Australian Government
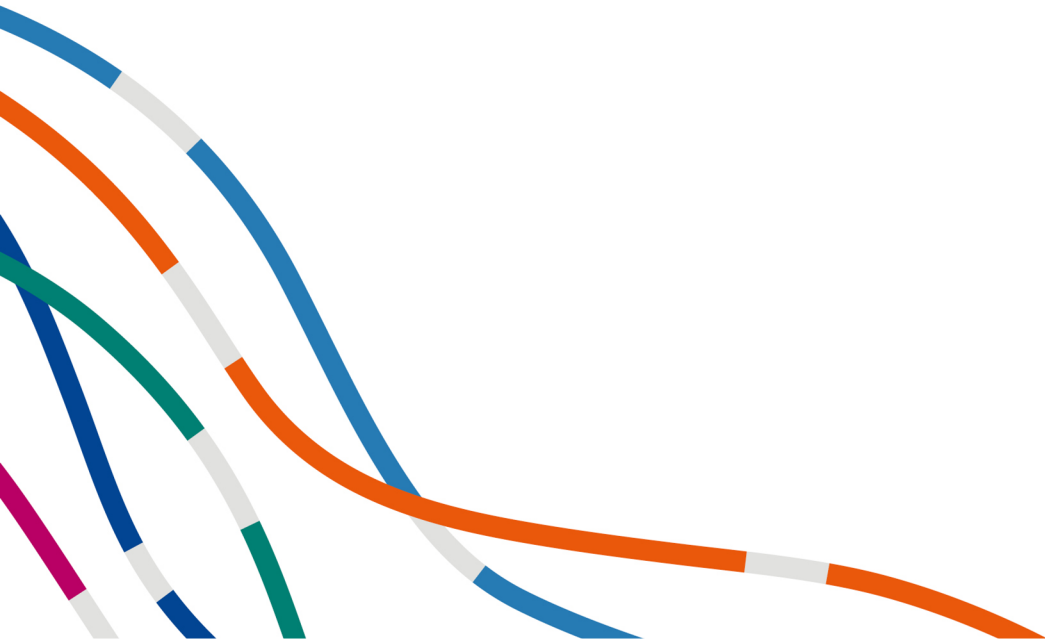
Department of Education, Skills and Employment

PORTFOLIO GUIDE

Education, Skills and Employment

May 2022

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The Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio

The Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio consists of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the Department) and the following entities:

- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- Australian Research Council
- Australian Skills Quality Authority
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
- Australian National University[1]

About the Portfolio Guide

The *Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio Guide* (the Portfolio Guide) sets out the leadership, architecture and main activities which underpin the Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio. It provides factual and high-level overviews of the Department's administered programs at a point in time.

This version of the Portfolio Guide was last updated in May 2022, to align with the *Portfolio Budget Statements 2022-23 Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio* (PBS) published as part of the 2022-23 Budget.

The Portfolio Guide is an internal resource that provides a stocktake of the Department's activities. The Department has a range of published documents that provide a strategic overview of the department. Key publications include the Corporate Plan, Annual Report, Portfolio Budget Statements, and Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is the Department's primary planning document. It provides the Parliament, the public and stakeholders with an understanding of our purpose, functions, objectives and role. It also sets out how we undertake these functions and role and how we will measure performance in achieving our purpose. The Plan also discusses elements of the Department's operating context including the:

- Environment
- Capability (e.g. People Strategy and ICT strategy)
- Enterprise risk management
- Governance committee arrangements (e.g. Audit and Assurance Committee)
- Cooperation with other organisations.

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[1] The Australian National University is not part of the general government sector included in the Commonwealth general government sector fiscal estimates and does not have a chapter in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

Annual Report

The Annual Report is the Department's primary performance reporting document, including financial statements and non-financial performance information. The report informs the Parliament and the public about achievements, performance against measures set in our Corporate Plan, and the financial position of the Department at the end of each reporting period. The Report also includes information on the management and accountability practices of the Department including:

- Corporate governance
- External scrutiny
- Key employment statistics and information
- Other mandatory information as required.

Portfolio Budget Statements

The purpose of the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) is to inform Senators and Members of Parliament of the proposed allocation of resources to government outcomes by entities within the Portfolio.

A key role of the PBS is to facilitate the understanding of proposed annual appropriations in Appropriation Bills (No. 1 and No. 2). The PBS provide information, explanation and justification to enable Parliament to understand the purpose of each outcome proposed in the Bills.

Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements

Related to the PBS are the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES), which focus on explaining the changes in resourcing by outcome(s) since the Budget. As such, the PAES provides information on new measures and their impact on the financial and/or non-financial planned performance of programs supporting those outcomes. The PAES facilitate understanding of the proposed appropriations in Appropriation Bills (Nos. 3 and 4).

Whereas the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) is a mid-year budget report which provides updated information to allow the assessment of the Government's fiscal performance against its fiscal strategy, the PAES update the most recent budget appropriations for entities within the Portfolio.

EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO
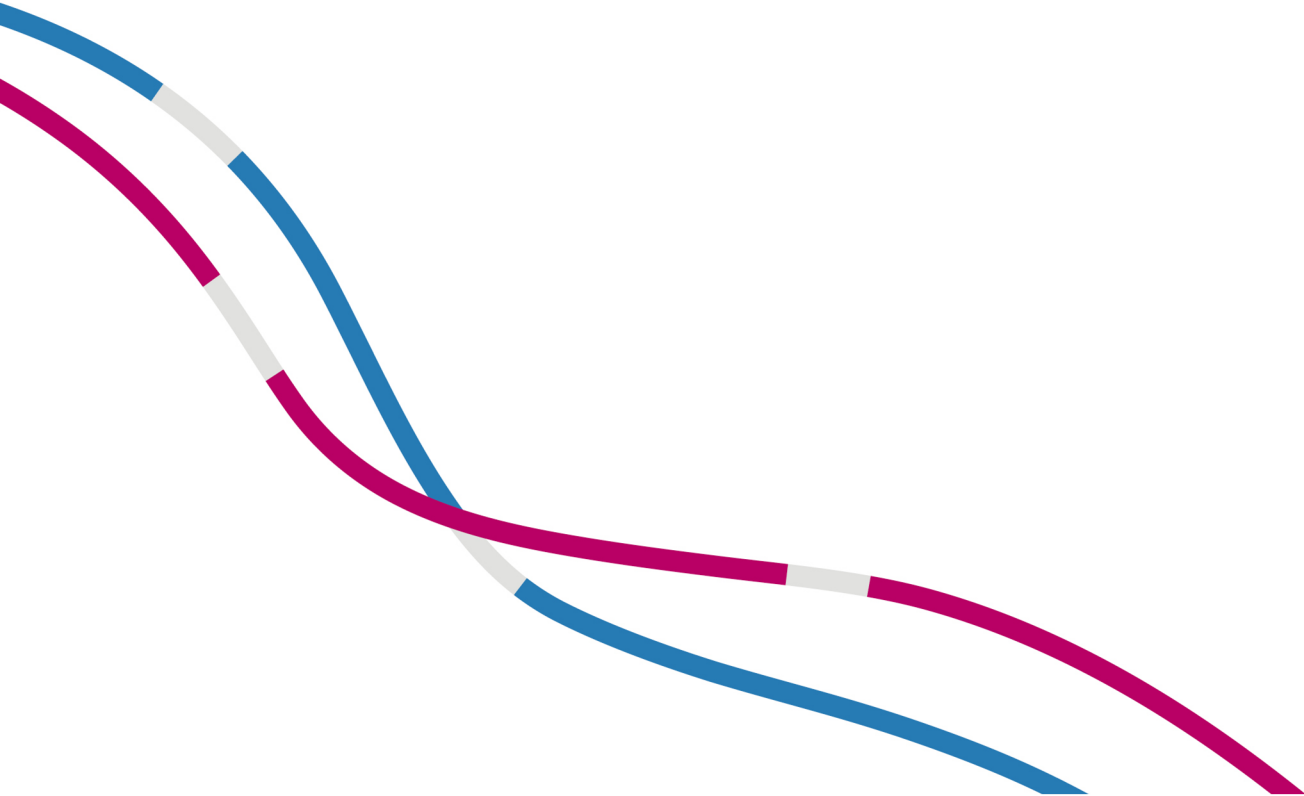
The Department

Purpose

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment's (the Department) purpose is to contribute to Australia's economic prosperity and social wellbeing by creating opportunities and driving better outcomes for people through education, skills and employment pathways.

Outcomes

The intended outcomes for the Department are included in the *Portfolio Budget Statements 2022-23 Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio* and in the Appropriation Acts.

1	Improved early learning, schooling, student educational outcomes and transitions to and from school through access to quality child care, support, parent engagement, quality teaching and learning environments.
2	Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education and international quality research.
3	Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.
4	Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work and meet employer needs.

Our People

Our people are one of our most important assets. We value our people and their diversity – their professionalism, capability and commitment to public service. We live the APS values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical.

Workforce

As at 31 December 2021, the Portfolio[2] employed approximately 4,369 staff under the *Public Service Act 1999*. Of this total, 3,871 staff (88.6 per cent) are located in Canberra, central Melbourne and central Sydney, 427 staff (9.8 per cent) in other capital cities and 60 staff (1.4 per cent) in regional areas[3] including:

- Newcastle, NSW
- Orange, NSW
- Alice Springs, NT
- Darwin, NT
- Mackay, QLD
- Northern Queensland, QLD
- Townsville, QLD
- Adelaide, SA
- Hobart, TAS
- Bendigo, VIC
- Perth, WA

As at the end of February 2022, the Department had approximately 1,400 contractors, representing approximately 26 per cent of the Department's total headcount. Of these contractors, approximately 37 per cent are ICT (518 contractors), and 63 per cent non-ICT (882 contractors). Non-ICT contractors include those engaged for service delivery, administration and project/program delivery.

The Department also has an International Counsellors Network, with employees located in Brazil, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico and Vietnam.

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[2] Data reflects the Department, Australian Research Council, Australian Skills Quality Authority, and Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. Data for the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) are not included as these agencies do not employ staff under the *Public Service ACT 1999.*
[3] Data taken from the APS employment data as of December 2021.

Diversity

In early 2022, the Department launched its *2022–2024 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy* (the Strategy) and supporting Action Plan. The Department's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is currently being refreshed. Our new plans will align with whole-of-Commonwealth strategies including the *APS Workforce Strategy 2025, Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020–2024, the Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–2025,* and the *Realising the benefits for all – APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–2026*.

The new Strategy focuses on:

- Engagement and representation
- Capability and connection
- Alignment and reporting.

The new RAP will focus on:

- Cultural awareness and capability
- Career development and advancement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- Engagement, accountability, leadership and integrity.

The Department, through the Strategy and RAP, aims to achieve whole-of-Commonwealth targets, which are as follows:

- representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples comprising:
  - 5 per cent of APS 4–6 levels by 2022
  - 5 per cent of Executive Level 1 and Executive Level 2 by 2024
  - 3 per cent of Senior Executive Service (SES) levels by 2024
- 7 per cent representation for people with disability by 2025.

Workplace Diversity

	Overall APS	DESE
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	3.5%	3.2%
Non English Speaking Background	14.6%	15.1%
Disability	4.5%	4.8%
Part time	13.3%	14.1%
Mature Age (55+)	19.4%	14.0%
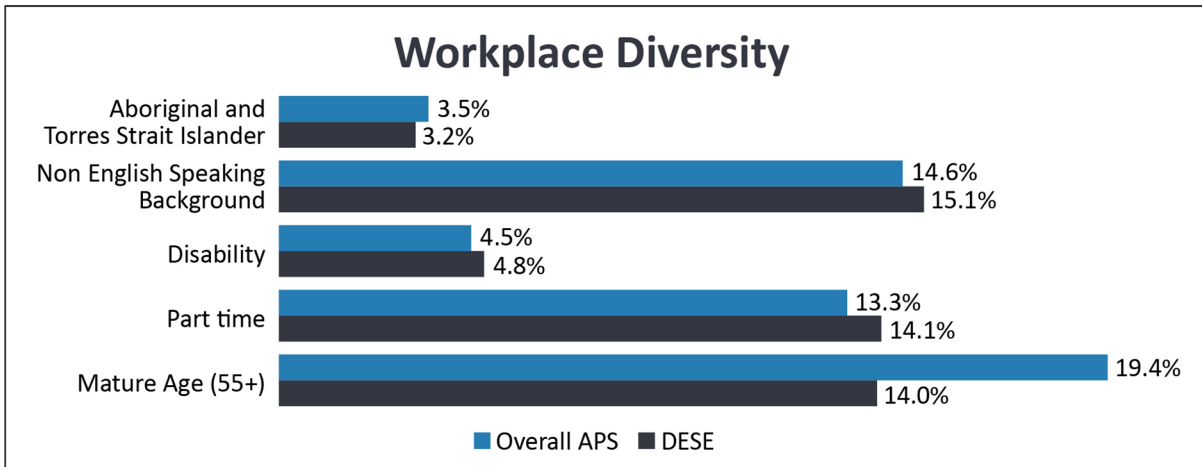
As at 31 December 2021, the Department's diversity statistics are comparable to the APS. The Department also has strong female representation at the SES levels of 61.8 per cent compared to the APS average of 51.4 per cent of females at SES levels[4].

