

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

and

Victorian Catholic Education Authority Limited (VCEA)

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Memorandum of Understanding

between

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (ABN 89 411 320 250) (a body corporate established under Chapter 4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic))

of Level 7, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000

(VRQA)

and

Victorian Catholic Education Authority Limited (ACN 119 459 853) (a company limited by guarantee established under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth))

of Levels 6 and 7, 486 Albert Street, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

(VCEA)

Background

- A. The purpose of this MoU is to record the shared and separate responsibilities of the VCEA and the VRQA to ensure Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises comply with the Minimum Standards, and Catholic Schools provide high-quality learning opportunities for children and young people.
- B. This MoU reflects the mature and continuing partnership and shared commitment of the VCEA and the VRQA to ensure Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises are child safe environments.
- C. The MoU reflects the VCEA's commitment to high quality and rigorous reviews of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and to implement a comprehensive assurance framework to assure their ongoing compliance from 2025.
- D. The Schedules are intended to strike an appropriate balance between regulatory oversight that is sufficiently robust to give confidence to the VCEA, the VRQA, the Victorian Government and the people of Victoria, that Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises meet Minimum Standards.
- E. This MoU is intended to support a strong working relationship between the VCEA and the VRQA so that information is exchanged in a timely manner to enable swift, supportive action by the VCEA to assure the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards.
- F. This MoU gives effect to:
 - a. the VRQA's approval of the VCEA as a Review Body under sections 4.3.2(c) and 4.3.8F(c) of the ETR Act to review and report on the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards; and
 - b. the Statement of Expectations and the School Review Bodies Guide.
- G. This MoU establishes procedures for dealing with:

- a. applications for registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and the amendment of registration;
 - b. review of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises against the Minimum Standards;
 - c. applications for exemptions from the curriculum and enrolment Minimum Standards;
 - d. reporting on the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards;
 - e. provision to the VRQA, for inclusion on the State Register, of each Catholic School's Annual Report to the School Community and each Catholic School Boarding Premises' Annual Report to the School Boarding Premises Community
 - f. reporting on complaints received by the VRQA or VCEA relating to compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards;
 - g. referral to the VCEA of complaints received by the VRQA about Catholic Schools' and Catholic School Boarding Premises' compliance with the Minimum Standards;
 - h. the referral of child safety concerns received from the CCYP and other regulators, or identified by the VRQA via complaints, media and the like, to the VCEA for action; and
 - i. requests by the VRQA for the VCEA to undertake a review or assessment of a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises.
- G. This MoU outlines the VCEA's responsibilities and obligations as the approved Review Body for Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and the KPIs that will inform the annual Review Body Assurance Program.

Agreed terms

1. Definitions and Interpretation

Definitions

In this MoU, unless the contrary intention appears, the following definitions will apply:

Annual Compliance Report means the report provided by the VCEA to the VRQA on the compliance with the Minimum Standards of all Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in Victoria under sections 4.3.5(2) and 4.3.8V(2) of the ETR Act, and regulations 71(1) and 71J of the ETR Regulations, as referenced in the Schedules to this MoU.

Annual Report to the School Boarding Premises Community (Boarding Annual Report) means the report a school boarding premises must make available to the community concerning the school boarding premises' performance under clause 9, schedule 4A of the ETR Regulations.

Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC) means the report a school must make available to the school community concerning the school's performance under clause 18, schedule 4 of the ETR Regulations, which are then provided to the VRQA for inclusion on the State Register in accordance with this MoU.

Bishop means a reference to each of the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the

Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat, the Bishop of the Diocese of Sale or the Bishop of the Diocese of Sandhurst from time to time, or the administrator of the relevant Diocese during any period that the office of the Bishop in that Diocese is vacant, or a reference to them jointly, as applicable.

Catholic Diocesan Proprietor means a reference to each of MACS, CES, DOSCEL and DOBSEL, or a reference to them jointly as applicable.

Catholic Diocesan School means a school governed and operated by a Catholic Diocesan Proprietor, or by any other entity that is wholly owned or controlled by any of the Catholic Diocesan Proprietors, and which is registered by the VRQA as owned by that proprietor on the State Register.

Catholic School is a school that is established and conducted in any Diocese with the authority of any of the Bishops and which belongs to the VCEA system of schools, and includes a reference to:

- (a) a Catholic Diocesan School,
- (b) a Religious Institute (RI) School;
- (c) a Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) School; or
- (d) a school that is jointly owned by any of the Catholic Diocesan Proprietors, a Religious Institute (RI) Proprietor and/or a Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) Proprietor.

Catholic School Boarding Premises means a school boarding premises (as defined in section 1.1.3(1) of the ETR Act) at which school boarding services (as defined in section 1.1.3(1) of the ETR Act) are provided by or on behalf of a Catholic School.

CCYP means the Commission for Children and Young People established under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012* (Vic).

CES means Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (ACN 643 894 384), a company limited by guarantee established by the Bishop of the Diocese of Sandhurst which is the registered proprietor of Catholic Diocesan Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Sandhurst. CES governs and manages the operation of these schools and boarding premises and provides support, services and leadership to them and to other Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Sandhurst.

Chair means the Chair of the VCEA Board.

Chief Executive Officer (Director), VRQA means the person appointed to, holding or acting for the time being in the position of CEO (Director) of the VRQA.

Chief Executive Officer, VCEA means the person appointed to, holding or acting for the time being in the position of CEO of the VCEA.

Child Information Sharing Scheme means the sharing of information in accordance with Part 6A of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic).

Code of Canon Law means the Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 25 January 1983 or its successor and any other universal or particular legislation promulgated by the competent ecclesiastical authority.

Commencement Date means the date of execution of this MoU by the last of the Parties.

Complaint means a complaint received by VCEA or the VRQA that relates to the compliance of a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards.

Confidential Information means information (in whatever form) of a Party including but not limited to technical, scientific and financial information which comes into the possession of the other Party through intentional or unintentional disclosure, excluding information which:

- (a) is or comes into the public domain other than by disclosure in breach of the terms of this MoU;
- (b) is or becomes available to the recipient Party from a third party lawfully in possession of it and with the lawful power to disclose it to the recipient Party;
- (c) is rightfully known by the recipient Party (as shown by its written record) prior to the date of disclosure to it under this MoU; or
- (d) is independently developed by an employee of the recipient Party who has no knowledge of the disclosure made under this MoU.

