Adjournment Debate or provide a Private Members' Statement.

Re-read the 'Topic' column on Page 5 and 6 for more information.

### Is there a particular structure I must follow?

- Write your title on the top of the page. i.e. *Member for Barcoo*
- Start with *'Thank you Mr Speaker'* or *'Thank you Madam Speaker'*.
- If you are speaking about the Bill, use a persuasive writing style.
- All other speeches can be persuasive or may simply be informative, depending on the topic.

### I am nervous!

You are not alone—there will be many students equally nervous. Some strategies the Parliamentary Education team uses when they are nervous include:

- Practicing your speech out loud before the day.
- Visualising yourself giving a successful speech. What does it look, sound and feel like?
- Focusing on the speech, not the audience.
- Taking a slow, deep breath before you start to speak.
- Using positive self-talk—replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations about your ability to deliver the speech.
- Holding something small in your hand (like a paperclip) and focus on that when you give your speech.

### How will I know if there will be a Mr Speaker (male) or Madam Speaker (female)?

Unfortunately, we are unable to tell you before you speak who will be in the chair. As you can imagine, MPs can have last minute schedule changes, so it is best to prepare to say both.

### Is there any chance to give an impromptu speech?

Yes—during Consideration in Detail. There will be a few students assigned to speak to each amendment to get the debate going, but after this if you would like to contribute to discussion of an amendment follow the steps below:

1. When the Speaker says *'Does any other Youth Member who has not already spoken to this clause wish to speak?'*
2. Put up your hand.
3. Wait until the Speaker makes eye contact with you, and says *'I call the Youth Member'*.
4. Stand up and give your 'off the cuff' speech.
5. Don't forget to say *'Thank you Mr/Madam Speaker'* at the start and end of your speech.

## Bill guiding questions

(Government Opposition)

### Second reading debate

- Will lowering the voting age **encourage civic engagement**, or **lead to more informal voting**?
- Will prohibiting inaccurate and misleading statements and the use of AI by parties, candidates and elected officials **build trust**, or **be difficult to enforce and limit freedom of speech**?
- Will increasing the penalty for failing to vote **reinforce the importance of voting**, or **create resentment**?
- Will amending laws around donations **reduce undue influence** or **lead to more hidden funding and breach people's privacy**?

### Consideration in detail

- Will not penalising 16- and 17-year-olds for failing to vote **lower pressure** or **reinforce bad habits**?
- Will making voting in local government elections **reduce participation** or **encourage genuine civic engagement**?

## Bill research starting point

We encourage you to do your own research, but we know sometimes it can be hard to know where to start. To help we have put together a list of secondary sources.\*

### Voting generally

Electoral Commission of Queensland <[Homepage](#)>.

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (Unknown) *Voluntary and compulsory voting* <[Chapter 8](#)>.

Matteo Bonotti and Paul Strangio (2022) *Australia's experience of compulsory voting – and what it tells us about democratic fragility and resilience* <[Australia's experience of compulsory voting — and what it tells us about democratic fragility and resilience - ABC Religion & Ethics](#)>.

Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (2020) *Is It Compulsory to Like Compulsory Voting?* <[Arguments For And Against Compulsory Voting - MoAD Stories](#)>.

State Library of New South Wales (2019) *Chapter 5: Compulsory voting – for and against* <[Compulsory voting - for and against | State Library of New South Wales](#)>.

Umang Vinayaka, Harvard International Review (2023) *Compulsion Emboldens Democracy: A Deep-dive into Australia's Mandatory Voting* <[Compulsion Emboldens Democracy: A Deep-dive into Australia's Mandatory Voting](#)>.

### Lowering the voting age

Community of Democracies (2019) *Youth Recommendations to Increase Engagement in Democracy Report* <[community-democracies.org/app/uploads/2022/12/COD\\_Youth\\_ENG-1.pdf](#)>.