The Department recognises that people are our greatest strength and is committed to creating an inclusive and diverse workplace for everyone. Some of our key initiatives to achieve this are:

- establishing five employee-led diversity networks including:
    o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network
    o Ability and Carers Network
    o Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Network
    o Gender Equity Network
    o Pride Network
- appointing 12 Senior Executive Diversity Co-Champions
- creating a diversity Co-Chairs Council
- refresh of the Employee Support Officer Network, ensuring representation from a diverse range of backgrounds.

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[4] Data taken from the APS employment data as of December 2021.

Leadership

Dr Michele Bruniges AM

Secretary

Dr Michele Bruniges AM is the Secretary of the Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

In her earlier executive career, Dr Bruniges was Chief Executive of the ACT Department of Education (2004–2008), held senior roles in the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workforce Relations (2008–2011), and was Director-General of the NSW Department of Education and Communities (2011–2016).

Dr Bruniges' qualifications include a PhD in Educational Measurement, a Masters in Education, and a Diploma in Teaching. She is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Churchill Fellow, a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators and a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders. In 2012, Dr Bruniges became a Member of the Order of Australia for service to public administration and was a joint recipient of the inaugural 100 Women of Influence Award for her work in public policy.

Dr Bruniges received national recognition in 2015 for her significant contribution to education as the recipient of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders Gold Medal Award. In that year, she was also awarded the Australian College of Educators' Sir Harold Wyndham Medal for her contribution to the education of young people in NSW.

In April 2017, Dr Bruniges became the first Australian appointed to Chair the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Governing Board and was reappointed for a second term in 2019.

In 2019, the Australia College of Educators awarded Dr Bruniges its highest award, the College Medal, for her outstanding and sustained contributions to the fields of education and across a range of sectors.

Mr Brenton Philp

Deputy Secretary
Early Childhood and Child Care Group

Mr Brenton Philp is Deputy Secretary for the Early Childhood and Child Care Group.

Mr Philp joined the Department in May 2021 and was promoted to Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care Group in August 2021. Prior to this, Mr Philp held Group Manager positions for pensions, welfare, housing, homelessness and families at the Department of Social Services. Mr Philp's experience spans over twenty years in the APS, having performed senior roles in social policy, energy policy, digital transformation, and competition and consumer protection regulation. He has served in the Departments of Industry, Energy and Environment, Social Services and the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as well as a long career with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Mr Philp is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from James Cook University.

Dr Ros Baxter PSM

Deputy Secretary
Schools and Youth Group

Dr Ros Baxter PSM is Deputy Secretary for the Schools and Youth Group.

Dr Baxter joined the Department in February 2020. Prior to this, Dr Baxter was the Deputy Secretary of Integrity and Information at the Department of Human Services. Dr Baxter is a very experienced senior APS leader, from working on the ground as a front-line social worker to leading policy functions across several departments, including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Social Services.

Dr Baxter has a Doctorate in Philosophy and holds several bachelor's degrees including a Bachelor of Law, Bachelor of Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts. She is the Department's Deputy Secretary with overarching responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy within the Department, including providing strategic oversight of the Department's work under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Mr Tony Cook PSM

Deputy Secretary
Higher Education, Research and International Group

Mr Tony Cook PSM is Deputy Secretary the Higher Education, Research and International Group.

Prior to commencing with the Department, Mr Cook was the Director-General of the Department of Education, Queensland. Mr Cook previously held the role as Associate Secretary for Schools and Youth in the former Australian Government Department of Education and Training and has held senior executive positions within the Victorian Public Service.

In October 2013, Mr Cook was made Honorary Fellow of the Australian Council for Education Leaders. In January 2014, he was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service in driving the schools policy and funding reform in Australia.

Mr Cook is a registered primary school teacher with a major in early childhood education. He holds a Bachelor of Education from the Queensland University of Technology.

Ms Nadine Williams

Deputy Secretary
Skills and Training Group

Ms Nadine Williams is Deputy Secretary for the Skills and Training Group.

Ms Williams has a background in microeconomic and regulatory reform and experience in leading complex reform agendas at both the Commonwealth and State government level. Prior to joining the Department, Ms Williams held senior positions in the Department of Communications and the Arts, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Finance and the NSW Government. She has worked across a broad range of public policy issues, and overseen the delivery of telecommunications consumer regulation, regional communications policy and programs, and the National Broadband Network; economic, employment and training policy in the Indigenous Affairs portfolio; COAG regulatory and competition reform; and a range of environment and agricultural policy areas.

Ms Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from the University of Sydney and an Executive Masters in Public Administration from the Australian National University.

Mr Nathan Smyth

Deputy Secretary
Employment and National Workforce Group

Mr Nathan Smyth is the Deputy Secretary for the Employment and Workforce Group.

Prior to joining the Department, Mr Smyth has held senior positions at the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Department of Finance, the Department of Health, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Duntroon. He has extensive experience related to large scale reform such as leading Australia's implementation of tobacco plain packaging and the new employment services model, Workforce Australia.

Mr Smyth has a Political Science degree from the University of NSW and MBA from the University of Sydney and the University of NSW.

Mr Marcus Markovic

Deputy Secretary
Corporate and Enabling Services Group

Mr Marcus Markovic is the Deputy Secretary for the Corporate and Enabling Services Group and the Chief Operating Officer.

Mr Markovic has a long career in the APS and has held senior finance and technology executive roles in the Department of Education, Department of Human Services, ComSuper and the Australian Taxation Office. He has extensive experience in leading large operational, finance and information technology teams and implementing change programs.

Mr Markovic has a Master of Business Administration, Graduate Diploma (Information Systems) and Bachelor of Commerce. He is also a fellow of CPA Australia and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Governance

The Department's governance committee arrangements support the delivery of its strategic priorities. Our governance committees play an important role in the functioning of the Department by overseeing reporting processes, managing and defining our appetite for risk, regularly monitoring our performance and providing a forum for consultation. Our governance structure is tiered to minimise crossover of functions and reporting.

Governance Committees Structure

Tier 1

Secretary

Executive Board

Key decision-making body, responsible for setting the longer-term strategy for DESE, ensuring the delivery of the Government's objectives and ensuring compliance with DESE's legal and financial obligations

Audit and Assurance Committee

Provides advice on the appropriateness of financial and performance reporting, systems of risk oversight and management and systems of internal control.

Tier 2

Risk, Security and Governance Committee

Responsible for supporting a positive risk and security culture; including engaging with opportunity and providing oversight of the effectiveness and appropriateness of DESE's risk management and supporting systems.

Strategic Policy Committee

Focuses on emerging cross-portfolio priorities and longer-term strategic policy issues from early childhood to employment.

Deputy Secretary Committee – Workforce Resourcing

Ensures a one department, enterprise-wide approach to workforce resourcing.

Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee

Responsible for DESE's broader Indigenous agenda to embed the philosophy of 'Indigenous business is everyone's business' across all aspects of our work. Provides strategic direction on the Reconciliation Action Plan, including reports to the Executive Board and Reconciliation Australia.

Investment and Implementation Committee

Provides advice and assurance to the Executive Board and the Secretary on the effective implementation of departmental projects.

People, Culture and Engagement Committee

Provides advice on a range of strategic culture, engagement and leadership matters.

PORTFOLIO ENTITIES AND BODIES

Portfolio Entities and Bodies

Contents

Summary of Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio Entities

Portfolio Agencies and Entity Bodies

- Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority
  - o Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Board
- Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership
  - o Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited Board
- Australian Research Council
  - o Australian Research Council Advisory Committee
- Australian Skills Quality Authority
  - o National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Advisory Council
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
  - o Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Accountable Authority

Bodies Forming Part of the Portfolio's Administrative Arrangements Orders

- Australian National University (ANU)

Statutory Bodies

- Australian National University (ANU) Council
- Higher Education Standards Panel
- Initial Teacher Education Quality Assessment Expert Panel
- National School Resourcing Board
- Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Advisory Board

Statutory Office Holders

- National Skills Commissioner
- Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Director
- Student Identifiers Registrar

Non-Statutory Appointments

- Regional Education Commissioner

Non-Statutory Boards

- Australian Industry and Skills Committee
- Council for International Education
- Equity in Higher Education Panel
- National Careers Institute Advisory Board
- Performance-Based Funding Review – Expert Group
- Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Working Group
- Skills Expert Panel

Ministerial Forums Relevant to the Portfolio

- Education Ministers' Meeting
- Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee
- Skills Ministers' Meeting

Other Structures within the Portfolio

- Australian Education Research Organisation Limited (AERO)
- National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
- Australia India Education Council
- Australia Indonesia Centre
- Australian-American Educational Foundation (Fulbright Commission) Board
- Education Services Australia (ESA)

Ministerial Requirements

In addition to the relevant Minister's responsibilities detailed under each portfolio entity section — including in relation to appointments — the Minister is appointed Chair for the following meetings:

Ministerial Forums Relevant to the Portfolio	
Education Ministers' Meeting	The Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) is chaired by the Minister for Education and is attended by Australian, state and territory government ministers responsible for Education. EMM meets regularly, usually quarterly, and may convene extra meetings if required.
Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee	The Minister responsible for Skills is Chair of the Skills Committee. The Skills Committee meets on a regular basis, Additional meetings may be convened as required.
Skills Ministers' Meeting	The Australian Government represented by the Minister responsible for Skills is the Chair of the Skills Ministers' Meeting.
Non-Statutory Board	
Council for International Education	The Minister for Education is the appointed Chair.
Other and structures within the Portfolio	
National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	The Annual General Meeting is usually chaired by Minister responsible for Skills or their proxy.
Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)	The Minister for Education is Chair of the Education Ministers Meeting. The Education Ministers Meeting appoints by consensus members to the ACECQA board and endorses ACECQA's Forward Work Plan.
Education Services Australia	The Minister for Education either attends the Annual General Meeting or nominates the Australian Government representative as a proxy.

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority

Outcome:

Improved quality and consistency of school education in Australia through a national curriculum, national assessment, data collection and performance reporting system.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority and a corporate Commonwealth entity, established under Section 5 of the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008* (ACARA Act) on 8 December 2008.

ACARA's purpose is to deliver national curriculum, assessment and reporting to all Australian Education Ministers. ACARA's strategic directions are set by its Charter and any other written instructions agreed to by Education Ministers.

ACARA is governed by the Board Chair, Deputy Chair and ACARA Board representatives from each state/territory. The CEO is appointed by the ACARA Board, after consultation with the Minister. The appointment is considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

ACARA works collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders including teachers, principals, government, state and territory education authorities, professional education associations, business and industry, community groups and the broader public in achieving its deliverables.

ACARA's work priorities include:

- providing a national approach to education through developing a robust and comprehensive national curriculum
- administration of the National Assessment Program, the national tests students sit in school, aligned to the national curriculum. This includes the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- collecting and publishing information on the My School website about the performance and resources of over 10,000 schools and campuses around the country.

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,784	13,844	14,081	14,320	-

Revenue from Australian Government. ACARA funding is appropriated to the Department and paid as grants to the agency.

ACARA Executive

The Executive is responsible for day-to-day operations and contributing to ACARA's strategic direction.

Members of the Executive include:

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
David de Carvalho	Chief Executive Officer	3 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Appointed by ACARA Board.
Tom Begeng	Director, Corporate Services & Chief Financial Officer	N/A	Appointed by ACARA CEO
Ann-Maree Ashburn	Director, Communications and Strategic Relations	N/A	Appointed by ACARA CEO
Sharon Foster	Director, Curriculum	N/A	Appointed by ACARA CEO
Peter Titmanis	General Manager, Assessment and Reporting	30 June 2022	Appointed by ACARA CEO
Russell Dyer	Executive Director, Assessment and Reporting (14 June 2022)	N/A	Appointed by ACARA CEO

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (Board)

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Board was established under section 11 of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008.

The ACARA Board has a Chair, Deputy Chair and 11 other members. These members are nominated by the Australian Government, each state and territory *as* well as the Catholic and independent sectors. Appointments to the Board are approved by the federal minister for Education, however, must be agreed by the Prime Minister, and at his discretion, the Cabinet.

The ACARA Board has established an Audit, Risk and Finance Committee to provide independent advice, assurance and assistance to the Board on ACARA's risk, control and compliance framework, and its external financial statement responsibilities. The main functions of the committee are to assist ACARA in meeting its obligations under the PGPA Act 2013 and the ACARA Act 2008, and provide a forum for communication between the Board, senior management and the external and internal auditors.