CRICOS means the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students.

CRMV Ltd (ACN 648 038 822) represents the interests of Catholic schools in Victoria owned by MPJP Proprietors and RI Proprietors. It also acts as a consultative forum for the debate of issues related to Catholic education, particularly as these pertain to MPJP Schools and RI Schools.

Diocese means a reference to each of the four Catholic Dioceses in Victoria over which a Bishop exercises ecclesiastical jurisdiction, being the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the Diocese of Ballarat, the Diocese of Sale and the Diocese of Sandhurst.

DOBCEL means Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (ACN 629 894 686), a company limited by guarantee established by the Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat which is the registered proprietor of Catholic Diocesan Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Ballarat. DOBCEL governs and manages the operation of these schools and boarding premises and provides support, services and leadership to them and to other Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Ballarat.

DOSCEL means Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (ACN 621 266 993), a company limited by guarantee established by the Bishop of the Diocese of Sale which is the registered proprietor of Catholic Diocesan Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Sale. DOSCEL governs and manages the operation of these schools and boarding premises and provides support, services and leadership to them and other Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Diocese of Sale.

ETR Act means the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* as in force from time to time.

ETR Regulations means the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 as in force from time to time.

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme means the sharing of information in accordance with Part 5A of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)*.

Government Agency means any government or any public, statutory, governmental, semigovernmental, local governmental or judicial body, entity or authority and includes a Minister of the Crown or the Commonwealth of Australia and any person, body, entity or authority exercising a power pursuant to an Act of Parliament.

Guidelines means the VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration and the VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Boarding Premises Registration as gazetted from time to time.

Investigation means the processes undertaken by the VCEA to determine whether a complaint substantiates a breach of the Minimum Standards.

KPIs means the key performance indicators which the VCEA must endeavour to meet and which will inform the annual Review Body Assurance Program. The KPIs are contained in the Schedules to this MoU.

Law means:

- (a) principles of law or equity established by decisions of courts within the Commonwealth of Australia;
- (b) statutes, regulations, by-laws, ordinances, orders, awards, proclamations and local laws of the Commonwealth, State of Victoria, any local government or a Government Agency;
- (c) the Constitution of the Commonwealth;
- (d) binding requirements and mandatory approvals (including conditions) of the Commonwealth, the State of Victoria or a Government Agency which have the force of law; and
- (e) guidelines of the Commonwealth, the State of Victoria or a Government Agency which have the force of law.

MACS means Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (ACN 643 442 371), a company limited by guarantee established by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Melbourne which is the registered proprietor of the Catholic Diocesan Schools and Catholic Boarding Premises in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. MACS governs and manages the operation of these schools and boarding premises within the Archdiocese of Melbourne and provides support, services and leadership to them and other Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Minimum Standards means the prescribed minimum standards that schools and school boarding premises (and other education providers) must satisfy in order to be registered and remain registered as contained in the ETR Act and Schedules 4, 4A and 8 of the ETR Regulations and includes the requirements under the ETR Act to comply with Ministerial Order 1359 and Ministerial Order 706.

Minister means the Minister for Education of the State of Victoria.

Ministerial Order 706 means *Ministerial Order 706: Anaphylaxis Management in Victorian schools and school boarding premises* and its successors.

Ministerial Order 1359 means *Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises* and its successors.

Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) means a public juridic person recognised as such under the Code of Canon Law which is established by the decree of a competent ecclesiastical authority for the purpose of active ministry.

Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) Proprietor means a body corporate that is established by an MPJP for the purposes of civil law recognition, or otherwise a body corporate that is owned and controlled (directly or indirectly) by an MPJP.

Ministerial Public Juridic Person (MPJP) School means a school governed and operated by an MPJP Proprietor and which is registered by the VRQA as owned by that proprietor on the State Register.

Moderation means the review and quality assurance of assessment reports by the VCEA to ensure they are consistent with the Guidelines and the assessment justifies a finding of compliance or non-compliance. The purpose of Moderation is to drive consistency of assessment and understanding of the Minimum Standards and Guidelines across VCEA.

MoU means this Memorandum of Understanding as amended from time to time and includes its Schedules and Annexures.

PA Act means the *Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic)*.

Party means either the VCEA or the VRQA as the context requires and **Parties** means both of them.

Primary Representatives means:

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA; and
- (b) the Chief Executive Officer (Director), VRQA.

Religious Institute (RI) Proprietor means a body corporate that is owned (directly or indirectly) by a canonically recognised religious institute and/or society with public juridic status in the Catholic Church in which, in accordance with their own law, the members pronounce public vows and live a fraternal life in common.

Religious Institute (RI) School means a school governed and operated by an RI Proprietor and which is registered by the VRQA as owned by that proprietor on the State Register.

Responsible Officer means the person appointed by the VCEA to coordinate registration applications and compliance reporting to the VRQA.

Review Body means a person or body approved by the VRQA under sections 4.3.2(c) and 4.3.8F(c) of the ETR Act to review a school or group of schools, or school boarding premises.

Review Body Assurance Program means the VRQA's annual risk-based assurance program of the activities undertaken by Review Bodies under their respective Memorandum of Understanding.

School Review Bodies Guide means the VRQA publication entitled *School Review Bodies Guide* last endorsed by the VRQA Board on 23 May 2022 and any successor guide, as amended from time to time.

Secondary Representatives means:

- a) VCEA: the Responsible Officer appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA.
- b) VRQA: the Deputy Chief Executive Officer Schools or the person holding, or acting for the time being in that position.

Senior Secondary or Foundation Secondary Registration means registration of a school by the VRQA under section 4.3.10 of the ETR Act to deliver a senior secondary or foundation secondary course.

Specialist School means a school that is registered pursuant to the ETR Act and defined in regulation 5 of the ETR Regulations and which caters mainly for students with disabilities or with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Specific Purpose School means a school that is registered pursuant to the ETR Act and is a school registered for a specific purpose which may include a school that provides an alternative educational program. Examples include English language schools, the Victorian School of Languages and Virtual School Victoria.

Statement of Expectations means the Statement of Expectations provided to the Chair of the VRQA by the Hon Natalie Hutchins MP, Minister for Education and the Hon Gayle Tierney MP, Minister for TAFE and Skills applying from 1 November 2022 and any successor Statements of Expectations.

