




Speech By
Hon. John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2014

EDUCATION (QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY) BILL

Second Reading

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (4.53 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Education and Innovation Committee for its detailed consideration of the Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013. The committee has prepared a comprehensive report on the bill. I note that the committee received a detailed briefing from the Department of Education, Training and Employment, considered written submissions from stakeholders and invited selected stakeholders to a hearing before preparing its report. The committee tabled its report on 18 December 2013 and I am pleased to note that the committee supports the passage of the bill.

The committee also made a number of recommendations for minor amendments to the bill, which I will respond to now. Recommendation 2 was that clause 73(2)(a) of the bill be amended to clarify that the minister may direct the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority—the QCAA—to grant a licence to use QCAA material to bodies other than the state. Clause 73 does not prevent the QCAA granting a licence to use QCAA materials to bodies other than the state. As such, the bill does not need to be amended.

Recommendation 3 was to amend the bill to define the term ‘chief executive’. Section 33 of the Acts Interpretation Act 1954 applies to the bill to determine which chief executive is referred to—that is, the chief executive of the Department of Education, Training and Employment. The reliance on the Acts Interpretation Act to define the term ‘chief executive’ is standard drafting practice, and therefore the amendment is considered unnecessary.

Finally, recommendation 4 was to amend clause 41 to specify that it applies to casual staff employed to carry out the statutory functions of the QCAA as specified in division 2 of the bill. The government supports this recommendation. Clause 41 enables the QCAA to employ casual staff under this section rather than the Public Service Act 2008. The terms and conditions of employment for these casual staff employed will be set by the Governor in Council. This clause is similar to section 69A of the current Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Act 2002. However, section 69A is restricted to employment of casual staff to assist in carrying out testing, moderation and certification functions. The section is primarily used by the Queensland Studies Authority to engage and remunerate teachers engaged in moderation, assessment and testing. Clause 41 expands on section 69A to enable casual staff to be employed by the QCAA to assist with any of its functions. This enables flexibility regarding which functions casual staff can be employed to undertake.

The committee is concerned the provision could be used to enable the QCAA to employ staff on a casual basis to undertake activities unrelated to its statutory functions—for example, cleaning staff—without regard to industrial relations arrangements setting minimum conditions. This was not the intention. Accordingly, I will move an amendment during consideration in detail to clause 41 to clarify the policy intention that casual staff may only be employed for the purpose of carrying out the statutory functions of the QCAA.

The committee also raised a number of points for clarification in its report. Responses to these matters are contained in the government's response to the committee's report, which I now table.

Tabled paper: Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 28—Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013, government response [\[4495\]](#).

This bill marks another step forward by the government in preparing Queensland's education sector for the future. In light of the significant reform and change underway in the sector, this bill will modernise the statutory framework and provide the necessary governance arrangements for QCAA to lead the implementation of major educational reforms on behalf of the government. As a result, the QCAA will replace the Queensland Studies Authority, the QSA, and be responsible for initiatives such as the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

Importantly, the bill will establish QCAA as a robust curriculum authority. Parents can be assured that the QCAA will operate at arm's length from both the executive branch of government as well as the schools sector. This will enable the QCAA, without fear or favour, to administer high stakes assessment processes, such as senior certification and tertiary entrance ranking, as well as develop syllabuses where there is no Australian Curriculum.

The QCAA will continue the important work that has already begun in response to the parliamentary committee report on senior assessment in mathematics, chemistry and physics. It will be charged to give effect to changes arising from the independent review of senior assessment and tertiary entrance processes currently being conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research. It will also lead the development and rollout of new senior subjects based on the Australian Curriculum. These are important reforms and underpin the government's commitment to improving education outcomes for Queensland students. I commend this bill to the House.