ACARA Board

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
Derek Scott	Chair	24 November 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Norm Hart	Deputy Chair	13 October 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Carolyn Grantskalns	Member (Independent Schools Council of Australia)	5 August 2023	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Neil McGoran	Member (National Catholic Education Commission)	22 July 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Fiona Mueller	Member (Australian Government member)	24 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
Jane Simmons	Member (ACT)	24 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Stephen Gniel	Member (VIC)	3 June 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Tony Luttrell	Member (TAS)	30 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Jacklyn Roberts	Member (NT)	24 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Member (QLD)	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Member (NSW)	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Member (SA)	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Outcome:

Enhance the quality of teaching and school leadership through developing standards, recognising teaching excellence, providing professional development opportunities and supporting the teaching profession.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL) is a Commonwealth Company limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is subject to both the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the *Australian Charity and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012*.

The Commonwealth of Australia, as represented by the Minister for Education, is the sole member of the company. AITSL operates under its own constitution, with an independent board of up to nine directors appointed by the Minister. The CEO is appointed by AITSL Board, after consultation with the Minister. The Board and CEO appointments are considered "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

The Minister is the sole shareholder in AITSL Ltd. Under the Corporations Act 2001, the Minister would have a contractual right to enforce AITSL's constitution.

AITSL's constitution itself gives the Minister powers over the management and operation of AITSL. These include:

- appointment of directors and acting directors (cl 4.3 and 4.4)
- removal of directors for any reason (cl 4.8)
- agreeing to appointment and removal of the CEO by the board (cl 7.1 and 7.5)
- set the remuneration of directors (if not set by the Remuneration Tribunal) (cl 10.2(a))
- give general and specific directions to the directors "in respect of the business, affairs or property" of AITSL, which directions must be complied with (cl 17.1 and 17.2)
- be given access to information about the company, financial and audit reports, and be kept informed of the operations of the company (various clauses).

AITSL priorities are set through letters from the Minister and Education Ministers, via the Education Ministers' Meeting.

AITSL plays a key role in leading significant national educational reform. AITSL is the designated skills assessment authority for people migrating to Australia as teachers. The policy direction and work priorities of AITSL give particular attention to three key areas: Initial Teacher Education; Quality Teaching; and School Leadership.

AITSL's work priorities include:

- Leading national implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Australian Professional Standard for Principals and accompanying tools and resources to support high quality teaching and leadership across schools and early childhood services

- Working with state and territory regulatory authorities and providers to strengthen initial teacher education course accreditation, improve candidate selection, enhance professional experience and improve assessment of graduates, so we are confident all teaching graduates are classroom ready
- Supporting teachers at all stages of their careers, from induction to ongoing access to high-quality professional learning, and national recognition of Australia's top teachers through Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher certification
- Implementing the Australian Teacher Workforce Data initiative, which will provide a national dataset to allow a better understanding of Australia's teaching workforce, including its characteristics, the potential upcoming supply of new teachers, and the career lifecycle of teachers in the profession from initial teacher education onwards
- Surfacing and promoting best practice in teaching and school leadership through research summaries and evidence-based resources.

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
12,036	9,312	8,049	8,111	0

Revenue from Government. AITSL funding is appropriated to the Department and paid as grants to the agency.

AITSL Executive

The Executive is responsible for the ongoing management and leadership within the broad framework and strategic direction set by the Board.

Members of the Executive include:

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Mark Grant	Chief Executive Officer	30 June 2023	Approved by the Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Appointed by AITSL Board
Edmund Misson	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	30 June 2025	Appointed by AITSL CEO
David Frost	Chief Financial Officer	30 June 2025	Appointed by AITSL CEO
Daniel Pinchas	General Manager, Teaching and School Leadership	30 June 2025	Appointed by AITSL CEO
Dianne Jickell	General Manager, Corporate	30 June 2025	Appointed by AITSL CEO
Lisa Molloy	General Counsel and Company Secretary	30 June 2025	Appointed by AITSL CEO

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (Board)

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL) operates under an expert Board with expertise in a number of areas, including: teacher education; regulation and accreditation of initial teacher education courses; school leadership; teacher practitioner expertise; public policy; governance, including audit, risk and finance; and government liaison.

The Chair, Deputy Chair and up to nine Directors are appointed by the Minister. In appointing the Deputy Chair and Directors, the Minister must consult with the Chair of the Board. The appointment is considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

The AITSL Board is responsible for setting AITSL's overall strategic direction and goals; overseeing and monitoring organisational performance and the achievement of strategic goals and objectives; monitoring financial performance and accountability; setting specific limits of authority for management; reviewing and monitoring AITSL's risk management and compliance systems; setting appropriate standards of corporate governance and codes of conduct; and protecting and enhancing AITSL's reputation.

The performance of AITSL's Board is reviewed at least every two years. The method and extent of each review is determined and agreed to by the Board. The Chair will action each review, obtain any assistance required and address any relevant findings that affect the Board's responsibilities and operations.

AITSL Board

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
John Hattie	Chair	30 June 2023	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Christopher Wardlaw	Deputy Chair	30 April 2023	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Beth Blackwood	Director/ Non-Executive Director	30 September 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Jennifer Buckingham	Director/ Non-Executive Director	30 September 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
Malcolm Elliott	Director/ Non-Executive Director	1 August 2023	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Renez Lammon	Director/ Non-Executive Director	31 July 2023	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Donna Pendergast	Director/ Non-Executive Director	30 September 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Lee-Anne Perry	Director/ Non-Executive Director	20 March 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Director/ Non-Executive Director	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Director/ Non-Executive Director	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Vacant	Director/ Non-Executive Director	N/A	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Australian Research Council

Outcome:

Growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice.

The Australian Research Council (ARC) is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity established under Section 5 of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*. The ARC's purpose is to grow knowledge and innovation for the benefit of the Australian community by funding the highest quality research, assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research conducted by Australia's universities, and providing advice on research matters.

The CEO of the ARC is appointed by the Minister. The CEO is assisted by the Australian Research Council Advisory Committee, which is established by the Minister under the ARC Act. The appointments of the CEO and the members of the ARC Advisory Committee are considered "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

The ARC evaluates the quality of research undertaken in Australian universities through the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) program. The ERA framework identifies research excellence by comparing Australia's research effort against international benchmarks.

Through its stakeholders, the ARC promotes the outcomes and value of research to ensure that the general community and industry benefit from ARC investments.

ARC stakeholders include:
- the Australian research sector (universities, publicly funded research agencies and peak bodies)
- Australian governments (Commonwealth, state and local)
- not-for-profit organisations and businesses
- industry and other end users of research (partner organisations)
- the global research sector
- people and communities.

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
842,656	882,683	924,163	967,326	1,004,109

Administered expenses and departmental revenue directly appropriated from Government.

ARC Executive

The ARC is led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), supported by five Branch Managers and a Chief Information Officer. Professorial-level Executive Directors, with substantial research expertise, are also drawn from the research sector and provide deep capacity for the agency to engage with its key stakeholders.

Members of the Executive include:

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Judi Zielke	Chief Executive Officer	7 April 2027	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Julija Deleva	Branch Manager, Corporate Services	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO
Mel Southwell-Lee	Branch Manager, Policy & Strategy	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO
Sarah Howard	Branch Manager, Research Excellence	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO
Stuart Henry	Branch Manager, Programs	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO
Jessica Winnall	Branch Manager, Executive	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO
Peter Conn	Chief Information Officer	N/A	Appointed by ARC CEO

Australian Research Council Advisory Committee

On 31 March 2022, the Minister for Education established the Australian Research Council Advisory Committee as a designated committee under section 31 of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*.

Appointments to the Committee are made by the Minister of Education. These appointments are considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence require approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointments are made.

Members have broad expertise across research, industry, and governance. In supporting the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Committee will help guide the strategic direction of the ARC to ensure its programs achieve value and impact for Australia. The Committee supports the CEO in setting the ARC's strategic agenda to deliver on the three broad objectives:

- to grow knowledge and innovation for the benefit of the Australian community by funding the highest quality research
- assessing the quality, engagement, and impact of research
- providing advice on research matters.

ARC Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
Chris Moran	Chair	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Mirjana Prica	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Michelle Simmons	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Mark Hutchinson	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Calum Drummond	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Maggie Walter	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Mark McKenzie	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Deborah Terry	Member	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
Tony Cook	Member (Ex-officio)	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister
David Williamson	Member (Ex-officio)	24 March 2025	Appointment signed by Minister

Australian Skills Quality Authority

> ## Outcome:
>
> *Through our regulation and partnership with stakeholders, ensure quality vocational education and training so that students, employers, the community and governments have confidence in the integrity of national qualifications issued by training providers.*

The Australian Skills Quality Authority's (ASQA) purpose is to ensure quality vocational education and training (VET) so that students, employers, governments, and the community have confidence in the integrity of national qualifications issued by training providers. ASQA plays a key role in ensuring that Australians can experience the social wellbeing and economic benefits that quality VET provides, by regulating the VET sector and partnering with stakeholders to continuously improve regulatory outcomes, consistent with the Government's expectations of ASQA as a best-practice regulator.

ASQA was established under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (NVETR Act) on 1 July 2011, following referral of powers by the majority of state and territory governments, and is accountable for the regulation of:

- providers that deliver VET courses to domestic students in Australia or offer Australian qualifications internationally
- providers that deliver VET courses to overseas students – training providers must be approved on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) to teach overseas students on student visas in Australia
- certain providers that deliver English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS).

In accordance with the NVETR Act, the CEO of ASQA is the National VET Regulator. The CEO is appointed by the Governor-General by written instrument. The CEO is advised by the NVETR Advisory Council, whose members are appointed by the Minister following consultation with the Education Ministers' Meeting. The appointment is considered "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

ASQA also provides national accreditation for courses to ensure nationally approved standards are met, based on established industry, enterprise, education, legislative or community need.

From 1 January 2023, a new function will be conferred on ASQA in relation to the assessment of training packages submitted by Industry Clusters for compliance against standards and policies set by Skills Ministers. ASQA will also build the capacity of Industry Clusters by providing guidance and support on common and emerging issues and risks that arise during the training package development process.

ASQA's stakeholders include:

- VET providers
- VET peak bodies
- the Australian Government and state and territory governments, together with other entities that form Australia's VET regulatory framework, including the two state-based VET regulators
- the VET program, funding and research network
- Industry Clusters
- employers
- students and the consumer protection network.

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
42,912	45,164	44,428	42,596	42,886

Revenue directly appropriated from Government.

ASQA Executive

ASQA is an independent statutory agency. The Accountable Authority and National VET Regulator is ASQA's Chief Executive Officer, who is appointed for a period of five years. ASQA also has a Deputy Chief Executive Officer and four Executive Directors.

Members of the Executive include:

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Saxon Rice	Chief Executive Officer	31 December 2025	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Governor-General
Christina Bolger	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	N/A	Appointed by ASQA CEO
Ty Emerson	Executive Director, Corporate	N/A	Appointed by ASQA CEO
Steve Maillet	Executive Director, Regulatory Engagement and Education	N/A	Appointed by ASQA CEO
Carmen Basilicata	Executive Director, Quality Assessment and Compliance	N/A	Appointed by ASQA CEO
Greg Simmons	Acting Executive Director, Regulatory Insights and Impact	N/A	Appointed by ASQA CEO

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Advisory Council

The National Vocation Education and Training Advisory Council (Advisory Council) and was established under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (NVETR Act). The Advisory Council supports the National VET Regulator and Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) by providing expert, strategic advice regarding the functions of the Regulator.

Establishment of the Advisory Council was a key recommendation of the Rapid Review of ASQA's Regulatory Practices and Processes and was appointed April 2022 to support its continued focus on best practice regulation of the VET sector.

Advisory Council members are appointed based on expertise in governance, regulation, industry engagement, and education and training. Appointments to the Advisory Council are approved by the Minister for Skills.

Governance arrangements for the Advisory Council were introduced in the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2020, which was passed in August 2020. The Bill includes the formation of an advisory council comprising experts in the fields of regulatory practice, sector and business engagement, and education and training.

ASQA Board

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Peter Costantini	Chair	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Valerie Braithwaite	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Renee Hindmarsh	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Grant Klinkum	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Adeienne Nieuwenhuis	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Neil Quarmby	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Donald Zoellner	Member	6 April 2025	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

> ## Outcome:
> *Assure the quality of higher education and the interests of students, principally by registering providers; accrediting courses; and investigating, assessing and building compliance and performance against higher education standards and codes.*

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) commenced operation in 2012 under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (TEQSA Act). TEQSA also has responsibility under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) for regulating all providers delivering higher education to overseas students studying in Australia, providers delivering Foundation Programs, and providers delivering English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students where they have an entry arrangement with a registered higher education provider.

Under the TEQSA Act, TEQSA consists of a Chief Commissioner and between 1 and 4 other Commissioners (there are currently 3). TEQSA Commissioners and the CEO of TEQSA are appointed by the Minister. These appointments are considered "significant Government appointments" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

TEQSA is Australia's independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency for higher education. Its purpose is to ensure that the interests of students and the reputation of Australia's higher education sector is protected through a proportionate, risk-reflective approach to quality assurance that supports diversity, innovation and excellence. TEQSA's work is guided by three principles — regulatory necessity, reflecting risk and proportionate regulation.