Term means the term of this MoU set out in clause 5 and includes any extension.

VCAA means the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and includes its Board, employees, contractors, consultants and agents.

VCEA means the Victorian Catholic Education Authority Limited (ACN 119 459 853), a company established by the Bishops to, in cooperation with the Catholic Diocesan Proprietors, support Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises in complying with all requirements under relevant laws for their ongoing registration as schools or school boarding premises in Victoria. This includes reviewing and monitoring, and taking whatever steps are necessary in supporting Catholic Schools and School Boarding Premises for the purposes of ensuring such compliance. The VCEA is an approved school system and funding authority for all Victorian Catholic schools except one¹.

VET means vocational education and training.

VRQA means the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and includes its Board, employees, contractors, consultants and agents.

2. Memorandum of Understanding not legally binding

This document is not intended to create legal relations or constitute a legally binding contractual agreement between the Parties, but is a significant document that sets out the commitment of the Parties. Notwithstanding this clause, the Parties will seek to comply with all of the terms of this MoU.

3. Memorandum subject to other provisions

This MoU is to be read subject to:

- (a) any policy, guideline or direction issued to the VRQA by the Minister pursuant to the ETR Act, whether such policy, guideline or direction is consistent with this MoU or not; and
- (b) any whole of Government policy issued under section 92 of the PA Act that applies to the VRQA.

¹ St Paul's College Balwyn is a Specialist School in Balwyn operated by Villa Maria Catholic Homes Limited.

4. Termination of Previous MoUs

The Parties acknowledge and agree that from the Commencement Date the existing MoU between the Parties dated 28 June 2023 will be terminated and replaced with this MoU.

5. Term

- (a) Subject to clause 5(b), this MoU will commence on the Commencement Date and will end on the third anniversary of the Commencement Date, unless terminated earlier by the Parties in accordance with clause 16.
- (b) 6 months prior to the expiry of the Term, the Primary Representatives may agree in writing to extend the Term.

6. Delegation and Approvals

Nothing in this MoU constitutes a delegation of any powers of the VRQA, under the ETR Act, the ETR Regulations or any other instrument, to the VCEA or the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA.

7. Co-operation and Consultation

The Parties will exercise their rights and perform their obligations under this MoU in a cooperative, consultative and transparent manner.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 VCEA

- (a) The VCEA (formerly known as Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Limited) was incorporated by the Archbishop of Melbourne and the Bishops of the Dioceses of Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst in 2006 as the single Victorian peak body for Catholic School education in Victoria, after more than 30 years of operation in an unincorporated form.
- (b) In 2023, following a wide-ranging review of the governance and operations of the company, the Bishops expanded the membership of the company by admitting as an additional member a nominee of CRMV Ltd, reiterated the purposes that underpinned the establishment of the company, clarified the scope of the company's functions, revised the governance of the company and amended the Company's name.
- (c) The VCEA's Constitution includes in its objects: *'School registration and compliance: to act as a review body for all Catholic Schools with responsibilities for registration and assuring compliance through reviews as delegated under the Memorandum of Understanding with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority, from time to time, and to undertake such action, including issuing requests or directions, as is required in fulfilling this function'*;
- (d) The VCEA supports, reviews and monitors the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with all registration, reporting and other requirements under relevant laws in the State of Victoria, and takes whatever steps are necessary in supporting Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises for the purposes of ensuring such compliance.

- (e) In fulfilling its responsibilities as a Review Body, VCEA will:
- (i) ensure processes are established and implemented to assure the ongoing compliance of all Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards;
 - (ii) have processes in place to quality assure the review program and periodically review these processes to ensure the effectiveness of the review program;
 - (iii) ensure that a regular review of all Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises is conducted, operating on a cycle of at least one review within a five-year period;
 - (iv) have processes in place to moderate and quality assure all assessments conducted as part of cyclical or out- of cycle reviews to ensure the consistency and quality of assessments;
 - (v) ensure that any referrals from the VRQA of complaints or concerns regarding compliance with the Minimum Standards by a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises are investigated or assessed in a timely manner and otherwise within any timelines specified in this MoU;
 - (vi) ensure that guidance and support is provided to Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises that have been identified as non-compliant with the Minimum Standards, including assistance with achieving compliance within the timelines specified in this MoU which must include the preparation and monitoring of an action plan with timelines for the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises to achieve compliance;;
 - (vii) ensure that the VRQA is notified of any actual or potential significant breaches of the Minimum Standards, in particular breaches of Ministerial Order 1359, that may move into the public domain or attract media or parliamentary attention and for which the VRQA might be requested to comment, within 7 days of VCEA becoming aware of any such breach;
 - (viii) promote the importance of the Minimum Standards and compliance by Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (ix) provide the Annual Compliance Report to the VRQA detailing the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises reviewed during that cycle in respect of each of the Minimum Standards;
 - (x) ensure that registration applications and applications for amendments to registration are quality-assured by the VCEA, complete and recommended by the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA on the basis they comply with the Minimum Standards. Registration applications will be submitted by the VCEA by 31 August in the year preceding the proposed commencement of the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (xi) ensure that registration applications for a Catholic School to provide a senior secondary course or foundation secondary course are submitted in coordination with the awarding bodies' authorisation to deliver the course

and by 30 June in the year preceding the proposed delivery of that course by the Catholic School;

- (xii) ensure throughout 2025 the VCEA monitors the quality and rigour of its review of the compliance of Catholic Schools and School Boarding premises with the Minimum Standards including Ministerial Order 1359 and its development and implementation of a comprehensive assurance framework to assure the compliance of Catholic School and School Boarding Premises;
 - (xiv) inform the VRQA of emergencies that may require a temporary relocation of students within 7 days of becoming aware of a need for a temporary relocation; and
 - (xv) use its best endeavours to meet the KPIs under this MoU.
- (d) The VCEA will notify the VRQA of any anticipated changes to the registered proprietor of any Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises, or changes in the person(s) or entity(ies) that own the registered proprietor of any Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises.

