



# Unit 4 – Student Program

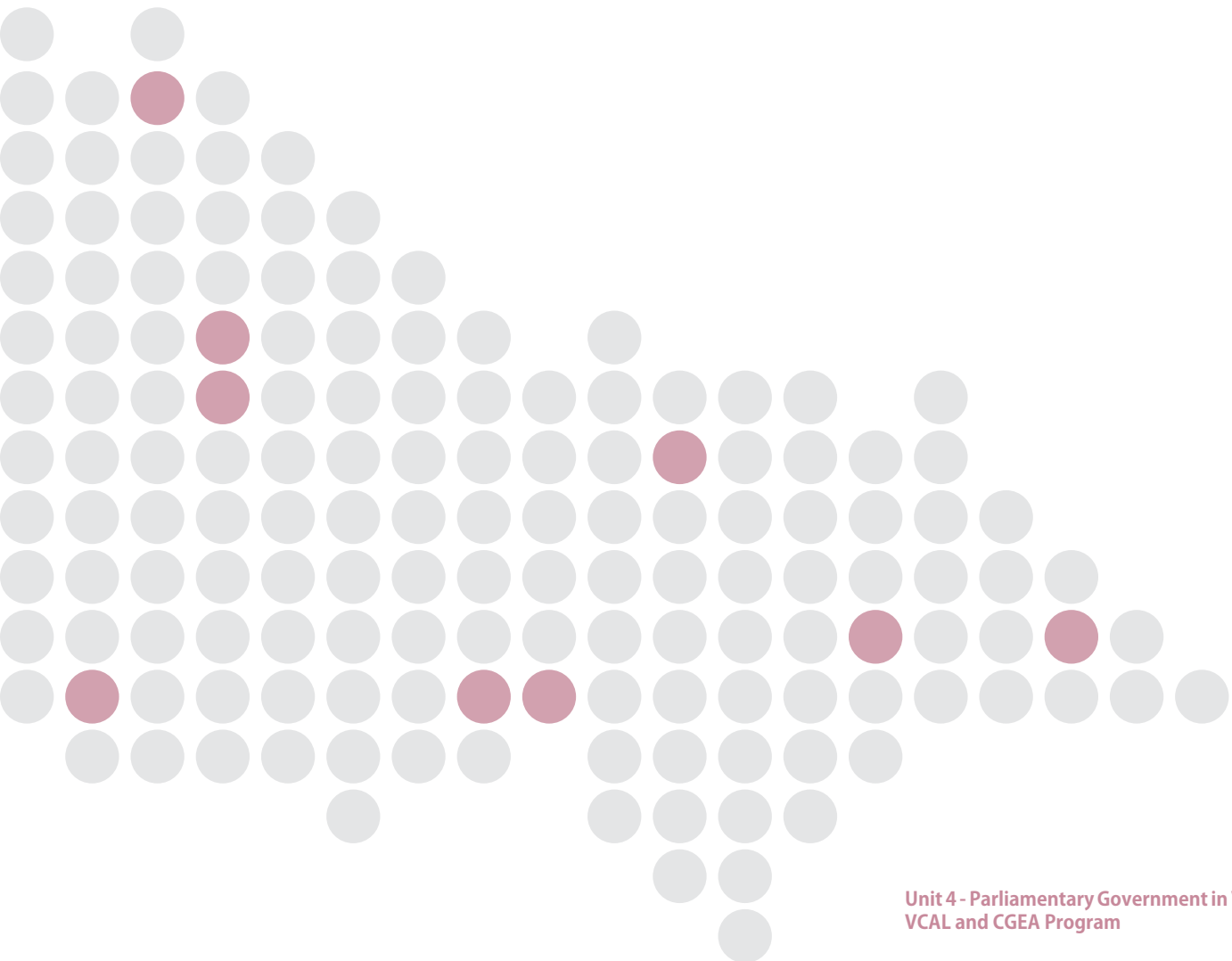
New Laws from Parliament



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# explore parliament

This VCAL/CGEA program invites you to investigate the structure and operation of parliamentary government. During the four Units of this program, you can become engaged in activities such as:

- Invite a local Member of Parliament to visit your classroom
- Go on a tour of Parliament House
- Create a 'new piece of legislation'

Although the total program consists of four Units, you decide whether to complete some, or all, of these Units



