

**Skills Council
Terms of Reference 2019**

1. Chair	The Commonwealth Minister responsible for Skills is the Chair of the Council.
2. Membership	<p>The Council consists of members from the Commonwealth, each state and territory, and New Zealand, with portfolio responsibility for skills issues.</p> <p>Each jurisdiction will nominate a Minister as a representative on the Council.</p> <p>The Chair may invite representatives from other agencies or organisations to participate in specific meetings or discussions, as appropriate.</p>
3. Operations	<p>The Council should meet a minimum of twice a year, with further work to be able to be conducted out of session.</p> <p>The Council will make decisions on the basis of consensus wherever possible.</p> <p>A Minister who nominates an item for the agenda must attend the meeting to present the item.</p> <p>A Council meeting may be rescheduled if a majority of members are unable to attend.</p> <p>The Council will engage with the Education Council and Industry ministers or officials where appropriate.</p> <p>The Council will also consult with non-government partners such as industry where appropriate.</p>
4. Scope of Responsibility	<p>The Council will assist COAG by developing and implementing policies under the vision endorsed by COAG, which includes:</p> <p>The vocational education and training (VET) sector is a responsive, dynamic and trusted sector that delivers an excellent standard of education and training. It provides strong economic and social outcomes, and supports millions of Australians to obtain the skills they need to participate and prosper in the modern economy.</p> <p>The Council will consider and advise on emerging priorities within the above areas.</p> <p>Specific actions to progress Council responsibilities in the next 18 months are listed in Section 5.</p> <p>The Council operates within the parameters established by COAG, including agreeing roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth and states/territories, respecting state sovereignty and allowing states to develop policy and deliver services in areas where they have responsibility.</p>

	<p>The Council’s work program will include, where relevant, its existing responsibilities under Commonwealth and state legislation, National Agreements, National Partnerships and any other governance arrangements, including endorsing Training Packages. The Council also works with other COAG Councils on cross-cutting issues.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians</p> <p>The Council will Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to access and complete quality VET courses and qualifications, by considering ways to provide more culturally relevant training and improve student pathways into further education and employment.</p>
<p>5. Specific actions to progress Council responsibilities in the next 18 months</p>	<p>The Council’s priority actions include ensuring the national training system delivers a highly skilled and productive workforce to support national and local economies by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. delivering on the shared vision for VET as endorsed by COAG; b. responding to and considering reviews related to the VET and higher education system. This could include the Australian Qualifications Framework Review, and Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of the Vocational Education and Training Sector; c. supporting effective operation of the national VET market and shared funding priorities; d. ensuring the continuous improvement of training products in meeting the current and emerging skills needs of industry, including, where relevant, through the endorsement of VET training packages; e. ensuring the quality of training development, delivery and outcomes through strengthened assessment requirements and practices, the ongoing review of standards and implementing the recommendations of the review of the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</i>; f. supporting national system bodies, including the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, the Australian Skills Quality Authority, the National Skills Commission and the National Careers Institute; g. enhancing the data available to consumers, governments and regulators by implementing Performance Information for VET (PIVET), including the creation of an RTO Performance Dashboard for consumers and improved data reporting and services; and h. ensuring VET programs and services strengthen opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to participate in the workforce and community and build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

6. Review and Reporting

The Council will be reviewed biennially against COAG's priorities, including whether there is a continuing need for the Council.

The Council will report to COAG as required on its progress.

The Council is able to refer matters to COAG for its consideration, noting that these will be matters genuinely requiring First Ministers' attention (such as major decisions and intergovernmental agreements). The Council can also advise COAG on an exception basis, especially when its priorities are not progressing satisfactorily.

The Council should review its terms of reference at least every 18 months.