8.2 VRQA

- (a) The VRQA is an independent statutory body with responsibility for:
- (i) registration of government and non-government schools and school boarding premises;
 - (ii) registration of providers to deliver courses to overseas students;
 - (iii) home schooling registration in Victoria;
 - (iv) course accreditation and registration of qualifications in Victoria;
 - (v) maintenance of the State Register in accordance with section 4.2.2(i) of the ETR Act;
 - (vi) investigation of complaints relating to the Minimum Standards against providers registered in Victoria;
 - (vii) regulating apprenticeships and traineeships; and
 - (viii) registering education and training providers (providers of VET, school education, senior secondary or foundation secondary education and non-school senior secondary or foundation secondary providers and overseas secondary student exchange organisations).
- (b) Additionally, the VRQA recognises its responsibility to drive consistency in compliance assessment approaches by Review Bodies and the VRQA, particularly regarding child safety, promoting child safety, and improving schools' compliance with the Minimum Standards, including by:
- (i) documenting and publishing its compliance framework;

- (ii) documenting and publishing guidance on the evidence required to demonstrate compliance with the Minimum Standards, including through the Guidelines; and
 - (iii) implementing the Review Body Assurance Program to ensure the consistency of assessment approaches and outcomes by Review Bodies and the VRQA, and that Review Bodies are continuing to assure the VRQA of the compliance of their schools and school boarding premises with the Minimum Standards.
- (c) The VRQA regulates for quality outcomes in safe and well governed environments. It does this by ensuring that schools in the independent, government and Catholic sectors meet the Minimum Standards.
- (d) The VRQA's regulatory processes are based on:
 - (i) transparency – relevant information, other than private and commercial in confidence information, is available to duty holders and the community;
 - (ii) proportionality – processes, incentives and penalties are proportional to the consequences of the particular risk;
 - (iii) consistency and predictability – processes and decisions will be sufficiently consistent as to be predictable to duty holders;
 - (iv) sector neutrality – all duty holders will be held to the same standards within the regulated sector while respecting their diversity and not taking a one size-fits-all approach; and
 - (v) efficiency and agility – processes deliver maximum public benefit for minimum resources. The VRQA will use co-regulators effectively, allow for flexible, case-specific responses, and decisions will be timely.
- (e) Review Bodies must meet the selection criteria, principles and obligations contained in the School Review Bodies Guide, including ensuring their schools and school boarding premises meet the Minimum Standards and providing guidance and support to their schools and school boarding premises to do so.
- (f) For its continuing approval as a Review Body and to demonstrate its continued ability to assure the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards, the VCEA is required to participate annually in the Review Body Assurance Program which will include participation and attendance at the Review Body Community of Practice, assessment of performance against the KPIs in Schedule 2 of this MoU and meeting all other obligations under this MoU.
- (g) The VRQA retains the authority to conduct a review of a Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises at any time and at its absolute discretion.
- (h) To assist the VCEA to fulfil its obligations as a Review Body the VRQA will:
 - (i) provide clear, accurate and timely information to the VCEA on all registration requirements to enable the VCEA to develop appropriate resources to support compliance and registration for Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises;

- (ii) as part of the Review Body Assurance Program, the VRQA will provide annual information sessions for relevant VCEA staff and reviewers to support consistency of understanding of how to assess compliance and to strengthen the quality of practice across Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (iii) at the request of VCEA, provide guidance regarding various aspects of the application of the Minimum Standards as relevant in VCEA's review and assessment of compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (iv) provide feedback on the Minimum Standards-related guidance and resources for Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises developed by the VCEA to support consistency of understanding and to strengthen quality of practice across Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (v) provide feedback to the VCEA on common non-compliances identified during assessment of the preceding year's applications for school registration and amendments of registration;
 - (vi) annually publish its priority areas of focus for cyclical reviews each year;
 - (vii) notify the VCEA of any referrals from the CCYP about child safety in a Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (viii) intervene at the request of the VCEA to directly review a Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - (ix) ensure the VCEA is performing its obligations as a Review Body by meeting its obligations under this MoU, monitoring of the VCEA's performance against the KPIs in Schedule 2 of this MoU, and through the Review Body Assurance Program; and
 - (x) meet regularly with relevant VCEA representatives to discuss Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises registration and compliance related matters.
- (i) When implementing the Review Body Assurance program, the VRQA will:
- (i) validate a sample of a minimum of 20 cyclical assessment reports completed by the VCEA each year;
 - (ii) provide at least 7 days' notice of proposed school visit shadowing activity to the VCEA to enable the VCEA to make appropriate arrangements with the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises and the reviewer conducting the visit. This will usually take place in the first half of each year; and
 - (iii) provide finalised validation findings to the VCEA in a timely manner and no later than 2 months after receiving the initial assessment report and all supporting evidence from the VCEA for validation to enable the VCEA to implement the VRQA's feedback for further assessments.

9. Schedules

- (a) The Parties agree to comply with the Schedules.
- (b) The Schedules may only be amended, varied or substituted in accordance with clause 14.
- (c) Key dates in relation to the operation of this MoU are listed in Annexure B.

10. Representatives

- (a) Except where otherwise provided, the Primary Representatives will be responsible for the performance of any obligations under this MoU on behalf of the Parties.
- (b) The Secondary Representatives will be responsible for the performance of any obligations under a relevant Schedule on behalf of the Parties.
- (c) A Party may replace a Primary Representative or a Secondary Representative by giving written notice to the other Party.

11. Confidentiality and Information exchange

11.1 Confidentiality

- (a) Subject to the ETR Act and any other applicable legislation, each Party may use the Confidential Information of the other Party only for the purposes of this MoU.
- (b) Each Party must keep the Confidential Information of the other Party confidential except:
 - (i) for disclosures permitted under clause 11.1(a);
 - (ii) to the extent that Party is required or authorised by or under Law to disclose any Confidential Information; and
 - (iii) to the extent that the VRQA is exercising a power under the ETR Act.
- (c) A Party may disclose the Confidential Information of the other Party to its officers or employees who have a need to know for the purposes of this MoU (and only to the extent that each has a need to know).
- (d) Each Party's obligations under this clause will survive termination of this MoU and will continue in relation to Confidential Information until the Confidential Information disclosed to it lawfully becomes part of the public domain.

11.2 Information exchange

- (a) The VRQA acknowledges and agrees that the provision of any information or data by the VCEA to the VRQA that is additional to any requirement or obligation under the ETR Act and the ETR Regulations, is at the discretion of the VCEA and subject always to the privacy obligations of the VCEA at Law.
- (b) The VCEA acknowledges and agrees that, with the exception of information the VRQA is required to provide pursuant to the Child Information Sharing Scheme or

the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, the provision of any other information or data by the VRQA is at the discretion of the VRQA and is subject to the privacy requirements and obligations of the VRQA at Law, including under the ETR Act.

