



Home Education Association, Inc  
PO Box 245  
Petersham NSW 2049  
ABN 98 261 801 288  
1300 72 99 91  
[heaq@hea.edu.au](mailto:heaq@hea.edu.au)  
[www.hea.edu.au](http://www.hea.edu.au)

# HEU REPORTING GUIDE

Created by the Home Education Association

This document has been produced to assist families as they report on their child's education to the HEU. **As families use it, we would appreciate receiving feedback, whether positive reviews or constructive criticism. Please send feedback to [heaq@hea.edu.au](mailto:heaq@hea.edu.au).**

## How Do I Prepare For My Report?

One of the most helpful things is to have a clear idea of what you are trying to help your child grow in. Then, throughout the year, you can be on the lookout for signs of growth in that. It can be as simple as showing how, at the start of the year, they couldn't complete it or were ignorant and now, later in the year, they have made progress.

Here is a **timeframe** to help you know what you should be doing throughout the year to prepare for your report.

**Month 1:** refer back to the Program Summary you sent to the HEU 2-3 months ago. Does it still apply? If so, get on with living out your educational program. If not, make some changes and then get on with what you have planned.

**Months 1-5:** as you home educate, keep evidence of the child's work, especially related to any specific goals you had.

- This could be written work, photos of them doing activities or working on projects, audio or video recordings, parent diaries, etc.
- Make sure it's dated (and named, if you are home educating more than one child).
- Keep the "works in progress", too, not just the final copy. This might include mind maps, outlines, drafts, photos of first attempts, etc. The HEU love to see the process the child went through to get to the finished product.



**End of Month 6:** You will receive an email from the HEU reminding you about the report process. DON'T STRESS! You don't need to send anything to them now! However, this is a good reminder to make sure you are gathering possible samples of the child's learning. Maybe now you can begin to decide what areas you will focus on for your report and narrow your sample collection to those areas. But it's okay if you're not ready to decide that yet.

**Months 6 to 9:** Keep on with your home education program and keep collecting possible samples if you still need to.

**End of Month 9:** You will receive an email from the HEU with a link for online reporting. You now have **exactly one month** (from the day the email was sent) to get the report completed. You can start completing the online report and save it as you go along, so you don't have to do it all in one sitting or you can write your report into a file and save it on your computer until you are ready to upload it. Alternatively, you can do the report on paper and you will need to mail it to reach them by the date specified in the email. If you mail it, it is a good idea to pay for tracking or else take photos or scans of everything before sending it, in case it gets lost in transit.

*If you complete the report online, you will receive an automatic email once you have submitted it.* If you don't, then you haven't actually submitted it. If you send it by mail, you will receive an email from the HEU once they receive it. If that is longer than 6 business days from the day you sent it, contact the HEU.

**End of Month 10:** The online link will no longer work. You should have already sent the report in by now.

**Sometime later:** The HEU will contact you advising that the report has been approved and the child is registered for another year OR they will ask for more information. If you are not clear on what they are asking you to supply, contact them again for clarification. They want to help you succeed. If you do not supply the extra information, you may be issued with a Show Cause Notice.

## How Do I Write My Report?

A report to the HEU should consist of 3 main components:

- i) comments on the **year in review**;
- ii) **work samples with commentary** on this to show evidence of educational progress and/or how you provided a quality education to the child;
- iii) and a **program summary** for the next year.

These three components are unpacked below, based on the terminology in the HEU online reporting system.

## Year in Review

### 1. General impressions

This is a chance to write just what it says, your general impressions of the year. This might include whether the year went smoothly or not, whether the child struggled or



excelled in any particular ways, how your confidence has grown or plummeted during the year, etc. This could be anything from one sentence to a whole page.

2. Did you achieve the goals outlined in your program?

You could respond with a simple 'Yes, all of them', 'No, none of them' or elaborate on which you did and didn't achieve.

3. Did you make any changes to your program? Why/why not?

Simply answer this honestly. If you did make changes, do not be afraid of saying so. The HEU do not view this unfavourably. They simply want to know the reasons. Showing that you made changes to better cater to your child's needs and abilities is a positive, not a negative. You might explain that you removed a subject because the child's mental health was struggling with the workload or that you changed maths curriculum to something better suited to their learning style or that you changed from a structured program to a self-directed learning approach because of the case made for it in a book you read.

