

Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025

Submission No:	24
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Dear Committee Members,

Free2Homeschool welcomes and supports the proposed home education changes set out in the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025. We commend all relevant parties involved for recognising the concerns raised within the home education community, particularly in addressing the inequalities that have limited our home-educated students across the state and their access to Year 12 equivalent educational opportunities.

Access to Year 12 is a crucial step in providing homeschooled students with greater opportunities for further education and career pathways. Many programs and services that facilitate post-secondary education and training require proof of enrolment in Year 12. These include:

1. **Financial Assistance** – Year 12 enrolment is often a prerequisite for certain financial support programs, for both students and their families, which can assist students in continuing their education. These include some centrelink payments, discounts for transport with a student card and resource access.
2. **Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC)** – This financial support is vital for families homeschooling in remote areas and for medical reasons. The ability to remain registered through Year 12 ensures continued eligibility for this assistance.
3. **Head Start Programs** – Many universities offer early entry programs that require proof of Year 12 enrolment, providing students with a head start on their tertiary education.
4. **TAFE at School Courses** – Enrolment in Year 12 allows homeschooled students to access TAFE courses, supporting vocational pathways and skill development.

This change will provide potential access to fair and equitable opportunities for dozens of students who are currently missing out, and even more who would in future years if this proposal is not implemented. We look forward to these changes coming into effect and appreciate our requests being included in the Bill.

To ensure true equity, we propose a slight change to the wording of the Bill to extend the registration period by an additional six months, allowing homeschooling registration until 18 and a half years old. This adjustment would provide all homeschooled students equal access to year 12 as well as an extra year of high school if it's needed, in the same way

that schooled students can apply for an additional year of study due to delayed starts or repeated years. This flexibility is particularly important for students transitioning from mainstream education and those with disabilities who require more time to complete their education with adequate supports.

Given that homeschooling incurs minimal costs for the government and that most homeschoolers graduate before Year 12, this change would not pose a significant financial burden. However, it would close the gap in educational access and opportunities, ensuring that no student is disadvantaged by an arbitrary cut-off date.

We strongly support this amendment and encourage its adoption to ensure that homeschooled students have the same educational rights and access to future opportunities as their schooled peers. We are excited for the significant reduction of inequity that this proposed amendment in Clauses 9 and 10 will provide for the home education community. We feel privileged to see such considerations and equity acknowledged and introduced so quickly for our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Amanda Bartle & Patricia Fitzgerald

Free2Homeschool