12. Data and Communication of Information

- (a) Subject to clause 11.2(a), the VCEA will:
 - (i) keep the VRQA informed of all matters of which it ought reasonably to be made aware in order for the VRQA to perform its functions;
 - (ii) provide relevant information to the VRQA in a timely manner about issues that may move into the public domain or attract media or parliamentary attention and for which the VRQA might be requested to comment; and
 - (iii) report as required under the ETR Act and this MoU.
- (b) Subject to clause 11.2(b), the VRQA will:
 - (i) keep the VCEA informed of matters of which it ought reasonably be made aware, and provide relevant information in relation to the performance of statutory functions for which it is responsible, or other matters as determined and agreed between the Chief Executive Officer (Director) VRQA and/or the VRQA Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA; and
 - (ii) provide relevant information to the VCEA about Catholic Schools which are subject to VRQA regulatory findings or actions in relation to their registration as either a provider for international school students (listed on CRICOS) or as a registered training organisation; and
 - (iii) provide information to the VCEA as reasonably requested by the VCEA from time to time.

13. Meetings, Records and Reporting

13.1 Meetings

- (a) The Primary Representatives agree to meet quarterly, or as otherwise agreed by them, to discuss the operation of this MoU, matters relevant to the VCEA's performance of its Review Body function and obligations, applications for Catholic School and Catholic School Board Premises registration and the Review Body Assurance Program.
- (b) In relation to each Schedule, the Secondary Representatives agree to meet monthly, or as otherwise agreed by them, to discuss the relevant Schedule.

13.2 Records

The Parties will keep records necessary to comply with their obligations under this MoU.

13.3 Reporting

Consistent with Schedule 2, the VCEA will provide the following reports to the VRQA:

- (a) Annual Reports to the Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises communities on or by 30 June of each year for the preceding school year during the Term; and
- (b) Annual Compliance Report on or by 31 July of each year for the preceding school year during the Term. The Annual Compliance Report will include:
 - (i) an assessment of Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises' compliance with the Minimum Standards in accordance with Schedule 2 reviewed in the school year preceding the preparation of the Annual Compliance Report;
 - (ii) an assessment of Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises' compliance with Ministerial Order 1359 reviewed in the school year preceding the preparation of the Annual Compliance Report;
 - (iii) data on complaints received by the relevant areas of the VCEA that relate to the Minimum Standards in relation to categories/topics to be agreed between the VRQA and the VCEA;
 - (iv) analysis of non-compliance and complaints data, including identifying any Minimum Standards, Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises that require further guidance and support from the VCEA to ensure ongoing compliance; and
 - (v) reporting against the KPIs in Schedule 2 of this MoU and if any KPIs are not met, identifying any relevant issues that hampered the VCEA's ability to meet those KPIs; and.
 - (vi) identifying any Catholic Schools or Catholic School Boarding Premises that did not achieve compliance within 3 months of receipt of a rectification plan, the reasons the timeframe was not met and the steps taken by the VCEA to support the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises to comply.
- (c) The VCEA will provide those reports specified in the relevant schedules in accordance with the timeframes specified.
- (d) The VCEA will notify the VRQA of any actual or potential significant breaches of Ministerial Order 1359 that may move into the public domain or attract media or parliamentary attention and for which the VRQA might be requested to comment, within 7 days of VCEA becoming aware of such actual or potential breaches.

14. Review and Variation

- (a) The Secondary Representatives will undertake a review of the relevant Schedules annually or as otherwise agreed by them.
- (b) At the end of the Term, the Secondary Representatives will undertake a review of the relevant Schedules.
- (c) Any amendment, variation or substitution of the terms and conditions of this MoU must be mutually agreed in writing and signed by the Parties.

- (d) The Parties agree that additional Schedules may be added to this MoU from time to time and any additional Schedules must be agreed in writing and signed by the Parties.

15. Disputes

- (a) For any disputes arising from this MoU, the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA and the Chief Executive Officer (Director) VRQA agree to act in a timely manner and in good faith to negotiate a resolution for the dispute, nominating a nominee of the VCEA and the VRQA to make determinations in relation to any matters arising that are in dispute.
- (b) Notwithstanding the existence of a dispute, the Parties will continue to perform any other obligations under this MoU.

16. Termination

This MoU may be terminated by either Party giving four weeks' notice in writing to the other Party.

Signing page

Signed for and on behalf of the
**Victorian Registration and
Qualifications Authority** by Pam
White PSM, Chair of the VRQA

Signature



Name

Pam White PSM

Date

22 January 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the
**Victorian Catholic Education
Authority Limited** by James Merlino,
Chair of VCEA

Signature



Name

James Merlino

Date

8 December 2025

Schedule 1: The Registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Schedule is to:

- a) give effect to the obligations of the Parties under the ETR Act to allow them to determine whether Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises comply with the Minimum Standards; and
- b) establish procedures for dealing with applications for registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and the amendment of any registration details.

2. Procedures for dealing with applications for registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and amending registration details

- (a) Applications to the VRQA regarding registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises, and the amendment of any registration details of registered Catholic Schools and registered Catholic School Boarding Premises, will be managed and submitted by the VCEA via the relevant Responsible Officer.
- (b) Consistent with sections 4.3.1(3)(b) and 4.3.8B(2)(b) of the ETR Act, only the VCEA has the authority to apply directly to the VRQA for initial registration or amendment to registration of Catholic Schools or Catholic School Boarding Premises. Any such applications will not be accepted by the VRQA unless lodged by VCEA.
- (c) Applications to the VRQA regarding registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises, and the amendment of any registration details of registered Catholic Schools or Catholic School Boarding Premises, will be made on the approved forms. The VRQA will provide current application forms to the VCEA by 31 March each year.
- (d) The VCEA will pay the application fee approved or fixed by the Minister relating to school registration and boarding school registration applications as published in the Government Gazette and in the VRQA's published list of fees on the VRQA website.
- (e) Applications concerning the registration or amendment to registration of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises will be accompanied by relevant evidence required under regulations 65, 69, 71D and 71H of the ETR Regulations.
- (f) The relevant area of the VCEA will quality assure all applications for school and school boarding premises registration or amendments to registration, and when submitting applications, the Chief Executive Officer, VCEA will write to the VRQA to recommend the registration of a school or school boarding premises or the amendment of a registration of a school or school boarding premises on the basis that the application demonstrates compliance with all of the Minimum Standards and the requirements for registration or amendment to registration.
- (g) The relevant area of the VCEA will ensure the evidence required to be submitted with an application is complete at the time of making the application (with the

exception of those matters referred to in the notes to Schedules 5 and 5A of the ETR Regulations).