TEQSA engages with the Department, and overseas higher education quality assurance agencies and other regulators such as the Australian Skills Quality Authority to inform the ongoing development of its approach and to share information and intelligence.

TEQSA's strategic objectives for 2022–26 in delivering on its purpose are to:

1. promote good practice and provide support for effective self-assurance
2. identify, analyse and respond to sector risks
3. ensure quality and compliance through effective and efficient regulation.

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
20,198	20,373	20,328	20,369	20,508

Revenue directly appropriated from Government.

TEQSA Executive

TEQSA currently consists of a Chief Commissioner (Chairperson) and three other Commissioners. The Commissioners collectively are the Accountable Authority of TEQSA under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. TEQSA also has a Chief Executive Officer responsible for the management and administration of TEQSA and one SES Officer (Executive Director). TEQSA's office is located in Melbourne.

Members of the Executive include:

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Peter Coaldrake	Chief Commissioner	28 February 2026	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Joan Cooper	Commissioner	14 April 2024	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Adrienne Nieuwenhuis	Commissioner	3 October 2026	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Stephen Somogyi	Commissioner	31 October 2026	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Alistair Maclean	Chief Executive Officer	31 August 2025	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Mary Russell	Executive Director	N/A	Appointed by TEQSA CEO

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Accountable Authority

The Minister for Skills must consult with the Ministerial Council before making an appointment. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Accountable Authority

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Commissioners are the Accountable Authority of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, as established under section 132 of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act). The Commissioners are appointed by the Minister for Education under section 138 of the TEQSA Act.

Commissioners are responsible for making regulatory decisions, setting strategic directions, monitoring risk in the sector and deciding on matters relating to the development of our quality assurance and regulatory functions. TEQSA's Commissioners also inform the higher education sector about it's work and the responsibilities of higher education providers under the Australian Government's regulatory system.

TEQSA Board

Name	Position	Expiration	Appointment process
Peter Coaldrake	Chair	28 February 2026	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Joan Cooper	Commissioner	14 April 2024	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Adrienne Nieuwenhuis	Commissioner	3 October 2026	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister
Stephen Somogyi	Commissioner	31/10/2026	Approved by Prime Minister/Cabinet on Minister recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister

Bodies Forming Part of the Portfolio's Administrative Arrangements Orders

Australian National University

The Australian National University (ANU) is the only Australian university established by Commonwealth legislation and is a corporate Commonwealth entity.

The ANU was established by the *Australian National University Act 1991* (ANU Act). As a Corporate Commonwealth entity, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) applies to the ANU.

The Department has broad oversight of the ANU's legislative obligations, such as meeting the requirements of section 46 of the PGPA Act, which requires the ANU to prepare and give an annual report to the Minister for Education, for presentation to the Parliament, on the ANU's activities for its reporting period. Further, under the ANU Act, the Minister for Education appoints 7 of the 15 members of the ANU Council on the recommendations of the Nominations Committee of Council. These appointments are considered "significant Government appointments" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

Statutory Bodies

Australian National University (ANU) Council

The ANU Council is the governing authority of the Australian National University (ANU). Under section 9 of the *Australian National University Act 1991* (ANU Act), subject to the ANU Act and the Statutes made under in Part 4 of the ANU Act, the Council has entire control and management of the ANU's operations. The Council is made up of 15 members including the University's the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor and 7 members appointed by the Minister for Education on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee Council.

There is no ministerial or Australian Government representation on the ANU Council, nor does the ANU Council play an advisory role to Government.

The Ministerial appointments to the Council are considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence require approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointments are made.

Higher Education Standards Panel

The Higher Education Standards Panel (the Panel) is an expert advisory body established under section 166 of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TESQA Act)*. Panel members are appointed by Minister under section 170 of the TEQSA Act. The Panel provides independent advice to the Minister(s) responsible for tertiary education and research. The Panel's work is independent of the national independent higher education regulator, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

The Panel's function is to advise and make recommendations to the Minister for Education on making or varying the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), which is the basis for TEQSA's regulation of the higher education sector. It also advises the Minister and TEQSA on any other matters relating to the Threshold Standards. The Panel can provide advice and recommendations to TEQSA about its strategic objectives, corporate plan, reform agenda, streamlining of activities, resourcing requirements and approaches to deregulation.

The Panel's advisory role includes providing the Minister with advice on policy issues affecting the quality of Australian higher education. The Panel consults with interested parties in carrying out its work. It generally meets quarterly, with additional meetings as needed for stakeholder consultation or to complete specific reports.

Initial Teacher Education Quality Assessment Expert Panel

The Initial Teacher Education Quality Assurance Expert Panel has been established to provide independent advice to the Australian Government on introducing an assessment mechanism for initial teacher education (ITE) to improve the quality of ITE programs.

The Panel will develop a new performance assessment framework to ensure effective assessment of the delivery of quality ITE courses by higher education providers under the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (Accreditation Standards).

The Panel will develop minimum and excellence threshold standards for ITE courses. It is intended that the minimum threshold will be reflected in revised and strengthened Accreditation Standards. The excellence threshold will be developed to identify higher education providers demonstrating high-quality delivery of ITE. The Panel, in consultation with stakeholders, will develop advice for the Government to consider on the most appropriate mechanisms to link these thresholds to funding incentives to ensure delivery of quality ITE courses.

The Panel will report through the Chair, Professor Mark Scott, to the Minister for Education in line with the implementation timeframe determined by the Minister. The performance assessment framework will be agreed by the Minister for Education and will be reviewed every three years to re-evaluate quality indicators and the changing nature of outcomes.

National School Resourcing Board

The National School Resourcing Board (the Board) is established under section 128 of the *Australian Education Act 2013*, to conduct independent reviews of the operation of the Act, including school funding arrangements under the Act to provide greater independent oversight over Commonwealth school funding arrangements. The Board reviews different parts of the funding model under the Act and the Australian Education Regulation 2013. These reviews help ensure:

- public confidence in the school funding model
- states, territories and other approved authorities meet their obligations under the Act
- that the funding model is using the best available data and methodologies and
- funding is used in line with the Act.

The Board is appointed by the Minister subject to consultation with the Education Ministers' Meeting, the national representative body for Catholic systemic schools and the national representative body for independent schools. The appointments are considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointments are made.

Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Advisory Board

The TPS Advisory Board is established under section 55A the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (*ESOS Act*). The members of the TPS Advisory Board appointed under the ESOS Act are also members of the VSL Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016,* and members of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

The main function of the TPS Advisory Board is to provide advice and recommendations to the TPS Director on the annual settings of the TPS Levy for the international and domestic schemes.

Membership currently comprises five members representing specified Government agencies, including the Department, the Department of Finance, and the Department of Home Affairs, and up to seven other members. The seven members who do not represent Government agencies are appointed by the Minister. These appointments are considered "significant Government appointments" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Advisory Board

Statutory Office Holders

National Skills Commissioner

The office of the National Skills Commissioner was established on 1 July 2020 and is led by a Commissioner who was appointed on 13 October 2020. The Commissioner was appointed by the Minister under the *National Skills Commissioner Act 2020.*

The National Skills Commission (NSC) provides trusted and independent intelligence on Australia's current, emerging and future skills, education, and jobs. The NSC's focus is on three key long-term outcomes:

- to make an enduring and relevant contribution to labour market information
- to improve the quality, accessibility and relevance of vocational education and training
- to contribute to a labour market that effectively aligns skills needs with education and training.

The NSC provides high quality advice to the Minister and informs the public on Australia's labour market, future workforce changes, and current, emerging and future skills needs. The Commissioner publishes an annual report on Australia's current, emerging and future workforce skills needs during the calendar year.

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Adam Boyton	National Skills Commissioner	12 October 2025	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister.

Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Director

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) Director is a Commonwealth statutory officer appointed under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.* The TPS Director is also the VSL Tuition Protection Director under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016* and the Higher Education Tuition Protection Director under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. TPS Director is appointed by the Minister. The appointment is considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made. The TPS Director is supported by staff of the Department and consultants, who assist in the performance of the TPS Director's statutory functions.

The main roles and responsibilities of the TPS Director include:

- overseeing the operation of student placements, payments to providers for accepting students affected by a provider default and, where appropriate, refunds, or re-credits to students
- managing the operation of the Overseas Students Tuition Fund, VET Student Loans Tuition Protection Fund and Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund for administrative, placement and refund/re-credit purposes, in accordance with responsibilities under the relevant education and financial accountability frameworks
- determining the annual risk settings of the four TPS levies for the international and domestic schemes.

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Melinda Hatton	Tuition Protection Service Director	5 April 2027	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister.

Student Identifiers Registrar

The Student Identifiers Registrar, is a Commonwealth statutory officer established by the *Student Identifiers Act 2014* and is appointed by the Commonwealth Skills Minister in consultation with the ministers responsible for skills in states and territories. The appointment is considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence each requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

The main roles and responsibilities of the Student Identifiers Registrar include:

- administering the USI initiative nationally
- managing the USI Registry System
- managing the USI Contact Centre.

The former Council Of Australian Governments agreed to implement the Unique Student Identifier (USI) in April 2012 to provide students with the ability to obtain a complete record of their training from a single source.

The USI initiative is supported through Commonwealth legislation, including the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*, and administered through the USI Registry System.

The USI initiative commenced on 1 January 2015 and the USI Transcript service commenced on 22 May 2017.

From 1 January 2021, the requirement to have a USI is being progressively introduced for higher education students, with full effect by the end of 2023. The USI will replace the Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN). New higher education students have required a USI to be eligible for Commonwealth assistance since 1 January 2021.

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
Janette Dines	Student Identifiers Registrar	16 April 2024	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister.

Non-Statutory Appointments

Regional Education Commissioner

The role of the Regional Education Commissioner was established in response to recommendations of the 2018 Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education (Halsey Review) and the 2019 National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy (Napthine Review).

The role was advertised nationally as part of an open merit-based search in mid-2021. An independent selection panel chaired by the Hon Dr Denis Napthine AO, former Premier of Victoria, and author of the Napthine Review interviewed shortlisted candidates and recommended a preferred candidate to Government.

The Hon Fiona Nash was appointed as Australia's first Regional Education Commissioner in December 2021.

The Commissioner supports the implementation of the Napthine and Halsey Reviews through partnerships and coordinated efforts across governments, local communities, education providers and employers.

The Commissioner oversees and coordinates cross-sector research projects to identify and set future policy directions. These projects explore areas identified by the Napthine Review such as student support services, geographical classification, internet access and affordability, Year 12 retention and career mapping for rural, regional and remote students.

The Australian Government has committed $6 million over 4 years to establish the role and to fund several research projects to significantly improve regional education outcomes by 2030.

Incumbents	Position	Expiry	Appointment process
The Hon Fiona Nash	Regional Education Commissioner	December 2024	Approved by Prime Minister on Minister Recommendation Instrument of Appointment signed by Minister.

Non-Statutory Boards

Australian Industry and Skills Committee

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) was established by the members of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry and Skills Council in May 2015 to give industry a formal role in approving national vocational education and training (VET) packages for implementation.

The Committee's role is to provide advice to ensure the directions taken by Ministers are informed by an industry-based perspective focused on the quality and relevance of the national training system. Where required, the Committee will be delegated the authority to approve industry-defined training qualifications.

Members include industry leaders nominated by Commonwealth and state and territory ministers responsible for skills and training, a peak body representative (rotating between the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Industry Group), and 2 ex-officio members (senior government officials).

The functions of the AISC are to:

- advise on the implementation of national training policies
- quality assure and approve training packages for implementation
- oversee the process for development and approval of accredited training
- provide direction on the national vocation education and training (VET) sector research priorities, including the work of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
- provide advice to the COAG Industry and Skills Council on training provider and regulator standards
- coordinate industry engagement through the Skills Ministers' Meeting
- undertake work as directed by the Skills Ministers' Meeting.

On 29 May 2020, National Cabinet agreed to replace COAG and establish the National Federation Reform Council (NFRC). Under the NFRC, National Cabinet established the Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee (Skills Committee), which would continue to support the ongoing reforms to vocational education and training. The endorsement of training packages and other work for the national training system is progressed through Skills Ministers' Meetings.

On 22 March 2022, the Australian Government announced the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) would undertake the training product assurance from 1 January 2023. The AISC will cease its role on 31 December 2022.

Council for International Education

The Council for International Education was established in 2016 to oversee Australia's role in international education and training. The Council is chaired by the Minister for Education and includes relevant Ministerial members and Expert Members with responsibility and knowledge in international education. The Council works with education providers, industry, and Commonwealth, state and territory governments to ensure the international education sector continues to play a key role in driving Australia's future economic growth, global engagement and innovation. The Council currently supports implementation of the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021–2030.

The Council provides an annual progress report to the Prime Minister.

Equity in Higher Education Panel

The Equity in Higher Education Panel (EHEP) is a high level strategic advisory body with a focus on student equity in higher education. The EHEP will provide advice and make recommendations to the Department on strategic issues relating to improving student equity in higher education. As part of its work, the EHEP will provide advice on the redesign the Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF) for implementation in the higher education sector by 2024.