Faith Gordon, ANU College of Law (2022) *Australia should lower the voting age* <[Australia should lower the voting age](#)>.

Lukas Coch, The Conversation (2023) *Should the voting age in Australia be lowered to 16?* <[Should the voting age in Australia be lowered to 16?](#)>.

Neelima Choahan, Michelle Wakim and Joseph Baronio (2024) *Push to lower Australia's compulsory voting age to 16 as advocate says youngsters feeling 'disenfranchised'* <[Push to lower Australia's compulsory voting age to 16 as advocate says youngsters feeling 'disenfranchised' - ABC News](#)>.

Niki Nojournian (2023) *The Case For Lowering The Voting Age In Australia* <[7.pdf](#)>.

### Misinformation and AI in elections

Fiona Dennehy, The Alan Turing Institute (2024) *No evidence that AI disinformation or deepfakes impacted UK, French or European elections results* <[No evidence that AI disinformation or deepfakes impacted UK, French or European elections results | The Alan Turing Institute](#)>.

IDEA International (2024) *AI & Elections: Exploring the Opportunities and Risks of Artificial Intelligence* <[AI & Elections: Exploring the Opportunities and Risks of Artificial Intelligence | International IDEA](#)>.

Parliament of Australia (2022) *Chapter 2 – Impacts of AI on democracy* <[Chapter 2 - Impacts of AI on democracy – Parliament of Australia](#)>.

Sam Stockwell and The Alan Turing Institute (2024) *What has the ‘year of elections’ taught us about AI and democracy?* <[What has the ‘year of elections’ taught us about AI and democracy? | The Alan Turing Institute](#)>.

United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe (2024) *Can artificial intelligence (AI) influence elections?* <[Can artificial intelligence \(AI\) influence elections?](#)>.

### **Political donations and caps**

AAP and SBS (2025) *Billionaires, betting companies and ‘dark’ donations: 2023-24’s political finance data released* <[Who are the biggest donors to Australia's political parties? | SBS News](#)>.

Economics and Governance Committee (2020) *Report No. 37: Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019*, <[EGC Report No. 37 56th Parliament - Electoral and Other Legislation \(Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters\) Amendment Bill 2019](#)>.

Dr Jill Sheppard and Josh Gibson (2024) *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Bill 2024* <[Electoral Legislation Amendment \(Electoral Reform\) Bill 2024 – Parliament of Australia](#)>.

Dr Yee-Fui Ng (2021) *Regulating Money in Democracy: Australia’s Political Finance Laws Across The Federation* <[Political-Finance-Laws-Commissioned-Report-ERRN-Final-with-Abstract.pdf](#)>.

The University of Sydney (2024) *South Australia’s plan to ban political donations raises risks and benefits* <[South Australia's plan to ban political donations raises risks and benefits - The University of Sydney](#)>.

### **Compulsory v non-compulsory voting**

Lisa Hill (2004) *Compulsory Voting in Australia: a Basis for a ‘Best Practice’ Regime* <[Hill, Lisa -- - "Compulsory Voting in Australia: A Basis For A 'Best Practice' Regime" \[2004\] FedLawRw 22; \(2004\) 32 Federal Law Review 479](#)>.

National Museum Australia (No date) *2.3 Compulsory voting: does it help or hinder democracy?* <[Voting Defining Moments | 2.3 Compulsory voting: does it help or hinder democracy? | Australia’s Defining Moments Digital Classroom | National Museum of Australia](#)>.

Tim Evans (2006) *Compulsory Voting in Australia* <[Compulsory Voting in Australia](#)>.

State Library of New South Wales (2019) *Chapter 5: Compulsory voting – for and against* <[Compulsory voting - for and against | State Library of New South Wales](#)>.

Paul Thomas (2016) *Compulsory Voting: The Pros and Cons* <[ThomasPaulG-e.pdf](#)>.

\*The views or information do not reflect the views of the Parliamentary Education team.