- (h) To implement clauses 2.2(b) and 2.2(e) of this Schedule 1, the VCEA will make applications and submissions in writing to the VRQA in the following circumstances:
- (i) a new Catholic School is proposed to be registered, including without limitation a new school which will result from an amalgamation of existing registered schools;
 - (ii) the registration of a Catholic School is proposed to be amended, including without limitation inclusion of an additional campus or year level at the school or a relocation of a school or campus;
 - (iii) the registration of a Catholic School that is proposed to deliver a senior secondary course/s or foundation secondary course/s;
 - (iv) a new Catholic Boarding School Premises is proposed to be registered;
 - (v) the registration of a Catholic School Boarding Premises is proposed to be amended; or
 - (vi) the registered proprietor of a Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises is proposed to be changed.
- (i) The VCEA will advise the VRQA, in writing, of the closure of a Catholic School or campus, or Catholic School Boarding Premises or location. Such advice will be considered to be a request for the voluntary cancellation of the registration of the relevant school, school boarding premises, campus or location.
- (j) The VRQA and the VCEA acknowledge that:
- (i) with regard to applications for the registration of new Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises, the VCEA will submit applications for registration by no later than 31 August of the year prior to commencement;
 - (ii) with regard to applications for a Catholic School to provide an accredited senior secondary or foundation secondary course, the VCEA will submit the application by no later than 30 June of the year prior to commencement unless an alternative date has been agreed between the VRQA and the VCAA (where relevant) and the VCEA;
 - (iii) with regard to amendments of registration, including adding a year level, establishing an additional campus, changing a school or campus' location, and changing the registration type for a school, campus or school boarding premises, the VCEA will submit the application by no later than 31 August of the year prior to commencement;
 - (iv) in exceptional circumstances the VCEA may progress an out-of-cycle amendment to registration and in such instances, the VCEA will submit the application no later than 8 weeks prior to the proposed commencement date;

- (v) with regard to emergency relocations (e.g. due to fire or flood), the VCEA will notify the VRQA within 7 days of becoming aware of the emergency that requires the relocation; and
 - (vi) applications for the change of the registered proprietor of a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises must be submitted by no later than 31 August in the year prior, where the proposed date of change of proprietor is 1 January in the following year or otherwise at least 4 months prior to the proposed date of the change of proprietor.
- (k) The VRQA may consider varying the dates in clauses 2.2(j)(i) and 2.2(j)(iii) of this Schedule 1 at the request of the VCEA, for example, if special circumstances arise justifying the varying of a date.
- (l) The VRQA and the VCEA acknowledge that applications for Catholic Schools will generally reflect the following approach:
- (i) Primary: Register for Years P-6 in one process;
 - (ii) Secondary: Register for Years 7-10 in one process; and
 - (iii) Senior secondary: Register for Years 11-12 in one process and senior secondary qualifications.
- (m) The VRQA and the VCEA acknowledge that an application for senior secondary or foundation secondary registration can be submitted concurrent with an application for additional year levels (11-12) or a new school. being either one of the following:
- (i) Years P-12;
 - (ii) Years 7-12; or
 - (iii) Years 10-12.
- (n) The VRQA will provide the VCEA with:
- (i) approved application forms for the registration of schools and boarding school premises, as well as amendments to registration, by 31 March each year;
 - (ii) access to an electronic copy of the Guidelines against which applications will be assessed in that year;
 - (iii) briefings by the VRQA for VCEA officers or contracted services, school principals and school or school boarding premises governing bodies as agreed by the Parties; and
 - (iv) written advice of changes of fees.
- (o) If the VRQA wishes to undertake a school or school boarding premises visit to inform its assessment of an application, the VRQA will agree upon protocols and procedures on school and school boarding visits with the VCEA.

3. Agreed Timelines

The VRQA and the VCEA agree on the following timelines to ensure timely registration:

- a) VRQA to email acknowledgement of receipt of an application to VCEA within 7 days;
- b) VRQA to send invoice to the VCEA within 14 days;
- c) VCEA to pay the invoice within 30 days;
- d) VRQA to send a written rectification report (for new schools) to the VCEA within 10 weeks;
- e) VRQA to send a written rectification report (for amendments to registration excepting change of proprietor applications) within 8 weeks;
- f) VCEA to send rectifications for new schools to the VRQA within 4 weeks;
- g) VCEA to send rectifications for amendments to registration within 4 weeks;
- h) VRQA to finalise Registration following provision of rectifications within 4 weeks; and
- i) Where required, the VCEA and VRQA will agree on alternative timelines for the finalisation of registration applications.

[note: VRQA finalisation of registration will be dependent on VCAA authorisation of some senior secondary or foundation secondary applications and may be delayed awaiting VCAA confirmation. It is also dependent on the application demonstrating compliance with all of the required Minimum Standards]

4. Key Performance indicators - Registrations

The VCEA's performance as a Review Body under this schedule will be measured against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the table below.

KPI	Measure
1. The percentage of initial applications moderated and submitted by the VCEA that do not require further evidence or rectification, not including clauses 6, 7, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in Schedule 4 of the ETR Regulations	75%
2. The percentage of rectification submissions moderated and submitted by the VCEA that do not require further evidence or rectification.	95%

Schedule 1A: Seeking exemptions for Catholic schools

1. Process for seeking and granting exemptions annually

The VCEA will, in relation to a Catholic School, by 30 April each year, write to the VRQA to apply for an:

- (a) exemption from the curriculum Minimum Standard for a school; and
- (b) approval for an enrolment number that is less than the minimum enrolment number required in clause 7 of Schedule 4 of the ETR Regulations, where the VCEA is of the view that such an exemption or approval is necessary in relation to that school.

If the VRQA grants an exemption or approval, it is in force for a period of 12 months from the date the exemption is approved.

A written response will be provided by the VRQA within 20 business days to complete applications made under this Schedule for exemptions.

