

## ATTACHMENT B

### STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVING AGE REQUIREMENTS

#### **New South Wales**

<b>Calendar Year</b>	2006	2007	2008	<b>2010</b>
<b>Leaving Age</b>	15	15	15	<b>17</b>
<b>Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)</b>	Yr 10	Yr 10	Yr 10	<b>Yr 11 - 12</b>

**Act increasing leaving age:** NSW has been examining raising the leaving age to either 16, 17 or 18 for some time. The Premier of NSW, Mr Nathan Rees, announced on 28 January that NSW government will increase school leaving age from 15 to 17 commencing from 2010. The NSW Government will introduce legislation to change the school leaving age which is currently 15.

**Change of age effective from:** 1 January 2010.

**To apply to students who:** turn 17 (2010) ie. **immediate effect.** In addition if a student is under 17 and wants to leave school after Year 10, they will need to be in vocational training, an apprenticeship or paid employment for more than 25 hours per week.

**Reason for Change:** Premier Rees in his media release of 28 January 2009 has stated that the benefits of increasing the school age include:

- *Better wages over a lifetime -- On average early school leavers will earn lower wages over a lifetime and are more likely to be unemployed for periods of their lives (Source: Access Economics 2006);*
- *A better chance of employment -- According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, early school leavers are two-and-a-half times more likely to be unemployed;*
- *A stronger economy – the NSW economy stands to gain an estimate of up to \$2.7 billion if early school leaver numbers are halved by 2050 (Source: Applied Economics); and*
- *A better trained workforce – those who complete school are more likely to pursue further study/training*

The *Raising the School Leaving Age Consultation Paper* released in February 2008 noted that:

- *“Currently in NSW young people are able to leave school at fifteen. This age was set over sixty years ago during World War II. It is no longer relevant in the current economic environment, and maintaining such a low expectation sells our young people short. Raising the school leaving age to at least 16 is one way we can make sure that in NSW all our young people aim higher and do their best in our very challenging world”; and*
- *“The Government has determined that, based on the overwhelming evidence of benefit to young people and the community, the minimum school leaving age should be increased to at least 16.”*

See: <http://www.premier.nsw.gov.au/Newsroom/Articles.html> (Nathan Rees to raise school leaving age 28 January 2009)

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/newsroom/yr2006/sep/studentsplan.pdf>

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/reviews/schleavage/schleavagecons.pdf>

## Victoria

<b>Calendar Year</b>	2006	<b>2007</b>	2008	2009
<b>Leaving Age</b>	15	<b>16</b>	16	16
<b>Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)</b>	Yr 10	<b>Yr 11</b>	<b>Yr 11</b>	<b>Yr 11</b>

**Act increasing leaving age:** *Education and Training Reform Act 2006.*

**Change of age effective from:** 1 July 2007

To apply to students who: are between the ages of 6 and 16 years and who must be enrolled at a school or another registered education and training provider – ie. **immediate effect**. Students 15 years of age who had already legally left school when the Act was proclaimed on Sunday 1st July, are not expected to return.

**Reason for Change:** *“These changes are based on overwhelming evidence that people who complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification are more likely to make a successful transition to further study or work and there are ongoing negative effects from leaving school early - not just for the individual but also for society and the economy.”*

See: [http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg\\_minimumage.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg_minimumage.htm)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/participation/parentupdate/july07/reformact.htm>

## Queensland

Calendar Year	2006	2007	<b>2008</b>	2009
Leaving Age	16	16	<b>17</b>	17
Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)	Yr 11	Yr 11	<b>Yr 11 - 12</b>	Yr 11 - 12

**Act increasing leaving age:** *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.*

**Change of age effective from:** 1 January 2008, however, from 1 January 2006, young people must stay at school until they turn 16 or complete Year 10, whichever comes first.

**To apply to students who:** are in Year 10 in 2006 – these students will be the first to be affected by the new laws ie **immediate effect**. From 1 January 2006, young people must stay at school until they turn 16 or complete Year 10, whichever comes first. After this, the *compulsory participation* phase will apply until the young person:

- gains a Senior Certificate or Certificate III (vocational qualification); or
- has participated in eligible options for two years. An eligible option is an educational program provided by a school, a course of higher education provided by a university or other provider, a TAFE course, an apprenticeship or traineeship; or
- turns 17.

**Reason for Change:** “*These changes are based on national and international evidence that young people who complete 12 years of education have greater opportunities for further education and sustainable employment.*”

See: <http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/senior.html>

## Western Australia

Calendar Year	<b>2006</b>	2007	<b>2008</b>	2009
Leaving Age	<b>16</b>	16	<b>17</b>	17
Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)	<b>Yr 11</b>	Yr 11	<b>Yr 11 - 12</b>	Yr 11 - 12

**Act increasing leaving age:** The *Acts Amendment (Higher School Leaving Age and Related Provisions) Bill 2005* was passed in November 2005.

**Change of age effective from:** 1 January 2006 and then 1 January 2008.

**To apply to students who:** turn 16 (2006) and 17 (2008) ie. **immediate effect.** Consequently as of January 2006 the leaving age in WA was raised to the end of the year in which a student turned 16 years of age; and, as of January 2008, the end of the year in which a student turns 17 years of age.

**Reason for Change:** These changes have been implemented as:

- “research in Australia and overseas tells us that young people who complete 12 years of schooling and/or training are better prepared for life – both socially and economically – than those who do not; and
- too many young Western Australians are not completing 12 years of schooling and/or training.”