National Careers Institute Advisory Board

The National Careers Institute Advisory Board guides the National Careers Institute's (NCI) strategic direction and provides independent, expert advice to support the NCI in delivering its purpose, objectives and defined role as outlined in the Ministerial Charter. It is not a decision-making body, and has no governing legislation. The establishment of the NCI was announced as part of the 2019–20 Budget measure, Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow, to ensure Australians have access to accurate and up-to-date career information and support regardless of their age or stage of their career.

Performance-Based Funding Review – Expert Group

The Performance-Based Funding Review – Expert Group has been appointed to provide advice to the Minister for Education on the operation of the Performance-based funding scheme, after its first year of operation. The expert group was established by the Minister for Education.

Key matters for the Group's consideration are:

- providing technical advice on performance measures
- considering alterations to the qualitative submissions process
- providing input on the interaction between Performance-based funding and the Job-Ready Graduates reforms.

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Working Group

In 2014–15, the Australian Government announced *th*e Upholding Quality — Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Budget measure.

The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) was established based on recommendations for the Development of Performance Measurements by the Advancing Quality in Higher Education Reference Group, chaired by Professor Ian O'Connor, Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University. The report is available on the Department's website: Development of Performance Measures – Report of the Advancing Quality in Higher Education Reference Group.

The Working Group advises the Department on the QILT initiative including administration of the surveys and publication of results on the QILT website. This includes, for example, technical advice on issues such as survey and sampling design, psychometric analysis of survey instruments and the display of confidence intervals. The QILT Working Group comprises senior academics, planning officials, non-university higher education providers and business representatives.

Skills Expert Panel

The Skills Expert Panel provides independent expert advice on the implementation of the Government's Skills Reform priorities, informed by the Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System. Members were selected for their expertise in VET, tertiary education and industry. They are: the Hon Steven Joyce (Chair), Dr Vanessa Guthrie and the former Professor Peter Noonan.

The Panel meets with the Department on a regular basis, and undertakes additional stakeholder engagement activities as agreed by the Department or Minister. The Panel provides strategic advice to the portfolio Minister(s) on:

- strategic considerations for the achievement of the longer-term vision for VET
- ongoing alignment of the Budget measures
- practical concerns or issues for their implementation.

Ministerial Forums Relevant to the Portfolio

Education Ministers' Meeting

The Education Ministers' Meeting enables ongoing national cooperation and consistency on enduring strategic issues related to early childhood education and care, school education, higher education, and international education. The Commonwealth is the chair of the Education Ministers' Meeting and decisions are made by consensus.

Education Ministers are supported by a group of senior officials with responsibility for these policy areas who meet as the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC).

The Education Ministers Meeting is generally held four times a year.

Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee

The Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee (Skills Committee) was established on 29 May 2020 by National Cabinet to support the ongoing reforms to vocational education and training outlined in the Heads of Agreement for Skills Reform signed by all the states and territories. The Skills Committee is time-limited and the work program is a the direction of National Cabinet including:

- monitoring progress and reporting regularly to National Cabinet on the implementation of immediate reforms to improve quality and relevance as outlined in the Heads of Agreement
- overseeing the full implementation of the reforms tasked by National Cabinet
- negotiating a National Skills Agreement for agreement by the Council on Federal Financial Relations.

The Skills Committee consists of one member from the Commonwealth and one from each state and territory with portfolio responsibility for skills, and operates according to the conventions of the National Cabinet. The Minister responsible for skills is the Chair of the Skills Committee.

Documents and advice prepared for and by the Skills Committee are Cabinet material, with all proceedings and documentation to remain strictly confidential.

The Skills Committee meets on a monthly or bimonthly basis.

Skills Ministers' Meeting

Following the *Review of COAG Councils and Ministerial Forums* (the Conran Review) the Skills Ministers Meeting (SMM) was established as an ongoing mechanism for intergovernmental relations for skills and training.

The SMM collaboratively progresses items of national strategic importance within the portfolio to achieve agreed objectives and priorities. Priority actions include ensuring the national training system delivers a highly skilled and productive workforce to support national and local economies.

Skills Ministers predominantly work out of session to advance priorities, including to support Australia's critical skills and training needs in response to COVID-19 and to support economic recovery through a strong VET system for students, employers and industry.

The SMM provides a forum for national cooperation on the VET sector. It consists of portfolio ministers with responsibility for skills and training issues from the Commonwealth and each state and territory. The Skills Minister is the permanent Chair of the Skills Ministers' Meeting.

The SMM resolves issues in its portfolio and does not have a reporting line to National Cabinet or the National Federation Reform Council, unless directly tasked by either of these bodies. Key decisions and outcomes may be communicated by the Chair or through a press release or communique, as required to convey key decisions.

In recognition that Ministers (under the auspices of the Skills National Cabinet Reform Committee (Skills Committee) hold significant responsibilities relating to negotiation of a new National Skills Agreement and associated skills reforms, the SMM enables Ministers to progress non-Skills Committee priorities out of session, via correspondence. The First Secretaries Group and National Cabinet reviews the composition of regular, ongoing meetings such as the SMM every two years.

Other structures relevant to the Portfolio

Australian Education Research Organisation Limited (AERO)

Australian Education Research Organisation Limited (AERO) is a public company limited by guarantee. It members are the Education Ministers of the Commonwealth, States and Territories, and it is governed by a Board appointed by its members.

AERO's purpose is to position Australia's educators at the forefront of education research to improve learning outcomes for all children and young people.

The CEO is appointed by the Board. The appointment is considered a "significant Government appointment" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointment is made.

The establishment of a national evidence body was a key recommendation from the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools (also known as the Gonski Review 2.0). In December 2019, all Australian governments agreed to create an institute to position Australia's educators at the forefront of education research to improve learning outcomes for all children and young people.

The creation of a national education evidence organisation was one of the national policy initiatives under the 2020 National School Reform Agreement, aimed at lifting outcomes across Australian education.

In 2020 Dr Jenny Donovan was appointed inaugural CEO of AERO and an independent Board was announced.

AERO was incorporated in 2021, with the vision to achieve excellence and equity in educational outcomes for all children and young people through effective use of evidence.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER) is a public company, limited by guarantee. The NCVER is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics about VET nationally.

NCVER was established in 1981 and its members are comprised of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for VET. The company is managed by a Board of 9 directors with experience across Commonwealth, state and territory governments, industry, unions, and training authorities. Member nominations for the Board are usually agreed by the Skills Committee out of session, and confirmed in the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM is usually chaired by the Commonwealth Skills Minister or their proxy.

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is a statutory body established under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (National Law). The National Law is enacted in Victoria and Western Australia, and the Victorian Act is adopted as law by the other States and Territories.

ACECQA guides the implementation and administration of the National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). The ACECQA Board is accountable to the Education Ministers' Meeting (EMM) and reports to it through the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC).

ACECQA is governed by a 13-member Board appointed by consensus of EMM. Key functions include:

- the administration of the NQF, promoting national consistency and continuous quality improvement, educating and informing services and the community about the NQF
- publishing and maintaining national registers of early childhood education and care services and providers.

EMM provides strategic direction to the ACECQA Board via a Letter of Expectation. The Letter of Expectation is updated periodically.

The NQF was established on 1 January 2012 and includes a legislative framework that consists of the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, incorporating National Quality Standards, Approved Learning Frameworks and a quality assessment and rating system. A review of the NQF commenced in 2019 and is expected to be finalised in 2023 (the NQF Review was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

Australia India Education Council

On 8 April 2010, the Education Ministers of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Republic of India signed a Joint Ministerial Statement reaffirming the Australian and Indian Governments' commitment to continue to expand collaboration in education, training and research. To support this expansion, both Governments agreed to the establishment of the Australia India Education Council (AIEC).

The AIEC is a bi-national body with representation from academia, policy makers and industry which aims to set the strategic direction of the bilateral education, training and research partnership and to develop strategic advice to focus and shape collaborative efforts.

Australia Indonesia Centre

A Prime Ministerial initiative, the Australia Indonesia Centre aims to strengthen and deepen Australia Indonesia business, government, education, research and community links. The core objectives are to: promote greater community understanding of contemporary Indonesia; strengthen and deepen Australia Indonesia linkages in government, business, education, science, research and communities; deliver solutions to shared national challenges in areas such as health, food, energy and infrastructure and education through collaborative research through networks of universities and research centres in Indonesia and Australia.

Australian-American Educational Foundation (Fulbright Commission) Board

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission (formerly the Australian-American Educational Foundation) was initially established under the bi-national treaty between the governments of Australia and the United States under the *Australian Treaty Series 1949 No. 14*. The Fulbright program was reviewed in 1964 under a revised treaty (*Australian Treaty Series 1964 No. 15*).

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission is governed by a board of directors composed of 5 Australians, appointed by the Minister for Education under delegated authority of the Australian Prime Minister, and 5 Americans, appointed by the U.S. Ambassador to Australia.

The Prime Minister and the Ambassador serve as joint honorary co-chairs of the commission, while the board of directors elects its chairperson each year from its members. The Fulbright Commission office is based in Canberra and is administered by the Commission staff.

The Department sponsors the following scholarships:

Fulbright Professional Scholarship in Vocational Education and Training. This scholarship is for professionals within the vocational education and training sector, or training leaders in business and industry. It provides for the development of specific skills and knowledge through a national training system.

Fulbright-Anne Wexler Scholarship. This scholarship, established in 2009, recognises the many contributions made by the successful Washington U.S. lobbyist Mrs Anne Wexler in her role fostering Australian-American relations. The scholarship supports Mrs Wexler's bi-national interests in the field of public policy including areas such as health, sustainability, energy, climate change, regional security, economics, political science, history or governmental relations.

Education Services Australia Limited (ESA)

Education Services Australia Limited (ESA) was established by Education Ministers on 1 March 2010 as a national not-for-profit company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act. It is jointly owned by the Commonwealth, state and territory education ministers and is a sustainable education service provider, working collaboratively in the interests of all Australian education jurisdictions to provide technology-based services. ESA develops cost-efficient products and services that can be adapted in response to emerging technologies and the changing needs of the education and training sector.

ESA provides:

- development, sharing and deployment of nationally owned technical data and assessment systems
- digital teaching and learning resources, tools and services
- information and communications technology services.

ESA is governed by a Board of Directors led by an independent chairperson and comprises both representational and independent expert members. The Board is responsible for developing policies and governing operations and performance in accordance with the Company Objects, the Education Ministers' Meeting's Letter of Expectation (provided every two years), relevant legislation and operates under its own constitution.

The Board comprises of up to six independent members (including the Chair) that are jointly appointed by all Australian Education Ministers plus four specific nominees. The specific nominees are appointed by each of:

- board members directly nominated by the Australian Government
- the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC)
- the non-government schools sector
- Universities Australia

The appointments are considered "significant Government appointments" for the purposes of the Cabinet Handbook, and hence requires approval by the Prime Minister or Cabinet before the appointments are made.