The VRQA and the VCEA acknowledge that:

- (a) Under regulation 61 of the ETR Regulations, the VRQA may exempt a school from the part of the curriculum Minimum Standard set out in clause 6(b) of Schedule 4 of the ETR Regulations if the school is a Specific Purpose School or Specialist School; and
- (b) Specialist Schools and Specific Purpose Schools have an ongoing exemption from the part of the curriculum Minimum Standard set out in clause 6(b) of Schedule 4 of the ETR Regulations and do not need to apply for an exemption.

2. Seeking and granting exemptions outside of the annual process

If the VCEA becomes aware that any school requires an exemption outside of the annual process outlined in clause 1 of this Schedule 1A, the VCEA will apply to the VRQA for those exemptions in one process once per school term.

Schedule 2: Assessing and Reporting on the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards for registration

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Schedule is to:

- a) give effect to the obligations of the Parties under the ETR Act to allow them to determine whether Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises comply with the Minimum Standards;
- b) give effect to the obligations of the Parties under the ETR Act to allow them to report on the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards;
- c) establish procedures for reporting on the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards; and
- d) set KPIs for the VCEA's obligations to review and assure the compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards.

2. Authorisation of the VCEA to report on compliance by Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards

- a) Pursuant to the ETR Act, the VRQA is responsible for, among other things, registering Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and ensuring they continue to comply with the Minimum Standards.
- b) Under sections 4.3.2(c) and 4.3.8F(c) of the ETR Act, the VRQA has approved the VCEA as the body responsible for the review of Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises' compliance with the Minimum Standards.
- c) It is the responsibility of the VCEA to ensure that any required delegations are in place to give effect to its role as a Review Body and to advise the VRQA of any delegation arrangements.
- d) The VCEA is required to notify the VRQA prior to making any change to existing delegation arrangements.
- e) As a Review Body, the VCEA will carry out the responsibilities outlined in clause 8.1(e).
- f) In relation to cyclical reviews and in addition to its responsibilities outlined in clause 8.1(e), the VCEA will:
 - (i) develop and implement a system for moderation and quality assurance of assessment reports using a risk-based approach and random sampling methodologies;
 - (ii) where non-compliances are identified through a review or assessment, ensure that clear action plans with timelines for achieving compliance are

provided to Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises and monitor the progress of addressing the non-compliances identified;

- (iii) provide support and guidance to Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises identified as non-compliant to ensure they meet the Minimum Standards within a maximum of 3 months from receipt of a rectification plan;
- (iv) if a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises is not compliant within 3 months of receiving a rectification plan, the VCEA will take all reasonable steps to support the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises to comply as soon as possible'
- (v) if a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises remains non-compliant after 3 months, the VCEA must notify the VRQA within 14 days and provide information about the outstanding non-compliances, any reasons for the ongoing non-compliance and actions taken by the VCEA to support the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises to comply; and
- (vi) if the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises remains non-compliant the VRQA will consider taking appropriate action, including conducting a review of that Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises.

3. Annual Reports to the School and School Boarding Premises Community

Annual Reports to the School Community (ARSCs) and Annual Reports to the School Boarding Premises Community will be:

- (a) provided in Microsoft Word and PDF format or as otherwise agreed between the VRQA and the VCEA; and
- (b) submitted to the VRQA for publication on the VRQA State Register by 30 June of each year during the Term of the MoU.

4. VRQA's approval of the VCEA to provide reports

For the purposes of sections 4.3.2(c) and 4.3.8F(c) of the ETR Act, the VRQA approves the VCEA as a Review Body to provide reports to the VRQA regarding compliance and non-compliance by Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards.

The VCEA

The VCEA must:

- (a) require all Catholic Schools to include in their Annual Report to the School Community an attestation by the principal that their school is compliant with the Minimum Standards and all requirements for school registration including Ministerial Order 1359;

- (b) ensure that the VCEA's Annual Compliance Report is consistent with Annexure A and is completed and forwarded to the VRQA by 31 July of each year for the preceding school year; and
- (c) ensure that the VCEA reports annually to the VRQA specifically on Catholic School and Catholic School Boarding Premises' compliance with Ministerial Order 1359 by 15 July of each year for the preceding financial year. This report will enable the VRQA to meet its reporting obligations to the CCYP. This report is to be completed in a form approved by the VRQA.

The VRQA

The VRQA will:

- (a) provide an initial response to the VCEA's Annual Compliance Report including feedback for discussion and notification of issues arising within 30 days after the receipt of the report by the VRQA; and
- (b) advise the VCEA of any compliance issues relating to Catholic School provision of CRICOS courses, VET programs and student exchange programs or in relation to a Catholic School Boarding Premises.

The VRQA may, during the term of this MoU, seek to validate the Annual Compliance Report provided by the VCEA. In doing so, the VRQA would negotiate an acceptable methodology, scope and timing through consultation with the VCEA.

5. Improving compliance

In the Annual Compliance Report, the VCEA will identify those Minimum Standards with higher levels of non-compliance and advise the VRQA on actions the VCEA will take to address these areas. These actions may include developing guidance, tools or training aligned to the VRQA's regulatory framework.

6. Key Performance Indicators – Reviews

The VCEA's performance as a Review Body under this Schedule will be measured against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the table below.

KPI	Measure
<p>1. Percentage of cyclical compliance assessment findings submitted to the VRQA by the VCEA under the Review Body Assurance Program which the VRQA confirms by validation are consistent with the requirements of the VRQA Guidelines and for which the evidence demonstrates compliance or non-compliance.</p> <p>NOTE: The VCEA's performance against this KPI will be assessed by determining the average of the results of the VRQA's validation determined pursuant to A (below)</p>	75%

<p>for all assessment reports the VRQA validates pursuant to the Review Body Assurance Program in the relevant calendar year.</p> <p>A. For each assessment report the VCEA submits to the VRQA, the percentage of findings which the VRQA confirms by validation will be determined as a proportion of the total number of findings the assessment report contains (Assessment Report Validation Result). The VCEA's overall KPI result will then be calculated by averaging the Assessment Report Validation Result for the total number of assessment reports validated under the Review Body Assurance Program that calendar year.</p>	
<p>2. The VCEA will moderate and quality assure all assessment reports and develop procedures and processes to ensure the consistency and quality of assessment reports</p>	<p>100% of all assessment reports. both cyclical and out-of-cycle.</p>
<p>3. Percentage of Annual Reports to the School Community and Annual Reports to the School Boarding Premises Community provided to the VRQA by 30 June each year</p>	<p>95%</p>

Schedule 3: Complaints, specific reviews and general reviews

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Schedule is to:

- a) establish a process for triaging and referring complaints received by the VRQA about Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises to the Responsible Officer;
- b) explain the process for the VRQA to request that the VCEA, as a Review Body, undertake a general review or a specific review of a particular Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises; and
- c) confirm that the Annual Compliance Report will contain data on complaints received by the relevant areas of the VCEA that relate to the Minimum Standards in relation to categories/topics to be agreed between the VRQA and the VCEA.

