



Speech by

Hon. ANNA BLIGH

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

Hansard 20 August 2002

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Education and Training Reforms

Hon. A. M. BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Minister for Education) (9.47 a.m.), by leave: Our government's quest to make Queensland the Smart State of Australia has taken another step forward. The Queensland government is committed to building an education and training system which provides opportunities for all young people to be engaged in some form of study, training or work, or to be learning or earning.

Last week my colleague the Minister for Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and I released two complementary reports that build on the work of our education and training reforms for the future announced in March this year. The two reviews are *The senior certificate: A new deal* by Adjunct Professor John Pitman, former director of the Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies, and *The review of pathways articulation* by Professor Margaret Gardner, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Queensland.

The Pitman and Gardner reports will now be considered by government, along with the results of five months of community feedback on the green paper to inform the development of a white paper. Both reports acknowledge the increasingly diverse needs, expectations and aspirations of young people and advocate for greater flexibility and choice. I would like to draw to members' attention this morning the Pitman report, *The senior certificate: A new deal*. I table the report for the information of the members.

The Pitman report challenges the current time-driven senior certificate and proposes an achievement based senior certificate instead. The recommendations would provide young people completing a senior stage of education with flexible entry and exit points and more individualised approaches to learning, enabling them to progress through the senior years at different rates.

John Pitman suggests that the senior certificate be based on achieving a threshold quantum of worthwhile learning that builds on the current system and recognises that learning occurs both inside and outside of schools, and that it should meet the needs of the 21st century. The Pitman report recommends that learning from workplaces, TAFE and the community should be counted towards the senior certificate and that skills and knowledge taught should be more relevant to complex work needs. Further, the report proposes that all students commencing the senior stage of education enter into a personalised senior agreement with a school which maps out how they will achieve their senior certificate. As part of this process, young people disengaged from school should be offered a fresh start in a learning environment which meets their needs and leads to the award of a senior certificate.

The government has not yet taken any position on the recommendations made in either the Pitman or Gardner reports and will not do so until adequate consideration of the implications has occurred. Information sessions will be held with key stakeholders in Brisbane, Mount Isa, Cairns and Rockhampton in the next two weeks. A summary of the reports will be provided to all schools and P&Cs over coming weeks and both reports are available on Education Queensland's web site. I encourage all members to familiarise themselves with these important reports.