Similarly, if you did not make changes, simply say so and explain why. E.g. "Jordan thrives on the approach we are using." "We'd love to switch to x curriculum, which we believe would suit Riley better, but are unable to afford it. In the meantime, we make as many adjustments as we can to enhance Riley's learning."

4. What were the highlights or lowlights?

This might pick up on some of the comments you already made in the General Impressions section but may be entirely new information. It could be a sentence or two up to maybe a few paragraphs.

5. In what area did your child achieve the most success?

This could be a subject area (e.g. maths, art) or something else that relates to their education (e.g. attitude, organisational skills, perseverance, confidence). Where did you see them grow or succeed the most? This could be as short as a word or phrase or longer if you feel the desire to brag on your child!

6. Any other relevant information?

This is a catch-all where you can include anything else that you think is pertinent to how your child went during the past year. It may include (but not be limited to) comments about the health of the child or other family members which impacted negatively or positively, any changes or disruptions to the family (moving house, a new baby, death of someone close), any diagnoses or insights into the child and any comments about your educational philosophy. It is fine to write "N/A" (not applicable) if there is no other information you consider relevant.

## Provide comment on the accompanying work samples

First, **a note about work samples**. These can be something the child has produced (e.g. written work, or a recording, or photographs of something the child created) or, in some instances, can be something the parent has produced to demonstrate the child's learning.

Examples of the latter might be:

- a parent diary (These are especially useful for children with special needs, where they might be a record of how a child's vocabulary was expanding, how they developed in an everyday skill, etc. Families using a self-directed learning approach might also find these helpful to record a child's natural learning about a topic e.g. *Feb 18 - watched video about whales, Mar 6 - visited Grandma and Child talked for 5 minutes about whales, drawing on knowledge gained from the video, July 10 - went on whale watching trip and Child correctly named the whale's body parts, the types of whales we saw and explained to fellow travellers about whale family structures. The guide was very impressed! (though perhaps a bit exhausted from all the questions Child asked!)* This can also be used to demonstrate how something taught in a more formal way has been used in real-life. E.g. You may submit one sample of a maths worksheet about reading clocks or subtracting time and a second sample of a parent diary that records something like, *"Driving home from tennis, Child asked what time the cousins were arriving. After I said the time, Child looked at their watch, announced the time and then correctly calculated that it was 97mins until the cousins would be arriving."*
- A table outlining what skills the child had to use or learn for that project, under a variety of subjects e.g. project was a doll's house (Include a photo of the project under construction and another of it finished); English - had to read, Maths - had to measure materials, had to cost items, Geography - learnt about need for pitched roofs so snow slides off. (Could include Science, Art, History, etc).
- A transcript of the child's explanation, rather than the child writing the account themselves.

Work samples can be marked (e.g. with comments or ticks and/or crosses) or unmarked. Either way, the comments you provide in this section will be the "parent annotations" that the HEU are looking for.

Second, **a note about definitions**.

### a. Literacy

Literacy includes anything to do with a child's reading, writing or speaking skills. It is NOT limited to the subject area called English or Language Arts. You could use a history essay, a psalm written for Religious Studies, a note they wrote to Grandpa, a science report, an essay on art styles for Art, etc just as easily as using a story, poem, report or essay they wrote for English.

**b. Numeracy**

Numeracy includes anything to do with numbers, data and mathematical concepts. It is NOT limited to the subject area of Mathematics. As well as samples from Maths, you could use any work sample that includes measurements, graphs, numerical tables, etc such as a Science report, their calculations for a woodworking project, doubling a recipe or dealing with fractions for cooking, calculating the volume of soil or sand needed for a garden bed or sandpit, etc.

**c. Other**

The HEU prefers that you pick a different subject to the previous year but this is not essential. If you use the same subject area as the previous year, explain why you chose it again e.g. it's the area of most progress, it's an area of passion for the child.

Okay, now to the questions the HEU asks and how to answer them.