2. Complaints and specific reviews

- a) Under sections 4.2.2(1)(nd)(i) and (iii) of the ETR Act, the VRQA has a function to investigate complaints against schools and school boarding premises, which, if proven, would be a breach of the Minimum Standards.
- b) Where the VRQA receives a complaint about a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises, it may refer the complaint to the VCEA.
- c) Under section 4.3.3 of the ETR Act, the VRQA can undertake either a 'general review' or a 'specific review' of a school. Similarly, under sections 4.3.8G and 4.3.8H of the ETR Act, the VRQA can undertake a general or specific review of a school boarding premises. A general review involves a review of a school or school boarding premises' compliance with all of the Minimum Standards. A specific review may focus on particular Minimum Standards and is opened on the grounds identified in section 4.3.3(2A) and 4.3.8H(2) of the ETR Act.
- d) The VRQA can request that the VCEA (as the Review Body) undertake either a general review or a specific review, investigation or assessment of compliance with the Minimum Standards.
- e) Where the VRQA requests the VCEA to undertake a general or specific review:
 - i) the VCEA will:
 - i) commence a review within 14 days (excluding where the request is made during the school holidays) or within a timeframe agreed with the VRQA;
 - ii) upon completion of the review, provide copies of the report prepared at the conclusion of the general review, specific review, investigation or assessment to the VRQA for validation together with all evidence relied upon in assessing compliance with the Minimum Standards;
 - iii) comply with the requirements in clause 2(f)(ii)-(iii) of Schedule 2; and

- ii) the VRQA will respond to the VCEA with its validation of the report and evidence submitted and relied upon by the VCEA in relation to compliance with the Minimum Standards within 30 days.
- f) The VCEA will respond within the timelines set by the VRQA to report on the outcome of the general review or specific review, including to provide any information that has been requested. Where timelines cannot be met, the VCEA will seek an extension of time by agreement with the VRQA.
- g) In relation to referrals of complaints or concerns to the VCEA, in addition to its responsibilities under clause 8.1(e), the VCEA will:
 - i) commence a review, assessment or investigation (as appropriate) within 14 days (excluding where the referral is received during the school holidays) of receipt of the referral;
 - ii) provide updates at monthly meetings or another process by agreement on the progress of a complaint investigation or referral;
 - iii) provide copies of any assessment, review or investigation report to the VRQA together with any evidence relied upon in assessing compliance with the Minimum Standards;
 - iv) where the complaint or concern relates to the care, safety and welfare of students, including Ministerial Order 1359, notify the VRQA as soon as possible and at most, within 7 days of any supports and actions taken or proposed to be taken to ensure the ongoing safety of children at the Catholic School and/or Catholic School Boarding Premises;
 - v) where a review or assessment is conducted, comply with the requirements in clause 2(f)(ii)(iii) of Schedule 2;
 - vi) in relation to complaints, conduct an investigation in accordance with VCEA policies and procedures applicable to the nature of the allegations and notify the VRQA of the outcome of that investigation insofar as it relates to the Minimum Standards, including providing a copy of any report of the investigation as appropriate; and
 - vii) in relation to referrals of complaints or concerns to the VCEA, the VRQA will respond to the VCEA with its validation of the report and evidence submitted and relied upon by the VCEA in relation to compliance with the Minimum Standards within 30 days.

3. Reporting on Complaints

The VCEA will report annually to the VRQA on the number of complaints received by the VCEA that are relevant to the Minimum Standards, in accordance with clause 13.3(b)(iii) of this MoU, through the Annual Compliance Report. The information will include:

- a) the name of the Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises;
- b) the date complaint was received and finalised;

- c) details of the complaint including the Minimum Standards alleged to have been breached;
- d) any additional action taken by the VCEA, for example the opening of a review under clause 14 of Ministerial Order 1359; and
- e) details of the outcome of the complaint.

ANNEXURE A – Criteria for reporting on Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises’ compliance with the Minimum Standards

Reporting to the VRQA is pursuant to sections 4.3.2(c) and 4.3.8F(c) of the ETR Act on whether registered Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises comply with the Minimum Standards

The criteria to be applied in assessing whether Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises comply with the Minimum Standards is outlined in the Guidelines published on the VRQA website. These documents may be updated from time to time to reflect legislative and policy changes.

The VRQA will notify the VCEA of the format for reporting on the following matters no later than 30 December in the year preceding the due date for inclusion of these matters in the Annual Compliance Report:

- compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with the Minimum Standards, with data reported to identify the compliance of the Catholic Schools in each Diocese;
- areas of non-compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises unable to be resolved by the VCEA and previously reported to the VRQA;
- promotion of the Minimum Standards;
- Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises reviewed; and
- new or amended registration applications for Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises.

ANNEXURE B - Key Dates

Date	Activity
30 April	Applications for exemptions from the Minimum Standards for curriculum and/or minimum enrolment numbers.
30 June	Applications due for schools seeking senior secondary or foundation secondary registration to provide an accredited senior secondary course.
30 June	Annual Reports to the School Community and Annual Reports to the School Boarding Premises Community under Schedule 2 due to the VRQA.
15 July	Report on compliance of Catholic Schools and Catholic School Boarding Premises with Ministerial Order 1359 in a form approved by the VRQA to enable the VRQA to meet its reporting obligations to CCYP.
31 July	VCEA Annual Compliance Report to the VRQA.
31 August	Applications due for new registered Catholic Schools and new registered Catholic School Boarding Premises.
31 August	Applications due for amendments to Catholic School (excluding addition of senior registration) or Catholic School Boarding Premises registrations.

