

# Queensland Home Education Consultative Group

## Terms of Reference

### Vision

Every home educating child, family and community in Queensland is engaged, supported and thriving.

### Purpose

The Queensland Home Education Consultative Group (QHECG) provides input, feedback, and recommendations to support and enable high quality home education in Queensland. The QHECG fosters collaboration between the Department of Education and the home education parent community, ensuring diverse voices and perspectives—including First Nations peoples, families home educating children with disability, and rural and regional families—are represented in decision-making. The group supports clear and consistent information sharing about home education processes and requirements through strong, positive partnerships between the department and home educators to support families more broadly.

### Scope

The QHECG will provide a forum for meaningful consultation and communication between the Department of Education and home educating parents. The group will:

- represent the diverse views, concerns, needs and experiences of the home education community
- share information, feedback and suggestions on policies, programs, and initiatives that impact home education families
- work collaboratively to improve outcomes for children, facilitating communication and understanding between the department and home-educating families
- identify and address challenges, opportunities, and emerging issues to ensure inclusive and high-quality learning within the home education sector.

### Strategic alignment

- The [Government's Response](#) to the recent [Home Education Review \(Dunstone, 2024\)](#) accepted recommendations for enhanced communication, stakeholder engagement, and consistent messaging to families. This includes:
  - *Recommendation 2.1*: Form the Queensland Home Education Consultative Group. The group will enable continued and regular communication with families in undertaking these reforms.
- In addition to this, the QHECG supports the department's [Education Strategy](#) which outlines two focus areas:
  - *Educational achievement*: the QHECG supports the department's common goal that each child will progress in their learning each year through responding to their learning needs to help them achieve individual excellence
  - *Belonging and engagement*: QHECG input will enhance and enable a positive, inclusive, and supportive culture that promotes a sense of belonging, wellbeing and safety to support children's engagement in learning.
- The QHECG aligns with the [Queensland Government Regulator Performance Framework](#), contributing to formal consultation and engagement process (Model Practice #2) that allows:
  - parent input into decision-making,
  - regulators to understand parents' and families' contexts and the impacts of regulatory actions, and
  - trust between QHE and home educating families through a collaborative relationship to improve the efficiency and success of regulatory activities.

## Membership

- **Chairperson:** appointed by the Department for a 12-month term to promote impartiality, ensure effective governance, and facilitate a seamless transition to a departmental chair.
- **Parent representatives:** 8-9 QHE registered parents appointed biennially on a rolling basis to represent the diverse views and reasons for choosing home education. The composition of membership should collectively represent:
  - parents living in different areas of the state
  - a parent whose registered child is undertaking the equivalent of primary studies
  - a parent whose registered child or young person is undertaking the equivalent of senior studies and/or extension programs
  - a parent of a registered child or young person with a disability
  - a parent of a registered child or young person who is neurodivergent
  - a parent who is home educating a registered child or young person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- **Departmental representatives:** up to 4 Queensland Home Education leadership team members with oversight of home education policy and practice.

## Appointment process

- Members will be appointed for a two-year term with rolling biennial appointments to ensure a balanced mix of experienced and new parent representation. This approach allows for continuity of knowledge while welcoming fresh perspectives from newly registered parents, whose voices are equally valued.
- Parent representatives are selected through an open Expression of Interest process, ensuring regional and demographic diversity.
- Selection criteria include:
  - commitment to advancing home education
  - knowledge of the interests, concerns, and lived experiences of home educators
  - ability to represent a range of views of home educators
  - an understanding of governance and the education system
  - willingness to participate fully in group activities
  - an openness to partnering with the department
- Vacancies may be filled from the most recent Expression of Interest process.

## Eligibility

- Applicants must be the parent of a child currently registered for home education at the address linked to the relevant education region.
- Serving members will be eligible to reapply for a new 2-year term, supporting continuity and the retention of valuable experience
- The group will be widely representative to reflect the diverse nature of the sector across geographical locations. The mix of experiences, diversity of views, and reasons for choosing home education are key considerations in the overall composition of the QHECG.

## Meetings

- The QHECG will meet quarterly for 90 minutes
- Additional meetings may be scheduled as required. These may include strategic working sessions or meetings on a targeted area of interest or concern, such as enabling senior pathways
- Meetings will be held virtually or in-person, depending on the needs and availability of members
- A quorum will consist of at least 50% of the group's membership including the Chair.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Parent representatives

- Actively contribute to discussions and engage with other members
- Prepare by reviewing meeting materials in advance
- Represent perspectives from their regions and provide specific expertise
- Provide constructive feedback and uphold engagement principles (respect, active listening, growth mindset)
- Commit to attendance at quarterly meetings and actively participate in consultative group activities
- Share the discussions of the QHECG with their communities as appropriate.

### First Nations representative

- Engage with and guide the QHECG to actively embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within home education activities
- Contribute own expertise and experience where appropriate as a First Nations home educator.

### Departmental representatives

- Provide updates and be responsive to feedback in considerations of the group's advice on policy, process, or program development
- Uphold engagement principles (respect, active listening, growth mindset).

### Chairperson

- Lead meetings, set agenda and ensure effective operations
- Ensure the group operates effectively and according to agreed protocols
- Uphold the Terms of Reference as required
- Report on outcomes to the Deputy Director General, Early Childhood, Regulation and Communication
- Maintain neutrality and ensure all voices are heard
- Approve draft minutes for circulation to members.

### Secretariat

- Coordinate meetings, agendas, minutes, and actions.
- Maintain records in line with departmental policies.
- Implement a communication strategy about the QHECG's work.

## Reporting and accountability

- After each meeting, the QHECG will provide a summary of discussions and recommendations to the Department.
- The Department will provide feedback on how recommendations have been addressed.
- Terms of Reference will be endorsed by the committee at the first meeting and reviewed every two years.

## Confidentiality and conduct

- Members are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive discussions
- Conflicts of interest must be declared and will be managed by the Chair.

## Secretariat support

- The Department of Education will provide secretariat support, including meeting coordination, agenda preparation and distribution of minutes.