1. What approaches did you use to support your child to complete these samples?
  - a. Literacy
  - b. Numeracy
  - c. Other

Here the HEU is looking for what you did as a parent so that the child was able to get to the point of producing this sample of work. This is where you might talk about any of the following (or other ways not listed):

- Providing instruction in the topic
- Modelling to them how to do something
- Having them watch a video or read a book
- Coaching them through the steps
- Sitting beside them while they completed the task to help them stay on task or give them moral support
- Helping them with ideas or structure or vocabulary choice or whatever
- Giving them the task/assignment and letting them get on with it themselves
- Asking them to look for mistakes or ways to improve
- Pointing out to them or marking on their work any mistakes or ways to improve
- Having them make corrections or improvements
- Conversations to ascertain their understanding
- Sharing how many of this type of work they had done prior to this one and whether they did this one with the same amount of help from you or less (or more if it's a harder task)

Do this for each sample within each subject area - Literacy, Numeracy and Other. And remember to use your own words. The exact phrases used above are not required. Explain it in words that feel like they are coming from you.

2. What progress did you observe between the samples?

- a. Literacy
- b. Numeracy
- c. Other

Progress can mean improvement but it can also mean moving on to a new area of learning. This is where you might talk about a child

- Doing similar work better (e.g. spelling is better, more sums are correct, the structure of the essay is better, the painting is more advanced, the second cake came out cooked properly, they can now swim a whole length of the pool instead of just across the width)
- Doing similar work to a greater degree (e.g. the story or essay or speech was longer, they can run 3km now instead of 1.2km at the start of the year)
- Doing similar work at a more advanced level (e.g. they have progressed from single digit multiplication to double digit multiplication, they have moved from reading beginner readers to chapter books,)
- Carrying their learning over into real life or other subjects (e.g. they have begun writing letters in a foreign language to their penpal, they tell the time using analogue and digital clocks around the house, they used algebra concepts learnt in maths to solve chemical equations)
- Moving on to a new area of learning (e.g. they have become confident in multiple digit multiplication so have moved on to division, you finished learning about Ancient Egypt and moved on to Ancient Greece, you completed a unit on painting in Art and moved on to pottery)
- Being able to complete the sample with better attitudes or with less support from you (e.g. they were able to identify more of their errors themselves, they were more confident about how to complete this task and needed less assistance than the first one, the output is of a similar quality but they had a better attitude whilst completing the second, they took less time to do the second one)
- Not progressing and explain why/what you are doing about it (e.g. Jay really struggled with fractions all year and we are going to get a maths tutor/have Jay assessed, Morgan's ability to write has been severely impacted by the chemotherapy)

3. At what level are the samples targeted?

Here you can comment on whether the samples are for work targeted at, above or below the child's age. Or, many parents will simply comment that the samples are targeted at the child's ability/level, since they dislike the notion of children being expected to be at certain levels at various ages.

#### 4. Any other relevant information.

Comment on any other information that may be relevant, such as (but not limited to) medical conditions, social skills, adjusting to learning in English, house moves. Most families will leave this blank.

## Program Summary

The purpose of a Program Summary is to give the HEU an overview of your expected educational program/learning goals. It is a **summary** not an in-depth document. This does not need to include detailed lesson plans or book lists. The HEU is particularly interested in seeing that your goals are tailored to the needs and developmental stage of your child.

The Program Summary may include:

- long-, middle- and/or short-term goals
- subject areas you intend to cover and the aspect within those you will work on (e.g. English - We will study poetry, advance to the next spelling book and work on writing longer stories. Cooking - the goal is for Li to learn to cook 3 main courses and 3 sweet dishes this year, without help.)
- ways you will cater to your child's individual needs (e.g. interests, learning difficulties, learning environment, personality, health issues)
- social and emotional aspects you will address

The Program Summary requires thought on the part of the parent but should not be a difficult document to create, as it is simply put into words what you intend to do with your child and why. As a guide, you should be writing no more than 2 pages/subject, and the overall summary may range in length from 1 to 12 pages, depending on the approach you use to complete it. Longer is not necessarily better. The examples show a variety of lengths and styles. *(5/7/23 Note: these examples are not yet available but should be by the end of 2023. We are releasing the Reporting Guide now, without those examples, so that families do not have to wait longer to benefit from this Guide.)*