PROGRAM FACT SHEETS
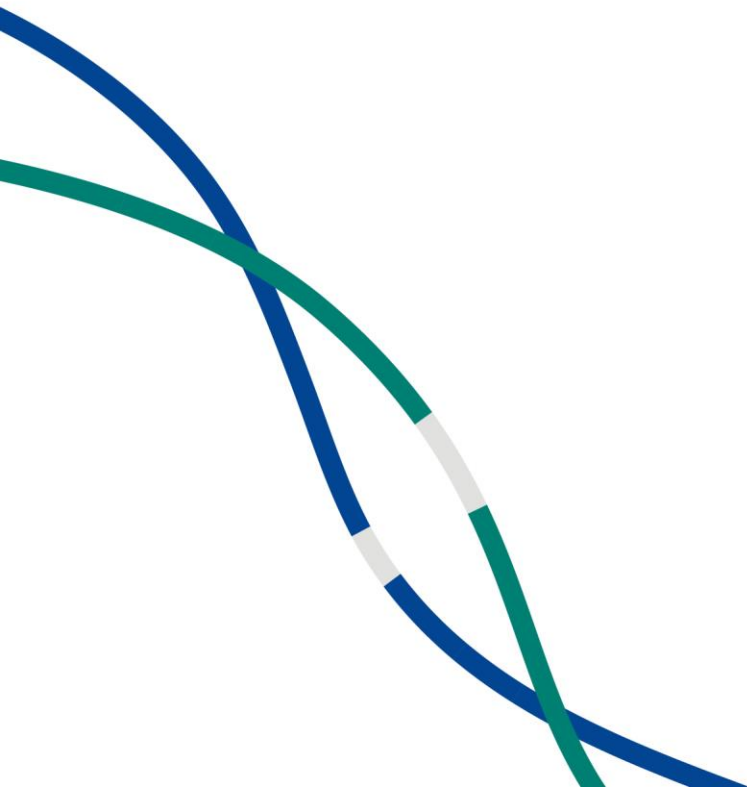
OUTCOME 1:
EARLY CHILDHOOD AND CHILD CARE
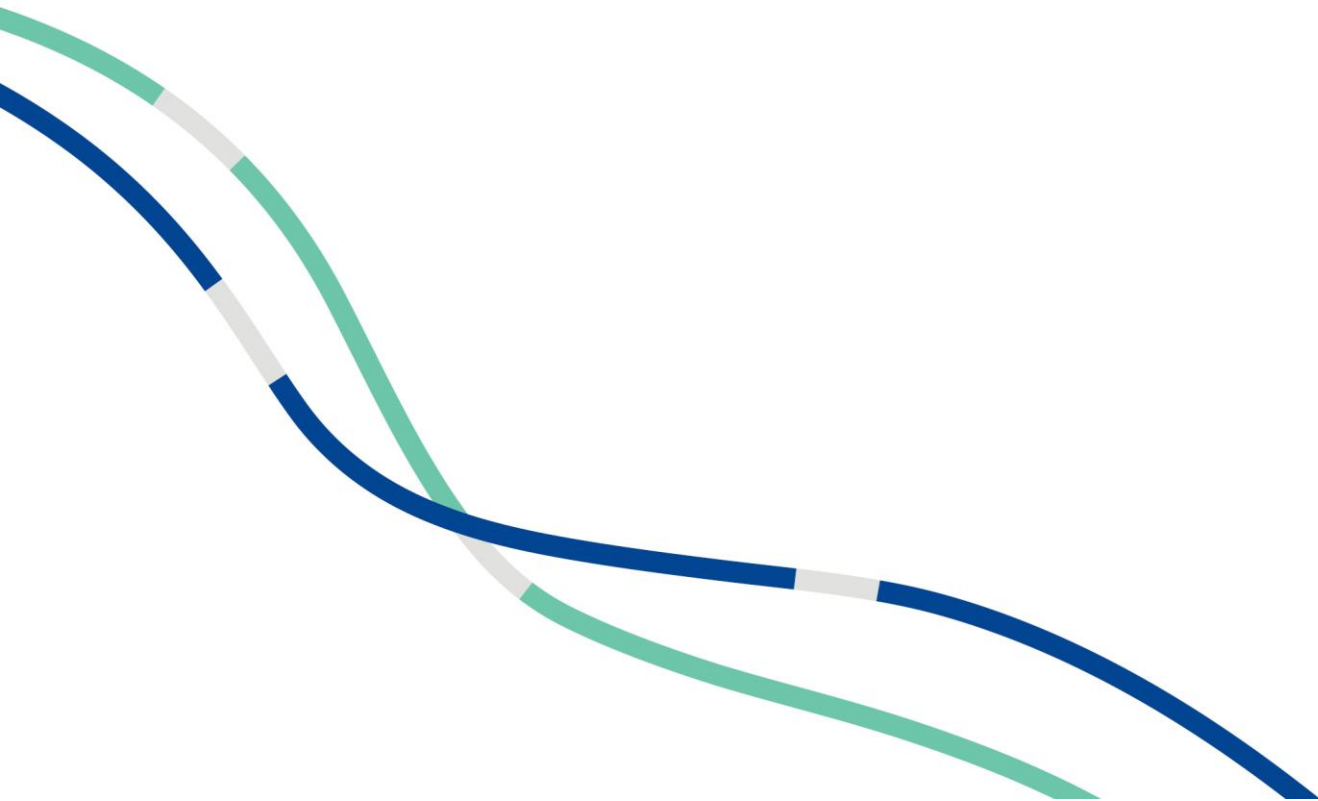
Outcome 1 – Early Childhood and Child Care

Improved early learning, schooling, student educational outcomes and transitions to and from school through access to quality child care, support, parent engagement, quality teaching and learning environments.

Contents

1.1 Support for the Child Care System

Table 1: Total Outcome 1.1. Support for the Child Care System

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Estimate**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
					COPEs
				Child Care Services Support	
Inclusion Support Program	211,644	132,696	132,696	132,696	133,296
Community Child Care Fund (excluding Connected Beginnings)	111,510	107,461	107,072	108,264	109,670
Connected Beginnings	16,373	20,341	24,697	28,398	27,210
Community Child Care Fund – Special Circumstances	22,392	7,700	4,000	4,000	4,000
Child Care Subsidy Annual Costs	1,105	1,105	1,105	1,105	1,105
Quality Support	20,711	23,278	18,840	18,403	18,641
Program Support	1,005	1,019	1,032	1,043	1,057
In Home Care	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Child Care Early Learning Projects	1,986	2,014	2,040	2,062	2,089
Early Learning Teaching Trial	1,300	250	300	–	–
Early Years Education Program	1,425	1,800	2,700	3,070	–
Total 1.1 Support for the Child Care System	**394,451**	**302,644**	**299,482**	**304,041**	**302,068**

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Inclusion Support Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

| START DATE: | 1 July 2016 |

| TERMINATION DATE: | Ongoing |

| CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: | ████████████████████████ |

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
211,644	132,696	132,696	132,696	133,296

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Inclusion Support Program (ISP) commenced 1 July 2016 and provides support to mainstream early childhood education and care services to build capacity and capability to include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers.

The ISP includes three key elements:

- **Inclusion Agencies:** In each state and territory an Inclusion Agency (IA) is contracted to assist eligible services to build their capacity and capability to provide and embed inclusive practice in the delivery of early learning and care programs. One IA is contracted to service both New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.
- **Inclusion Development Fund:** The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) provides funding to assist eligible services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be addressed through IA support alone.
- **Inclusion Development Fund Manager:** A single national IDF Manager is contracted to provide nationally consistent and equitable management of the IDF through assessment of applications for funding and communication of outcomes to services.

Policy objective

The desired outcomes of the ISP are that:

- early childhood education and care services have embedded inclusive practices in their service delivery model and, over time, have the capacity and capability to include children with additional needs and have reduced reliance on support from the program
- children with additional needs have an increased representation in mainstream early childhood education and care services, commensurate with their representation in the overall population
- parents and carers of children with additional needs have better access to, and are aware of, appropriate and inclusive early childhood education and care services that support their workforce, study or training choices.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Early childhood education and care services eligible for support through the ISP are:

- centre based day care
- outside school hours care
- family day care (FDC).

The child (or children) a service is seeking to include through support from the ISP must be the Family Tax Benefit child of a parent or carer assessed as eligible for child care fee assistance under Family Assistance Law.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The IDF provides funding to assist eligible early childhood education and care services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be resolved through IA support alone. There are four discrete streams of IDF support with different eligibility criteria, application processes and approved funding purposes. The rates for each of the streams are provided in the table below.

IDF Funding Stream	2021–22
IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	$23 per hour (for children with a disability with ongoing high support needs)
IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time–Limited Support	$23 per hour (enables immediate engagement of an additional educator for a limited time while a longer–term solution for children with additional needs is determined)
IDF Subsidy – Family Day Care Top Up	$11.40[2] per hour (for children with a disability with ongoing high support needs)
IDF – Innovative Solutions	The range for a single application is generally between $1,000–$3,000 and less than $10,000.

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[2] Indexed annually

Recipients

The ISP is an inclusion program and early childhood education and care services are the direct recipients of support. In most cases, services will seek support from the program to address barriers to inclusion triggered by the enrolment of a child (or children) with additional support needs. Therefore, children with additional needs and families are also a key client group of the program.

Evaluation

The ISP was evaluated as part of the broader Child Care Package. ███████████████████ ███████████████████████

History of program

The ISP replaces the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, which ceased on 30 June 2016.

Recipients

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Community Child Care Fund

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: The Connected Beginnings Program element of the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) commenced in July 2016, with other elements of the CCCF commencing in July 2018.

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

CCCF – excluding Connected Beginnings Program

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
111,510	107,461	107,072	108,264	109,670

Funding Type – Grant

Connected Beginnings Program

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
16,373	20,341	24,697	28,398	27,210

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The CCCF is a grants program for early childhood education and care services that aims to increase child care participation, particularly in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities. The CCCF is a key component of the Child Care Safety Net.

There are four main CCCF components:

- an open competitive grant opportunity
- a restricted non–competitive grant opportunity
- a special circumstances grant opportunity (funded under a special appropriation)
- the Connected Beginnings Program.

In 2022–23, eligible early childhood education and care services experiencing financial viability and/or sustainability issues will have access to free business support, provided by a business advisor engaged by the Department. CCCF business support will target services operating in disadvantaged or vulnerable communities.

Policy objective

The policy objective of the CCCF open competitive grant opportunity is to support approved early childhood education and care services to address barriers to child care participation, particularly targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable families and communities.

The policy objective of the CCCF restricted non–competitive grant opportunity is to support specified child care services, including those previously funded under the former Budget Based Funded (BBF) program and former Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) to operate sustainably.

The CCCF special circumstances grant opportunity supports continuity of child care, in particular in disadvantaged or vulnerable communities, where service viability is affected by an unforeseen event or circumstance such as an extreme weather event, pandemic or another event that would result in market failure for the community.

The CCCF also funds the Connected Beginnings Program. The aim of the Connected Beginnings Program is to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in identified areas of high need achieve the learning and development outcomes necessary for a positive transition to school.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The first funding rounds for both the CCCF open competitive grant opportunity and the CCCF restricted non–competitive grant opportunity were finalised in 2018, with funding commencing the same year.

Competitive Grant Opportunity

- Round one awarded $114.6 million (GST exclusive) over five years (from 2018–19 to 2022–23) to more than 700 early childhood education and care services in vulnerable and disadvantaged communities around the country, including priority regional and remote areas. In Home Care Services were not eligible for this round.
- Round two awarded more than $7 million (GST exclusive) over two years (from 2019–20 to 2020–21) to 75 child care providers and In Home Care Services in priority regional and remote communities.
- Round three awarded more than $100 million (GST exclusive) over three years (from 2021–22 to 2023–24) to more than 640 child care services in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities around Australia.
- As at 28 February 2022, 1,049 child care services are currently funded across all rounds.
- A new competitive round will fund the establishment of up to 20 new centre–based day care or family day care services in disadvantaged regional and remote communities where there is a lack of suitable care. This round is under development and will open later in 2022.
- Future CCCF grant opportunities will be advertised via GrantConnect, the Government's grants information system.

Restricted non–competitive grant opportunity

The policy objective of the CCCF restricted non–competitive grant opportunity is to support specified child care services (mainly former BBF and IAS services delivering early childhood education and care services). As at 28 February 2022, grants support 153 specific services.

The grant funding allows services the support required to:

- ensure continuity of locally driven service delivery, appropriate for the particular community
- increase in the capacity to operate sustainably under the Child Care Package
- address (or have increased capacity to address) community level barriers to child care participation
- increase the number of children from vulnerable or disadvantaged and/or Indigenous families or communities accessing services.

The outcomes of the first round of this grant opportunity were announced in April 2018, with most services offered five–year funding agreements. The amount of funding provided to individual recipients was determined on a case–by–case basis, taking into account the particular circumstances of each CCCF restricted service. Funding was made available for the specified services from July 2018.

While services have the certainty of ongoing funding tied to three to five–year agreements, grant funding may be adjusted following the program's annual review process. Grant funding for the remainder of the agreement may be adjusted after consideration of milestone reports, budgets and attendance details collected through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) System.

A list of services currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive grant opportunity is attached.

CCCFR Expansion (Closing the Gap)

In the 2021–22 Budget, an additional $29.9 million over four years was committed to expand the CCCFR program to fund up to 20 new high quality and mostly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander–run child care services in mainly remote and very remote areas, with low or no supply of child care subsidy approved child care.

The measure may also fund the expansion of existing CCCFR services to strengthen community engagement and engage families to increase child care participation and attendance, taking into account higher costs of service delivery in remote areas, training needs for educators and outreach to strengthen community engagement.

The measure will help services address community level barriers to child care participation and to increase the number of children from vulnerable or disadvantaged communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, accessing quality early childhood education and care.

The consultation for, and establishment of the 20 new sites is taking place in a phased manner, with invite only grant processes to be held during 2022.

Special circumstances grant opportunity

Annual funding of $4 million is available for special circumstances grants which provide ad hoc support for services affected by natural disasters, extreme weather events and the pandemic. Total special appropriation funding for these grants can be increased where there is higher demand for assistance to services that:

- are at high risk of temporary or permanent closure due to viability issues resulting from an unforeseen event or circumstance. This could be a natural disaster, extreme weather event or pandemic
- are at high risk of permanent closure, and the closure would result in a lack of suitable child care (market failure) for the community
- are seeking to commence a new service in a community where another service has closed, resulting in a lack of suitable child care (market failure), and the new service will require funding to establish a viable operation.

The special appropriation has increased from $4 million to $22.4 million in 2021–22 and to $7.7 million in 2022–23 to assist child care services recovering from the flood and the ongoing impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic.

Connected Beginnings

- Connected Beginnings aims to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait children to become school ready. The program works closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities to identify early childhood priorities for change.
- A focus is ensuring that services, such as early childhood, maternal and child health, family support, pre–schools, councils and government agencies work together to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families with support and timely access to services. This then supports early learning, and addresses children's health, attendance, and cultural safety.
- The program support efforts to meet Closing the Gap targets for school readiness and increased participation in pre–school.

