



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background and Context

Why Regulate?

Teachers have a profound and lasting impact on children and young people, the importance of regulating teachers to ensure safety and quality cannot be understated.

Regulation by Government protects and benefits people. It is one of the key ways in which the Tasmanian Government can support the community and deliver its response to the *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings (Commission of Inquiry)*. Tasmania has four education regulators that impact:

- the quality of learning our learners' experience
- how student learning is assessed and recognised
- the quality and safety of learning environments
- the extent to which learners are participating and engaged in learning pathways.

The Teachers Registration Board (the Board) is responsible for registering teachers and ensuring teachers are of good character, competent, and fit to teach in Tasmanian schools.

The Board is accountable to the Minister for Education and is governed by a skills-based board. It is supported by an office of staff provided by the Department for Education, Children and Young People.

What does the Teachers Registration Act do?

The *Teachers Registration Act 2000* (the Act) was introduced to regulate the teaching profession in Tasmania. It established the Teachers Registration Board and its key powers and functions. The Act provides minimum professional standards for Tasmanian teachers and seeks to protect children in schools from potential abuse.

Why review the Act?

Since the Act's first introduction in 2000, much has changed, including:

- The Commission of Inquiry, which highlighted the need for the Act to better protect Tasmanian children and young people in schools. It set out issues and limitations with the current Act and recommended changes. The Tasmanian government has committed to implementing these recommendations by July 2026.
- The introduction of the Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia outlining a nationally consistent approach to the registration of teachers across areas like professional standards and development requirements.
- A national commitment to the registration of teachers in early childhood education and care settings through the National Early Childhood Education and Care

Workforce Strategy and subsequent Review of Child Safety Arrangements that endorsed teacher registration in ECEC as a key mechanism to enhance child safety.

- A more comprehensive national evidence base showing more Tasmanian students come from disadvantaged backgrounds than their national counterparts, with consequently lower levels of attendance, literacy and numeracy.
- The *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* and the *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* providing us with a much deeper understanding of how to make our institutions safe for children and young people.
- The release of the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report *A path to universal early childhood education and care (September 2024)*.
- The update of the *Education Act 2016* and the Review of Education Regulation making recommendations and implementing legislation that reflects changes in contemporary understanding of best practice regulation to deliver outcomes.

The Teachers Registration Act Review represents the next step in modernising education regulation in Tasmania, redesigning it to better meet the needs of children and young people, keep them safe and prepare them for the future. This follows the update of the Education Act 2016 and the Review of Education Regulation.

What will the review do?

The objective of the Review is to review the *Teachers Registration Act 2000* and make recommendations to ensure:

- children are safe while they learn
- teachers, including those in early childhood education and care, are high quality and meet professional standards
- the legislative framework reflects modern regulatory practice and is fit-for-purpose.

To deliver this, the Steering Committee will advise the Minister on:

- best practice teacher registration
- the powers required by the Teachers Registration Board to perform its functions
- how to enhance the application of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- how to enhance the Act's compliance with the Framework for Teachers Registration
- how teacher registration is currently undertaken in other jurisdictions
- how teacher registration processes can be streamlined
- how the recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse can be implemented
- how the registration of early childhood teachers working in early childhood education and care settings can be implemented

- an approach to implement any recommendations made, including any legislative amendments
- any other matters considered relevant to achieving the outcomes of the Review, subject to the agreement of the Minister.

What won't the Review cover?

Matters out of scope include:

- governance matters for the Board that were included in the *Review of Education Regulation*
- matters considered in the *Review of Tasmania's Education System*
- pay and conditions of teachers, including those working in the early childhood education and care sector
- curriculum.

Relevant findings from the *Review of Tasmania's Education System* that are adopted by Government will be incorporated into this Review where possible.

Timeline

Subject to the parliamentary schedule legislative amendments from the Review will be considered by Parliament no later than July 2026.

Consultation

The Review will include an opportunity for everyone, including children and young people, teachers, Aboriginal communities, victim survivors, and the Tasmanian community to share their views.

Governance Arrangements for the Review

The Review will be overseen by a skills-based Steering Committee who will advise the Minister on the Review. Its membership, role and operation will be defined in a separate Terms of Reference.