

Bill Writing Resource

2024 Youth Parliament

Victoria

Welcome to Mentor Meetings!

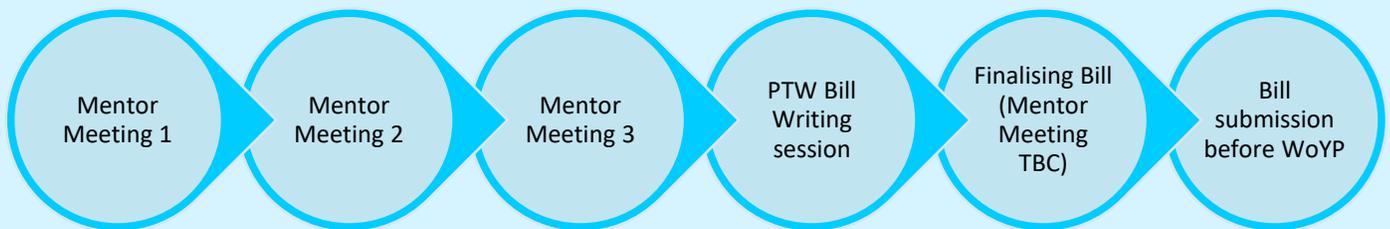
During your Mentor Meetings, you will be supported by a taskforce mentor to **research, draft, and write your Youth Parliament Bill**. Work on your Bill begins now and will continue until a few weeks before the Week of Youth Parliament camp in June/July.

You will have **three meetings with your mentor** before the training weekend at the end of May, where you will research and develop the bulk of your Bill. Outside of these Mentor Meetings, it is expected and highly encouraged that your team meets to continue working on your Bill and implementing any feedback provided during or after your meeting.

Your mentors are dedicated and knowledgeable young people who are excited to guide you on this journey, but **they will not be writing your Bill for you**. Mentors can answer your questions and offer suggestions on the direction and solutions presented in your Bill, but your Bill should be an accurate reflection of the views and perspectives of your team as young people.

Your Bill does not have to be perfect. **Do your best and put in the work**, and you will put together a really awesome piece of work that you are proud to present in Parliament House later in the year.

The Process...



The Mentors:

Ryan Peterson	ryan.peterson@ymca.org.au
Anna Scott	anna.scott@ymca.org.au
Lily Trethowan	lily.trethowan@ymca.org.au
Ella Shelden	ella.shelden@ymca.org.au
Lucy Bice	lucy.bice@ymca.org.au
Tim Reesink	timothy.reesink@ymca.org.au
Mills Inston	mills.inston@ymca.org.au

Mentor Meeting 1

What is the goal of MM1?

The team will have a better understanding of your Bill topic/issue, and will have a few ideas on how to approach a solution.

What should we have done before MM1?

1. Submitted topic options
2. Received allocated Bill topic
3. Preliminary research (if time)

What should we have done by the end of MM1?

- Some dot points of ideas on how to address your issue via State Government means
- Noted areas for further research and discussion in between meetings
- Gained an understanding of the Youth Parliament Bill structure and expectations/limitations of our Bills

Meeting Content:

What is a Bill?

A Bill is a proposed law presented to parliament for discussion. Broadly, a Bill details the ins and outs of a Government approach to solving a problem or addressing an issue. Bills are objective, and have little space for justification or argument; they should only describe the step-by-step process of addressing the issue, including outlining who and/or what, whether existing or to be implemented, will make this happen.

Youth Parliament Bills are significantly condensed compared to the real thing. Where real Bills can be hundreds of clauses and pages long, we only ask you to write between eight and ten clauses (three of these are actually preliminary context setting clauses, so it's really five to seven). For this reason, we ask that you are extremely specific and intentional with the issue you are addressing. Some teams can bite off more than they can chew by trying to address too many aspects of an issue, and end up being unable to write a comprehensive and holistic approach to their issue; they

approach is spread too thin and they end up only sort of solving two issues instead of properly solving one.

Youth Parliament Bills are in two parts. Oddly enough, we will focus on Part two first. We will go over Part one in a later meeting, but as stated above, Part one sets the context and provides background for the reader to better understand your Bill, Part two outlines the 'how' of addressing your issue.

Your Mentor will take you through an annotated sample Bill to better understand the structure.

Research Methods

- You can use the [Victorian Legislation Library](#) to look at previous pieces of legislation to get inspiration and guidance for your Bill.
- You can also use good old-fashioned Google to look at international examples of similar legislation, any news articles about the issue area that might inform your approach, and academic research to validate your approach.

Capacity of State Government; an incomplete list of approaches

State Government CAN:

- Establish regulatory bodies
- Build buildings
- Implement consequences for infringing a law
- Develop marketing/advocacy campaigns
- Implement regulations and/or restrictions (e.g. on sale of products, on standards for construction, on safety processes)
- Alter the details of an existing legislation

State Government CANNOT:

- Brainwash all Victorians to demonstrate a desired behavior
- Magically fabricate buildings, products or programs without human contribution

In Youth Parliament, we ask that you **do not discuss money or funding** in your Bill, or in subsequent debates. We can all agree that there are many issues which would be improved by infinite funding. For the sake of the program, pretend we live in a world of infinite money and that this is not a factor in the construction of your Bill.