Over time, it is anticipated the program will contribute to a reduction in the disparity in school readiness and educational outcomes between Indigenous and non–Indigenous children, and ensure children are safe, healthy, and ready to thrive at school by the age of five.

As at 1 April 2022, the Department is supporting 24 project sites in the following locations:

- Northern Territory – Alice Springs, Galiwin'ku, Tennant Creek and Angurugu
- Queensland – Doomadgee, Rasmussen and Mareeba
- South Australia – Ceduna and Port Augusta
- Victoria – Mildura and Shepparton
- New South Wales – Doonside, Mount Druitt, Taree, and Bourke
- Tasmania – Bridgewater/Gagebrook, Burnie and George Town
- Western Australia – Kalgoorlie, Derby, Roebourne, Armadale, Bidyadanga and Great Central Southern (Katanning).

Funding available to recipients under the program

Approximately $101 million in total was available in 2020–21 for allocation under the CCCF.

In August 2021, additional funding $81.8 million was provided to the Department and the Department of Health to support the expansion of the Connected Beginnings program to 50 sites nationally by 2025. $16.4 million has been allocated through the Department in 2021–22, and $20.3 million in 2022–23.

Recipients

Recipients of CCCF funding are approved providers of eligible early childhood education and care services.

Recipients of Connected Beginnings funding are backbone organisations which are identified in each approved location to work with the local community to lead the implementation of integration activities.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the Child Care Package included the evaluation of the CCCF.

A joint evaluation of Connected Beginnings was conducted with the Department of Health in 2019,

History of program

Funding from the first rounds of CCCF open and restricted grant opportunities was available from July 2018. Special Circumstances funding was implemented in October 2018.

Approximately $115 million was awarded over five years in the first round of the competitive merit–based grant assessment process. The total value of the second round of the CCCF open competitive grant opportunity is approximately $7 million over two years.

The total value of funding available under the first round of the CCCF restricted non–competitive grant opportunity was approximately $49 million per annum. Funding terms offered under the first rounds of both CCCF grant opportunities were up to five years, depending on the particular activity being funded and the circumstances of the individual child care service.

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Gujaga Multifunctional Aboriginal ChildCare Centre MACS	La Perouse	NSW
Gudjahgahmiamia Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services	Wreck Bay Village, Jervis Bay	NSW
Waverley Action for Youth ASC	Bondi Beach	NSW
Yalbillinga Boori Day Care	Cowra	NSW
Birrelee Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Service	West Tamworth	NSW
Tharawonga Mobile Resource Unit	North Star	NSW

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Multi–Purpose Allira Gathering Association Incorporated T/as AlliraMACS Childcare	Dubbo	NSW
Towri MACS	South Bathurst	NSW
Oorunga Wandarrah MACS Centre	Airds	NSW
Nimbin Child Care Facility	Nimbin	NSW
Bogan Bush Mobile	Nyngan	NSW
Cowra Early Childhood Services – Mobile	Cowra	NSW
Bland Shire Mobile Resource Unit LDC	West Wyalong	NSW
Crookwell Mobile Long Day Care	Crookwell	NSW
Narnia Early Learning Young Parents Waratah	Waratah	NSW
Lachlan Mobile Child Care Service	Condobolin	NSW
Deniliquin Mobile Children's Service	Deniliquin	NSW
Galloping Gumnut Mobile Playvan	Lithgow	NSW
Puggles Mobile Children's Services Van	Tumbarumba	NSW
The Outback Mobile Resource Unit Inc Tibooburra	Tibooburra	NSW
Wiradjuri Neighbourhood Centre	Wagga wagga	NSW
Noogaleek Children's Centre	Berkeley	NSW
Greater Hume Children Services Walla Walla	Walla Walla	NSW
Greater Hume Children Services Henty	Jindera	NSW
Lajamanu Childcare Centre (Lajamanu Crèche)	Yuendumu	NT
Milikapiti Crèche	Milikapiti	NT
Karuwalijawu (Yarralin) Creche	Yarralin	NT
Minjilang Creche	Minjilang	NT
Manayingkarirra Child and Family Centre	Maningrida	NT
Ampe Kenhe Apmere (Congress Child CareCentre)	Alice Springs	NT
Laramba Child Care Centre	Ti Tree	NT
Nyirripi JET Creche	Alice Springs	NT
Yuelamu JET Creche	Alice Springs	NT
Haasts Bluff (Ikuntji)	Haasts Bluff Community	NT
Mount Liebig (Watiyawanu)	Mount Liebig Community	NT
Titjikala	Titjikala Community	NT
Hermannsburg (Ntaria)	Hermannsburg COMMUNITY	NT
Finke (Aputula)	Finke Community	NT
Kintore (Walungurru)	Kintore Community	NT
Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte)	Santa Teresa Community	NT

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Galiwinku Community Child Care Centre	Elcho Island	NT
Yirrkala Child Care Centre	Yirrkala	NT
Umbakumba Creche	Groote Eylandt	NT
Gapuwiyak Creche	Gapuwiyak	NT
Wugularr Creche	Wugularr Community Via Katherine	NT
Jilkminggan Creche	Jilkminggan Community, Via Mataranka	NT
Manyallaluk Creche	Manyallaluk	NT
Jirnani Child Care Centre	Bathurst Island	NT
Pirlangimpi Creche	Melville Island	NT
Alekarenge Family Centre	Ali Curung	NT
Na Wulg Family Care Service	Katherine	NT
Emu Point Creche	Emu Point	NT
Wunala Creche	Borroloola	NT
Barunga Community Creche	Barunga	NT
Warruwi Creche	Goulburn Island	NT
Gap Youth and Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation	Alice Springs	NT
Atitjere Creche	Alice Springs	NT
Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Limited MUTITJULU	Mutitjulu	NT
Wadeye Child Care Centre	Wadeye	NT
Bagot Community Outside School Hour Care	Bagot Community	NT
One Tree Yera Children's Service	Batchelor	NT
One Tree Kalkarindji Children's Service	Kalkarindji	NT
Nauiyu Nambiyu Child Care Centre	Nauiyu Nambiyu Community	NT
Little Crocs Creche	Timber Creek	NT
Gunbalanya Creche	Gunbalanya	NT
Yuendumu Early Childhood	Yuendumu	NT
Papunya Early Learning	Papunya	NT
Areyonga Early Learning	Areyonga	NT
Docker River Early Learning	Darwin	NT
Ngukurr Child Care	Ngukurr	NT
Koolkan Early Childhood Centre & Family Support Hub	Aurukun	QLD
Iama Migi Kaziw Mudh	Yam Island	QLD
Lady Gowrie Thursday Island Child Centre	Thursday Island	QLD

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Gundoo Early Childhood Learning Centre	Cherbourg	QLD
Gulliver's Travels Mobile Children's Service	Goondiwindi	QLD
Aragun Child Care Centre	Badu Island	QLD
Hammond Island Outside School Hours Care	Hammond Island	QLD
Umagico Outside School Hours Care	Umagico	QLD
Injinoo Outside School Hours Care	Injinoo	QLD
Umagico Child Care Centre	Umagico	QLD
Injinoo Child Care Centre	Injinoo	QLD
Injilinji After School Care Program	Mount Isa	QLD
Thursday Island Vacation Care Program	Thursday Island	QLD
Yarrabah Daycare Centre	Yarrabah	QLD
New Mapoon Child Care Centre	New Mapoon	QLD
New Mapoon Children's Activity Centre	New Mapoon	QLD
Doomadgee Child Care Centre	Doomadgee	QLD
Nola's Place	Hope Vale	QLD
Undoonoo Day Care Centre	Woorabinda	QLD
Korrawinga Vacation Care	Nikenbah	QLD
Koolyangarra Child Care Centre	Highgate Hill	QLD
Pompur Paanthu Long Day Care	Pormpuraaw	QLD
Pormpur Paanth Outside School Hours Care	Pormpuraaw	QLD
Ama La Day Care Centre	Bamaga	QLD
Ama Aukia Activity Centre	Bamaga	QLD
St George Aboriginal Enrich & Vacation Care	St George	QLD
Search Light Early Learning Centre	Sunnybank	QLD
Wandarrah Neighbourhood Centre CC	Inala	QLD
Mabel Early Learning Creche	Slacks Creek	QLD
St.Mary MacKillop Goodoo Early Learning Centre	Palm Island	QLD
Wynbring Jida M.A.C.S Child Care Centre	Whyalla Stuart	SA
Kura Yerlo Children's Centre	Seaton	SA
Mallee COGS	Lameroo And Pinnaroo	SA
Marree Aboriginal School Creche	Marree	SA
Robe Mobile Service – CCOWS	Robe	SA
Koonibba Child Care Centre	Koonibba	SA
Umoona Child Care Centre (MACS)	Coober Pedy	SA
Kaurna Plains Early Childhood Centre	Elizabeth	SA

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Port Lincoln Children's Centre	Port Lincoln	SA
Minya Bunhii Children's Centre	Ceduna	SA
Remote & Isolated Children's Exercise Inc	Port Augusta	SA
AC.Care – Minya Porlar Creche	Murray Bridge	SA
Hackham West Breakfast Club	Hackham West	SA
Milang Old School House Community Centre	Milang	SA
Norwood Community Creche Inc	Beulah Park	SA
Family House Occasional Care	Mount Barker	SA
King Island Child Care & Early Learning Centre	Currie	TAS
Midlands Rural & Remote Child Care Service	Longford	TAS
Tasmanian Aboriginal Child Care Association	Mowbray	TAS
Aboriginal Children's Centre	Risdon	TAS
Berrimba Child Care Centre (Echuca MACS)	Echuca	VIC
Gunai Lidj MACS	Morwell	VIC
Mallee Minors Child Care Centre	Ouyen	VIC
Yappera Children's Services Co–operative	Thornbury	VIC
Lake Tyers Early Learning Centre	Lake Tyers	VIC
Gippsland Rural Child Care Service	Bairnsdale	VIC
Wimmera Rural Child Care Service	Horsham	VIC
Corangamite Shire Mobile Child Care	Camperdown	VIC
Murray Valley Early Learning Centre	Robinvale	VIC
Lullas Children and Family Centre	Shepparton	VIC
Eltham Playhouse	Eltham	VIC
Outlets Co–Operative Neighbourhood House limited	Newport	VIC
Brunswick Neighbourhood House Cooperative Limited	Brunswick	VIC
Keysborough Freedom Club	Keysborough	VIC
Selby Community House	Selby	VIC
Tatura Community Cubby House	Tatura	VIC
Walwa Early Years Learning Centre	Walwa	VIC
Kids On Campus Mitta Mitta	West Wodonga	VIC
Bellbridge Early Years Learning Centre	Bellbridge	VIC
Saranna Early Childhood Education and Care Centre	Cullacabardee	WA
Teen Family Centre	Balga	WA
Wanyanyakem Taam Early Learning Centre	Kununurra	WA
Jalygurr–Guwan Multifunctional Aboriginal Service	Broome	WA

Organisation currently funded under the CCCF restricted non–competitive program	Suburb name	State
Rose Nowers Early Learning Centre	South Hedland	WA
Family House Child Care	Albany	WA
Gnowangerup Occasional Care Service (Mobile)	Gnowangerup	WA
Peel Youth Creche	Mandurah	WA
Little Nuggets Vacation Care	Halls Creek	WA
Narrogin Multifunctional Child Care Centre Mobile	Narrogin	WA
Coolabaroo Neighbourhood Centre	Thornlie	WA
Kora Childcare	Bayswater	WA
Baya Gawiy Early Childhood Learning Unit	Fitzroy Crossing	WA

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Community Child Care Fund – Special Circumstances

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999 – s233* **Community Child Care Fund Special Circumstances**

START DATE: 1 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
22, 392	7,700	4,000	4,000	4,000

Note change from an annual appropriation to a special appropriation effective 1 July 2020.

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

CCCF Special Circumstances funding aims to support for services that:

- are at risk of closure due to an unforeseen event or circumstance. This could be a natural disaster, extreme weather event or pandemic
- are at risk of permanent closure, and the closure would result in a lack of suitable child care for the community
- are seeking to open a new service in a community where there is no suitable child care.

Policy objective

The CCCF Special Circumstances grant opportunity is a special appropriation established to support continuity of child care, in particular in disadvantaged or vulnerable communities or thin markets, where a service is at risk of closure due to an unforeseen event or circumstance such as an extreme weather event or pandemic.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The CCCF Special Circumstances grant opportunity is open to CCS approved child care services that meet the eligibility criteria (listed above). Applicants apply for the ongoing CCCF Special Circumstances grants using an online form that is then assessed against the eligibility criteria by a dedicated assessment team.

History of program

This sub–program is funded for $4 million annually through the forward estimates, except for 2019–20 and 2020–21.

Funding available under the CCCF Special Circumstances grant opportunity was increased in November 2019 by $5 million to enable the program to better respond to the droughts affecting much of Australia and in January 2020 it was increased by another $5 million to support recovery efforts for early childhood education and care services in communities affected by the bushfire disaster. The program was expanded by a further $20 million in 2020 in response to the COVID–19 pandemic. The COVID–19 related grant opportunity was closed on 3 April 2020, in recognition of the alternative support that was provided to services under the ECEC Relief Package from 6 April to 12 July 2020.

