Year 7 related legislation introduced into the Parliament

The Education Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced into the Parliament on 16 April 2013.

The Bill deals with, among other things, year 7 becoming the first year of secondary education from 2015.

If the proposed amendments are enacted, it will mean that effective 1 January 2015, year 7 will be secondary education, and will no longer be primary education and must not be offered as such.

For eligible non-State schools intending to start offering secondary education for year 7 on or after 1 January 2015 and before 1 March 2016 — the amendments propose: (a) a simplified process to change each school’s accreditation status to include year 7 (secondary); and (b) if applicable, automatically grant Government-funding eligibility for year 7 (secondary).

For a school already approved to offer secondary education for year 7, and intending to offer secondary education for year 7 on or after 1 January 2015 and before 1 March 2016 — the governing body is to give the Board a Year 7 Change Notice.

For an approved stand-alone primary school (with year 7), and intending to offer secondary education for year 7 on or after 1 January 2015 and before 1 March 2016 — the governing body is to apply to the Board for accreditation using a specially-designed Application Form.

The Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, the Explanatory Notes for the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, and pages 957 to 959 of the Record of Proceedings (Hansard) for the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 provide more details about the proposals.

As is customary practice, the Parliament referred the Bill to its Education and Innovation Committee. The Committee is scheduled to report back by 16 July 2013.

The Board intends to write to all non-State school governing bodies with more details of the amendments, if and when passed by Parliament.

New obligation to report “likely” sexual abuse commences

The new obligation to report “likely” sexual abuse commenced on 29 January 2013.

In short, from 29 January 2013, the obligation to report “likely” sexual abuse applies to certain categories of students, and requires:

a) if a non-State school staff member reasonably suspects, in the course of the staff member’s employment at the school, that a student is likely to be sexually abused by another person — the staff member must give a written report of the suspicions to the school’s principal or a director of the school’s governing body; and

b) the principal or director must immediately give a copy of any written report received to a police officer.

Details of the new obligation may be found at:

a) section 366A (Obligation to report likely sexual abuse of person under 18 years at non-State school) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006;

b) section 68A (Report about likely sexual abuse—Act, ss 365A(4) and 366A(5)) of the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006;

c) section 10 (Health, safety and conduct of staff and students) of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001; and

d) section 366B (Delegation of director’s reporting function under s 366 or 366A) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
Cyclical review program guidelines

Cyclical review program guidelines were updated in May 2013.

Changes include:

- The review reports submitted to the Board are required to specifically address whether the school’s student protection policy and procedures are compliant with the new reporting obligations for reporting by staff members of sexual abuse, suspected sexual abuse and "likely" sexual abuse under section 366, 366A and 366B of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

- The Board no longer request copies of the school’s annual reports to accompany the submission of the review report.

A copy of the guidelines can be downloaded from the Board’s website (http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/Pdf/cyclical-review-guidelines.pdf).

Updates of Governing body details and Positive notices

The next annual Governing body update program is scheduled to be conducted throughout September and October 2013. Each governing body is advised to maintain a register of each director and their blue card or exemption card details. The Board would appreciate notification of any changes that occur throughout the year. For any changes to contact details or a governing body or its membership, please complete an Update of governing body details notification which is available from the Board’s website (http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/Documents/forms.php).

For more information about governing bodies and directors of a governing body of a non-state school visit the Board’s website (http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/GoverningBodies/index.php).

Safety in schools data now being collected

The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (the EGP Act) gives powers to principals and governing bodies of non-state schools to deal with parents or visitors who disrupt the good order and management of schools or who threaten the safety of staff or students in schools.

Section 359 of the EGP Act provides for the mandatory reporting of the number of directions, orders and applications for review issued during the previous financial year by non-state school principals and governing bodies.

The Safety in Schools data for the 2012-13 financial year is now being collected by the Department of Education, Training and Employment and must be provided by 31 July 2013 for each school.

Please read the instructions and download the form from the Board’s website (http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/Schools/SafetyInSchools.php).

New certificates

The Board has introduced a new look A4 sized Certificate of Provisional Accreditation and Certificate of Accreditation. The new certificates are issued per school site and show the Attributes of Provisional accreditation or Attributes of Accreditation as approved by the Board for each site. A separate statement of the Attributes of Provisional Accreditation or Attributes of Accreditation will no longer be issued. Any previously issued A3 sized certificates remain current and do not need to be replaced.

Application forms

The Board has transitioned to electronic record keeping and no longer requires multiple copies of application forms. The forms are currently being redeveloped to accommodate electronic submission in the near future.

In the meantime, if you are able to submit your application electronically, please email your copy to admin@nssab.qld.edu.au.

If you need to submit a hardcopy application, one copy will be sufficient. However, as all applications are being scanned and turned into electronic records, the Secretariat would appreciate your application being assembled in a way that can be easily scanned. This means preferably no binding, no odd sized dividers or folded brochures.
Update notification forms

Need to notify the Board of a name change of a school or governing body, update principal or school details or update governing body details (i.e. office details, chairperson or directors and their positive notice (blue cards) or positive exemption notice (exemption cards))? Forms are available on the Board’s website (http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au/Documents/forms.php).