Working time:

Start off by brain storming solutions to your issue. Some ideas on where to start:

- Create a brainstorm with your issue in the middle and your ideas around the outside. Write down anything and everything – don't worry about how feasible they are to start off.
- Spend 5 minutes of independent research noting down anything you find that is interesting or could lead to an approach.
- Verbally discuss your ideas and build upon one another to create a foundation to work from.

Next, you should break down your ideas and think about what different aspects make up the implementation of the idea. For example, to ban a product you would need:

- A way to determine the extent and limitations of the ban (what is banned, who will determine the ban, etc.)
- A way to implement the ban (a product recall, prevention of sale, prevention of production, etc.)
- A way to manage the implementation (are there repercussions for infringement of the ban? What are they? Who manages them?)
- A plan to ensure the maintenance of the ban ongoing (an annual review, a public report, etc.)

Get down some dot points of ideas and further research and development areas. You can do this.

Good luck!

Progress Submission 1 week after your meeting

Email a saved copy (preferably PDF) of your progress to your mentor

Mentor Meeting 2:

What is the goal of MM2?

Slightly more concrete ideas on addressing your Bill issue should be developed and we should have a template(s) or previous Bill(s) to help guide our research and clause formations.

What should we have done before MM2?

1. Continued researching your issue and building your approach
2. Submitted your progress to your mentor 1 week after your first meeting for feedback.
3. Reflected on and implemented any feedback from Mentor Meeting 1

What should we have done by the end of MM2?

- Your Bill should begin to have structure and some clauses are beginning to take form
- Dot points are still okay, and we should have begun to consider the order of our clauses
- Importantly, if you are struggling to flesh out your approach at this stage, come up with a plan to address this.

Meeting Content:

Structure of your Bill and Clauses

Bills are made up of clauses. Clauses nest under each other to organise their ideas and make the presentation of information clear. Example of the nesting of a clause:

Clause 1	Clause Title
	1.1 Sub-clause
	a) Sub-sub-clause
	i) Sub-sub-sub-clause etc.

Some clauses will include over ten sub-clauses. Some will contain only one or two. This will be completely dependent on what the clause it trying to achieve. Remember, more sub-clauses do not equal a better clause, or, therefore, a better Bill.

The clauses of bill should follow a ‘narrative’ of sorts. There will likely be a natural or logical flow of clauses that makes the most sense in conveying your information. To use a common example, you wouldn’t put a clause describing the detailed operation of a board without first including a clause establishing the board and its make-up.

Examples of common clause types:

- Establishing a board/committee/department to oversee the programs within the Bill;
- Establishing eligibility for programs or benefits;
- Advertisement/marketing/distributing information about the programs within the Bill;
- Mandatory training or upskilling related to the Bill;
- Limitations of the Bill (e.g. timelines, intersection with other initiatives, resourcing);
- Penalties for infringement (if necessary) – no need to outline details of fines or incarceration as these will align with previously established guidelines.

Part 1 of your Bill

As you will have seen in the annotated sample Bill in MM1, Part one sets the context for your Bill to ensure anyone reading the Bill understands the issue, the approach, and the main reasoning behind the Bill. Prior to part one, you will also see an abstract which gives an overview of what the Bill does and what it aims to achieve. Part one always includes three clauses (which are counted in your 8-10 clauses):

- Clause 1 Purpose**
The main purposes of this Act are -
 - a) Purpose
 - b) Purpose
- Clause 2 Commencement**
This Bill shall commence... (don’t over think it...)
- Clause 3 Definitions**
In this Bill, we will define the following to mean –
 - a) **Word or phrase** means the following;
 - b) **Word or phrase** means the following.

Working time:

- Begin separating your ideas into clause groupings and thinking about the flow of the Bill's 'story'.
- Use templates or examples of past Bills to fill in the gaps where the implementation of your idea might need some help.
- Determine who and when you will work on Part 1. You may like to wait to ensure you understand the direction and approach of the Bill, but don't leave this too late!
- Ask yourself – is this approach providing a reasonable solution to the issue you have identified?

Progress Submission 1 week after your meeting

Email a saved copy (preferably PDF) of your progress to your mentor

Mentor Meeting 3:

What is the goal of MM3?

Your Bill should be fully structured with clauses detailed in dot points. You should understand what work needs to be completed prior to Participant Training Weekend (PTW) and what you will be able to complete after PTW.

What should we have done before MM3?

1. Continued collaboratively developing your clauses and begun work of Part 1.
2. Submitted your progress to your mentor 1 week after your meeting for feedback.
3. Reflected on and implemented any feedback from Mentor Meeting 2.

What should we have done by the end of MM3?

- Your Bill should look like (or be VERY close to) a completed Bill in terms of content and structure. The only work left should be writing complete sentences and implementing any further feedback.
- You should have a clear understanding and plan of what work is remaining on your Bill before the pre-PTW submission (one week after your third meeting).
 - Do you need **additional meetings** as a team to continue working (*note: you mentor will not be available for additional meetings except in extenuating circumstances and with approval from the Training Coordinator and Program Director*).
 - Do you need to **divide the remaining work** among team members to ensure it gets done?

**Pre-PTW Submission: 1 week after you third Mentor Meeting
(12th of May is the ABSOLUTE cutoff)**