See: <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolleavingage/detcms/participation/school-leaving-age/brochures-and-reports/changes-to-the-school-leaving-age.en>

[http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolleavingage/detcms/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset\\_id=336354](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolleavingage/detcms/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=336354)

## South Australia

<b>Calendar Year</b>	2006	2007	2008	<b>2009</b>
<b>Leaving Age</b>	16	16	16	<b>17</b>
<b>Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)</b>	Yr 10-11	Yr 10-11	Yr 10-11	<b>Yr 11-12</b>

**Act increasing leaving age:** *The Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007.*

**Change of age effective from:** 1 January 2009.

**To apply to students who:** are 16 year olds in 2008 ie **immediate effect** - requiring them to be in full time education or training until they achieve a qualification or turn 17. Under the new law, these young people are considered 'children of compulsory education age'.

If a child turns 16 in 2008, the law requires that all children of 'compulsory education age' participate full-time in an approved learning program until they turn 17.

The new laws will mean that every young person must be 'learning or earning' after they turn 16 and until they are 17 years of age or achieve a qualification.

**Reason for Change:** *The changes have been made "Because the new law reflects research which shows that young people who leave school too early are often unemployed by their 20s and then find it difficult to find work and careers of their choice. " and "Research tells us that young people who leave school or other study early are much more likely to be unemployed or in jobs with no long term future by the time they are in their twenties. This can impact on their overall health and quality of life."*

See: <http://www.edlawreform.sa.gov.au/>

## Tasmania

Calendar Year	2006	2007	<b>2008</b>	2009
Leaving Age	16	16	<b>17</b>	17
Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)	Yr 10	Yr 10	<b>Yr 11</b>	Yr 11

[Act increasing leaving age: Youth Participation in Education and Training \(Guaranteeing Futures\) Act 2005.](#)

[Change of leaving age effective from:](#) 1 January 2008.

[To apply to students who:](#) have completed Year 10 or turned 16 ie. **[immediate effect](#)** - will be required to participate in further education or training:

- for a further two years, or
- until they have gained a certificate III vocational qualification, or
- until they have turned 17.

This means that it will no longer be possible to finish education or training at the end of Year 10.

[Reason for Change:](#) Leaving age changes were implemented as: “*Recent research says that young people who stay in education or training after Year 10 will have more opportunities and more chance of choosing what they want to do. The Youth Participation in Education and Training (Guaranteeing Futures) legislation and supporting programs are aimed at achieving this.*”

See: <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/parents/starting/starting-and-leaving-ages>

## Australian Capital Territory

<b>Calendar Year</b>	2006	2007	2008	<b>2009 or 2010</b>
<b>Leaving Age</b>	15	15	15	<b>17</b>
<b>Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)</b>	Yr 10	Yr 10	Yr 10	<b>Yr 11 / 12</b>

**Act increasing leaving age:** The current legislation is the *Education Act 2004*. The Minister for Education, Mr Andrew Barr announced on 29 January 2009 that the ACT would increase its leaving age from 15 to 17 from either 1 January 2009 or 1 January 2010.

In August 2008 the ACT released a consultation paper titled *Pathways to the future – a consultation paper on increasing young people’s engagement in education, training and work* outlining proposals for raising the ACT’s school leaving age.

The ACT is expected to increase the school leaving age from 15 to 17, with other training ‘learning or earning’ requirements (young people to be in education, training or work).

**Change of leaving age effective from:** Expected to be from 1 January 2009.

**To apply to students who:** turned 17 in 2009 (or 2010 if this is chosen as the starting date for legislation) ie. **immediate effect.**

**Reason for Change:** Raising school leaving age would aim to ensure students are better prepared for an economy that requires higher skill levels; will lead to increased productivity growth; and will reduce those students leaving early who are more likely to become long-term unemployed adults and/or earn less when employed.

The ACT Government is committed to helping all young people make a positive transition from school to further education, training and work. It is consulting with young people, their parents and teachers and the wider ACT community about how this should best be done. While the ACT has the highest retention rates in Australia with 90 percent of ACT students finishing their schooling, the issue of whether the ACT school leaving age should be raised forms part of the consultation.

The ACT Minister for Education stated in January 2008 that: "*Perhaps considering measures such as raising the compulsory leaving age would enable us to address, effectively the remaining 10 per cent of the student population who aren't completing year 12 or an equivalent vocational education and training level.*"

See: [http://www.det.act.gov.au/pathways\\_to\\_the\\_future](http://www.det.act.gov.au/pathways_to_the_future)  
<http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7278>  
[http://www.det.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/30679/Pathways\\_to\\_the\\_Future.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/30679/Pathways_to_the_Future.pdf)

## Northern Territory

<b>Calendar Year</b>	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Leaving Age</b>	15	15	15	15
<b>Expected grade level (grade expected to complete)</b>	Yr 10	Yr 10	Yr 10	Yr 10

**Act increasing leaving age:** N/A at this point in time.

**Change of age effective from:** N/A at this point in time,

**To apply to students who:** N/A.

**Reason for no Change:** The 2003 *Report on Future Directions for Secondary Education in the Northern Territory* noted that raising the compulsory leaving age in order to keep young people at school, may have any effect in the Territory as having a compulsory leaving age of 15 has not deterred many young people from dropping out earlier and it is almost universally recognised that the current sanctions do not work.

However, the review is firmly of the opinion that young people should stay at school until they have the skills and understandings to equip them for their chosen career or learning pathways. Moreover, students should not leave school until they have organised their Futures Portfolio with assistance from their pathways mentor, to prepare them for their transition from school into further training or the workforce.

See: <http://www.betterschools.nt.gov.au/history/docs/report/report.pdf>