

## Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025

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<b>Submitted by:</b>	<div></div>
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<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	

To the Committee,

Firstly I want to thank you very much for hearing our requests as home educators to increase the age limit for home educated children to the end of the year that they turn 18.

This is so important for our community and especially the children of our community. Giving them equality with their main stream schooled peers.

However, I did want to also alert you to the fact that there will still be some children that will not have quite finished their schooling by the end of the year they turn 18.

My youngest son who is currently 14 has various learning difficulties and due to them is studying grade 8 this year rather than grade 9. His birthday is on the 30<sup>th</sup> December. This means that he turns the next age 2 days before the end of the year.

Looking ahead at each year of schooling, this means that he will only be finishing grade 11 at the end of the year in which he turns 18 but he will have been 17 for that entire year. If he had been born 2 days later, he would have an entire extra year to finish grade 12.

**In other words, a child that turns 18 on the 1<sup>st</sup> Jan will have an entire extra year of home schooling than my son just because my son is born 2 days earlier on the 30<sup>th</sup> December.**

I urge you to consider putting into the legislation, the option for children in my son's situation to have the chance to continue home education for at least another year. This could be dependent on an application or special process but just to have the option would mean he would have a fair chance of still accessing all of the other extra learning opportunities that other children have when he is ready and able to access them.

What this would look like in practise is that my son could access Tafe at School and possibly Uni headstart courses when he was at the right stage of emotional, social and academic readiness rather than being forced into that early just to "not miss out" and perhaps failing or struggling, or to miss out due to ageing out of the home education age limits.

I think there would not be very many children that need this option but some will (including my son) and those "some" still deserve equality and the same chances to complete their schooling on an equal basis as their peers.

The NSW government page says home educated children can "be registered up to the age of 18 years and for a continued period, up to 2 years in order to complete the planned educational program."

**I request that in the legislation you adopt, could you please say something along the lines of, "until the end of the year in which the child turns 18 and for a continued period, up to 2 years (or even just one extra year) as needed.**

This would allow policy to be made around the option of extra time for those few children who genuinely need that extra time to finish their school work well and with equal opportunities as their main streamed school peers, some of whom I have known have been able to stay enrolled at a mainstream school whilst turning 18 in the middle of the year or into the year they turn 19. My son and others like him, should not miss out just because he will turn 18 on the 30<sup>th</sup> December.

If needed, I would be very happy, towards the end of his grade 11, to go through an application process or other like process, for my son to be able to access this extra year, as it would be a special

circumstance, not everyone would need it, and I'm sure others in the same situation would be willing to also do that. However, as the wording in the proposed legislation currently stands, there would be no option allowed at all for my son to do any study during the year that he is actually 18.

Thank you for reading my submission and I appreciate the time you will take to consider my request.

**I do support the changes in the bill, to increase the age limit to the end of the year the child turns 18 but the extra few words in the legislation to allow some extra learning time if needed, will make a world of difference to children like my son.**

Thank you.