# Unit 4

## New laws from Parliament

### Part One

Important example of a recent new law

### Part Two

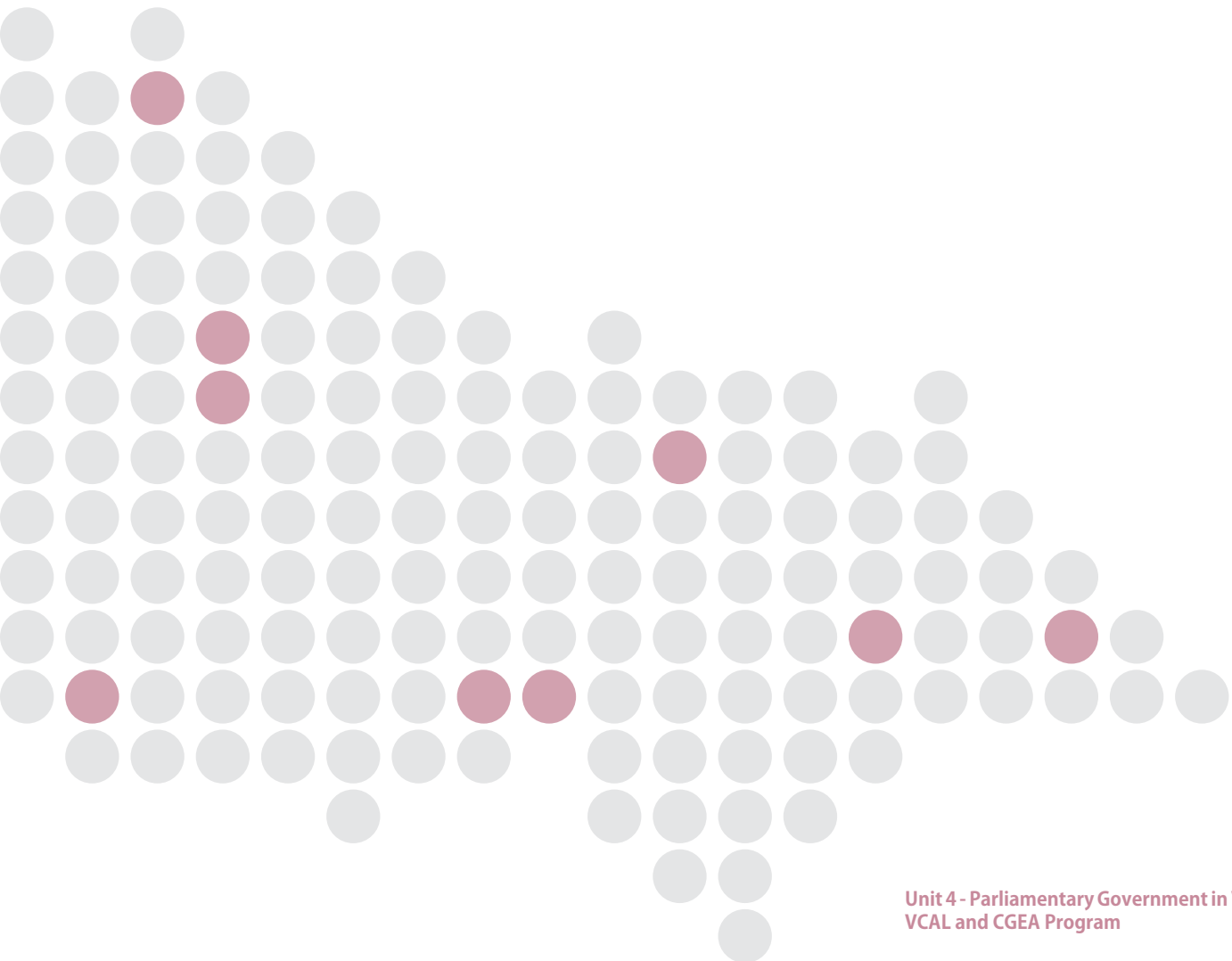
The official journey from 'idea' to 'enactment'

### Part Three

A role play

In this Unit, you work in groups to investigate the origins and development of a (recent) new law. An online resource from the Department of Justice website is used.

From this experience, you design a simple flow chart which shows the formal process of new legislation. Finally, you engage in role play to understand in more detail the various perspectives on facts and opinions held by interested parties.



# PART ONE

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## Important example of a recent new law

### Preliminary thoughts

How does a government develop a new law?

This is a question which many people in the community have never thought about – unless, perhaps, for some reason they became personally involved.

In the box below, make a guess at three or four steps that you think might be involved (from community action to parliamentary procedures). At the end of this Unit, read your thoughts again and see if they have changed!



Step	What happens first, then second, and so on
1	
2	
3	
4	

## A case study: Brodie's Law (2011)

### How do new law arise?

Victoria's anti-bullying legislation, known as Brodie's Law, commenced in June 2011. This new law made serious bullying a crime punishable by up to 10 years in jail.

Brodie's Law was introduced after the tragic suicide of a young woman, Brodie Panlock, who was subjected to relentless bullying in her workplace.

The Department of Justice has a webpage with film clips and information about Brodie's Law and her story

[www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/crime+prevention/bullying+--+brodies+law](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/crime+prevention/bullying+--+brodies+law)

Use the information from this site to answer the questions on the worksheet. You may like to work with one or two other students on this investigation, and then discuss the questions, and your responses, with the class.

### WORKSHEET - Brodie's Law

Questions to research	Your findings
What did Brodie's Law change?	
Why was Brodie's Law made?	
What happened that made politicians realise that a new law was needed?	



#### LAWS AND LAWS:

**Legislation:** laws made by parliament (called 'statutory law')

**Law :** rules set by the courts (called 'case law')

## PART TWO

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### The official journey from 'idea' to 'enactment'

The overall picture

Use the following animation to list the different steps. Perhaps you watch it twice:

- Getting the general idea
- Writing down the steps (rough copy then edit)

[www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/how-a-law-is-made-animated](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/how-a-law-is-made-animated)

How a law is made

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

how law is made



# how does it start



## In more detail: how does a new law start?

Watch two video segments of the online program: How a Law is Made. The two segments of this interactive resource which you watch are called Needs and Inputs.

They can be accessed at

[www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/how-a-law-is-made-interactive](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/how-a-law-is-made-interactive)

Write down the different ways in which laws can start.

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What different groups can influence politicians to introduce a bill?

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## Drawing a diagram to show this journey

Can it be done? Is it going to be too complicated?  
Examine the flowchart at

[www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/976](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/how-a-law-is-made/976)

- What do you think? At first sight, does the flowchart seem okay or is it a bit too complicated?
- Now discuss in the group which parts of the development of Brodie's Law you could map onto this diagram?
- Next, discuss how you would prepare a 'simplified' version of this flowchart - and then sketch your attempt to produce a plain English flowchart which shows the main steps in 'Making a Law'
- Within the group, decide which flowcharts show these steps best



**Bill** : a proposal for a new law which has been presented to Parliament

**Act of Parliament:** a law made by Parliament; a bill which has passed all three readings in both Houses and received royal assent

## PART THREE

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### A role play

Why not contact the Tours Unit and discuss a visit to Parliament House in order to participate in a role play which provides experience in

- The steps from idea to enactment

and

- Dealing with difficult issues surrounding the development of particular pieces of legislation

[www.parliament.vic.gov.au/visit](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/visit)

A new role play designed for classroom use is planned for 2014-15.

Incidentally, some legislation is difficult to negotiate and takes a long time before enactment but other legislation is quickly accepted.

**Brodie's Law** took from April until June in 2011 from First Reading to Royal Assent as the *Crimes Amendment (Bullying) Bill 2011*. This means that passage of this Bill took more than eight weeks – even though all parties supported its development; admittedly, it was complex.

On the other hand, most new legislation occurs smoothly and quickly.

In the first 150 years since the Parliament of Victoria opened in 1856, more than 13,000 Bills were enacted.

That is, approximately, and on average, \_\_\_\_\_ Bills have been passed each year. Admittedly, most were even more straightforward than **Brodie's Law**.

visit parliament





## Finally

If you have spare time you might like to complete the following Word-search puzzle (with some difficult words introduced through helpful sentences) and an exercise which introduces you to important expressions (and concepts) such as *Ombudsman*, *Pecuniary Interest*, or *Whistleblower Act*.

## Word Search

In the grid, find the words which fit into the gaps in these sentences

At least one MP is elected for each E \_\_\_\_\_

The abbreviation for Freedom of Information is \_\_\_\_

Most MPs are also members of a political \_\_\_\_\_

An elected MP should R \_\_\_\_\_ T everyone in the electorate

You vote by placing numbers in every square on the \_\_\_\_\_ paper

In a conscience vote, MPs vote according to the P \_\_\_\_\_ S in which they believe

A Public Private Partnership is called a \_\_\_\_

Universal suffrage is one feature of the system of government called D \_\_\_\_\_ Y

You can contact your elected representative at his or her electoral O \_\_\_\_\_

A	R	E	P	R	E	S	E	N	T
P	R	I	N	C	I	P	L	E	S
P	I	L	A	N	D	P	P	O	G
P	C	E	S	T	E	P	P	W	I
L	T	X	U	Z	M	A	B	E	S
E	L	E	C	T	O	R	A	T	E
E	R	F	G	K	C	T	L	L	A
M	I	C	O	U	R	Y	L	L	T
O	O	F	F	I	C	E	O	Q	V
S	I	H	A	M	Y	E	T	B	E

## Finally, once more

The media have, in recent times, used the following expressions when talking about the process of good government in a democratic society. It can be helpful to know these sorts of expressions when discussing parliamentary government.

**Write in the numbers to match the meanings with the appropriate expression.**

1. Pecuniary interest
  2. Good governance
  3. Whistleblower Act
  4. Ombudsman
  5. Auditor General
- An official whose job is to look into people's complaints against the government or public servants
  - Efficient and honest processes of governing a community
  - Legislation that protects a person who formally reports improper conduct by public officers or public organisations
  - A matter in which an MP has a financial interest
  - The officer who inspects government accounts and reports to the Parliament on whether they show that money is handled correctly, effectively and legally