In 2020–21, funding of $945 million was made available nationally from the special appropriation to support:

- Transition Payments, as part of the Transition Package – from 13 July to 27 September 2020, early childhood and child care services were eligible to receive a 25 per cent payment calculated at 25 per cent of fee revenue (or 25 per cent of the relevant hourly rate cap, whichever was lower)
- Additional supports offered to Victorian child care services, with payments made progressively from mid–August 2020, in light of the resurgence of COVID–19, commencing with the higher transition payment to Melbourne child care services
- Recovery Payments, as part of the Recovery Package, from 28 September until 31 January 2021, centre based day care, family day care and in home care services in all parts of Victoria are eligible to receive a 25 per cent payment with outside of school hours care services eligible to receive a 40 per cent payment.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The special appropriation is increased from $4 million to $22.4 million in 2021–22, and to $7.7 million in 2022–23 to assist child care services recover from the floods and the ongoing impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic. The amount per recipient can vary and is dependent on the individual application and the underlying circumstances.

Recipients

In 2020–21 there were 25 grants paid totalling $1.425 million for CCCF special circumstances:

- 3 grants totalling $0.156 million were awarded to services at risk of closure due to drought
- 15 grants totalling $0.596 million were awarded to services at risk of closure due to COVID–19
- 16 grants totalling $0.673 million were awarded to services at risk of closure due to other unforeseen circumstances.

As at 4 May 2022, the Department has awarded grants totalling $0.311 million to eight services for COVID–19 related special circumstances grants and $0.976 million to seven services at risk of closure due to other unforeseen circumstances. 222 applications are currently under assessment, of which 212 are COVID–19 related and seven are flood related. Of these 183 applications are from four large providers.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Child Care Subsidy Annual Costs

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2015
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,105	1,105	1,105	1,105	1,105

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The CCS Annual Costs currently cover:

- Child Care Financial Integrity Framework
- Research and Evaluation.

Policy objective

Integrity Framework

A Child Care Financial Integrity Framework (Integrity Framework) has been developed and implemented. The Framework builds on legislative and IT controls to ensure the financial integrity of all child care fee assistance payments and grants is maintained. The Integrity Framework comprises a suite of resources and consists of three levels:

- Corporate Strategy – overview of purpose, goals, objectives and risk–based compliance approach
- Operational Strategies – policies, approaches and principles to embed financial integrity and compliance into business as usual activities, and
- Operational Guidance – practical resources, processes, education and training material for internal and external stakeholders.

The Department takes a risk–based approach to maintain financial integrity. This approach monitors patterns of behaviour, considers high–risk indicators of potential error, non–compliance or fraud, investigates suspected breaches, and intervenes accordingly.

The Department uses a proportional approach in responding to non–compliance based on the severity of the contravention, the history of the non–compliant entity, overall trends in non–compliant behaviour and the entities' response to corrective action we take.

Research and Evaluation

The research and evaluation funding is utilised by the Department to support activities that contribute to the Government's early childhood education and care agenda. Proposals are assessed against the Department's Early Childhood and Child Care narrative and alignment with one or more of the Early Childhood and Child Care research.

During the 2021–22 program year, the research and evaluation activities supported by this program include:

- Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) evaluation of the Child Care package
- Online survey of child care services (Wave5 – COVID19 impact)
- Additional funds to support evaluation work associated Child Care Subsidy certificate length and language usage project
- Additional funds to support evaluation work associated the Early Years Education Program (EYEP).

During the 2022–23 program year, the Department will conduct a review of the ECCC Regulatory Framework to examine the legislation and regulations and make recommendations to strengthen these regulatory controls.

The review will help to strengthen decisions and subsequent review outcomes related to integrity activities, improve CCS payment accuracy and reduce administrative burden for the regulated community and government.

Eligibility for program and process for application

There are no eligibility criteria or processes for application for the CCS Annual Costs as individually procured activities within the sub–program support development, implementation and evaluation.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding would only be provided to individual recipients where an agreement is executed with the Department to deliver research and evaluation services.

Recipients

Any eligible body or individual who are eligible and enter into an agreement with the Department.

History of program

The package was developed in response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Childcare and Early Childhood Learning. The new Child Care Package was announced in the 2015–16 Budget, with full implementation delayed until July 2018. This program was established to support the implementation, evaluation and compliance monitoring of the package.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Quality Support

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: Various

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
20,711	23,278	18,840	18,403	18,641

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Child Care Quality Support Program aims to ensure that children in care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that will foster all aspects of their development and promotes quality care for all children in approved Australian early childhood education and care services.

Policy objective

For services and providers to be eligible to administer the Child Care Subsidy on behalf of families that use their services, they must meet state and territory approval requirements under the National Quality Framework (NQF), this includes Centre Based Day Care, Family Day Care and Outside School Hours Care services.

The Child Care Quality Support Program comprises the following elements:

- **Strong Quality** supports the delivery of quality child care and early learning services for children, families and communities. The program also supports relevant consultation with stakeholders to inform future policy.
- **Operational funding for Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).** ACECQA has a statutory role to work with all governments to guide the administration of the NQF including promoting national consistency and continuous quality improvement.
- **The National Quality Agenda IT System** provides online business applications for educators, providers and regulatory authorities, including recording the assessment and quality rating of early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services against the National Quality Standard.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The provision of this program funding is to give effect to decisions of the Government. The balance of funding relates to procurement activities under the sub–element Strong Quality.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The Strong Quality measure provides support through Education Services Australia for the Education Ministers Meeting, Australian Education Senior Officials Committee National Project Fund and the National Education and Care Services Ombudsman and Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioners.

Other funding allocated by the Government is consistent with the program description.

Recipients

Primarily supports ACECQA.

Evaluation

A review of ACECQA was completed in 2019. The review found that ACECQA is fit for purpose, operating consistently within its requirements under the National Law and that ACECQA plays an integral role in the ECEC regulatory ecosystem.

As a result of the positive findings of the review, ACECQA receives ongoing funding to recognise its integral role in promoting national consistency and driving continuous quality improvement.

History of program

The majority of funding supports ACECQA to administer the NQF, as endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009.

On 10 December 2019, the Australian Government announced ongoing funding for ACECQA from 1 July 2020. This includes annual indexation and will enable ACECQA to continue to perform its functions in supporting the administration of the NQF. From 2020–21 to 2022–23, ACECQA will receive $46 million.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Streamlining Early Childhood Education and Care Approval Processes across Jurisdictions

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: February 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

This is a component of the Child Care Quality Support Program.

Brief description

This program provides funding to support the streamlining of child care approvals to cut red tape and prevent fraud. Child care services will only have to submit one application to establish a new service for assessment by Commonwealth and state/territory regulatory authorities. It is anticipated a single application platform will be delivered from July 2023 for child care service applications under both Commonwealth and state/territory legislation.

Policy objective

The Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector develops Australian children and supporting workforce participation. The program will deliver:

- a single, faster, streamlined online process for new providers to apply to be assessed against both Australia Government and state/territory requirements to establish a child care service
- increased accessibility for small business operators to a growing and robust child care market
- an education and assessment package for providers
- better access to quality and suitability data for regulators and the Australian Government and resources to monitor, analyse and act on indicators of concern.

The ECEC sector is currently administered under a dual regulatory system. Child care providers wishing to provide care and receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) must be approved under both Commonwealth and state/territory legislation. This program of work will mean that child care providers can lodge a single application that is then separately assessed against the requirements of the Australian Government (focussed on business viability and suitability to administer CCS on behalf of parents) and State Regulatory Authority approvals processes (focussed on meeting standards for the safety, health and wellbeing of children and improved educational outcomes and development for children).

This will reduce the time and cost that child care providers must invest in supplying duplicate information to the Australian and state/territory governments. Joined–up assessments will allow for streamlined processing for quality applications and provide confidence that applications have been assessed in a consistent and proportionate manner. It will also address inefficiencies including unnecessary regulatory burden.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The provision of this program funding is to give effect to decisions of the former Education Council regarding their Joined Up Approvals project. Program decisions are made under governance arrangements agreed by Education Council.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The cost of IT activities required to enhance the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's (ACECQA) National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) including system development, enhancement and implementation costs is $6.7 million with an ongoing support and maintenance cost in the order of $1.4 million per year.

Non–IT activities include design and development of training materials costed at $384,000 and an online training environment costed at $864,000.

Recipients

ACECQA

Evaluation

An evaluation framework will be developed and underpinned by a number of discrete evaluation plans for the main elements of the program. It will establish baseline data and draw on other evidence and data to monitor program implementation and identify relevant outcomes of the program, against which the progress of the changes over time will be able to be assessed.

History of program

The Australian Government and state governments undertook an external feasibility study of options for a joined up approval process through the Education Council's Early Childhood Policy Group. This program responds to the business problems identified in the current state analysis and includes some alignment of requirements across jurisdictions.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Program Support

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: Various

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,005	1,019	1,032	1,043	1,057

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

This program supports the development, maintenance and dissemination of information to assist families to make informed decisions about child care and the related support programs and services provided or funded by the Government.

The major measures that contribute to this program are outlined below.

Child Care Payments Compliance

The Department has a broad–ranging compliance program in place to protect the integrity of Australian Government child care fee assistance made to approved services on behalf of families.

Child Care National Workforce Census

The National Workforce Census (the Census) provides a national overview of the early childhood education and care workforce with the latest Census undertaken in 2021. Results of the Census are expected to be released in the middle of 2022. The information collected helps inform and implement early childhood and child care policy, to ensure that high quality early childhood services are provided to young children and their families.

Program Evaluation and Research

Program Evaluation and Research (PER) aims to support activities within and outside the Early Childhood and Child Care (ECCC) Group that promote effective and collaborative research and evaluation. The PER funding can be used for in–house or external research or evaluation projects to better inform and support Government policy priorities and program implementation, examples being the June 2021 Parent Survey and the COVID–19 impact Parent Surveys. This complements the other ECCC research and evaluation activities being conducted such as the COVID–19 impact Child Care Services Surveys (see Child Care Subsidy Annual Costs).

Large Centre-Based Day Care (CBDC) Financial Viability assessments

Financial viability assessments of Centre–Based Day Care providers, with more than 25 Centre–Based Day Care services, are undertaken annually. Currently there are 12 providers which are assessed.

Policy Objective

Program Support implements a range of measures to support the following initiatives/work:

- Child Care payments compliance
- Child Care National Workforce Census
- Program Evaluation and Research
- Large CBDC Financial Viability assessments.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Program Support funding is determined based on activities to support implementation, promotion and evaluation of child care policy, reforms and compliance activities.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided under contract, this is not a grant program.

Recipients

Recipients are organisations contracted by the Department under procurement processes in accordance with Commonwealth and departmental procurement policy.

Evaluation

The integrity of CCS payments is monitored to provide an estimate of child care payment accuracy rates for the sector. In the financial year 2020–21, the payment accuracy rate for the CCS was 94.8 per cent, which exceeds the performance target of 90 per cent.

Independent actuarial advice estimates the total financial impact resulting from compliance activities and legislative changes from January 2014 to December 2021 to be $3.158 billion.

The Child Care Compliance program is audited by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) through the annual financial statement audit process.

History of program

Since 2012, the Department has identified serious non–compliance and fraud in the administration of child care fee assistance, particularly in the Family Day Care sector.
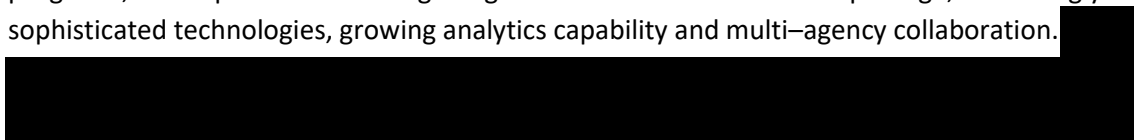
The department's ongoing focus on improving the accuracy of child care payments had led to the allocation of more resources towards the prevention and detection of serious non–compliance and increased stakeholder engagement and education.

The Family Day Care — Payment Integrity measure was announced in MYEFO 2017–18. The measure was intended to ensure the integrity of child care payments to family day care services, leading up to and during the transition to the new child care system. This measure enabled increased targeted compliance efforts and has seen the removal of 165 high–risk family day care services, preventing around $1.2 billion of incorrect payments from being made.

The MYEFO 2018–19 included the Family Day Care – Further Improving Payment Integrity measure that provides for implementation of further targeted activities and continues to strengthen the capacity to detect, investigate and understand criminal networks, and pursue prosecution of complex fraud in child care.

The 2021–22 Budget included the Better Child Care Regulation Measure to harmonise and streamline early childhood and child care regulatory processes across jurisdictions, eliminating duplication by working in partnership with states and territories.

The Child Care Financial Integrity Framework (the Framework) details how the Department will prevent, detect and respond to error, non–compliance and fraud across all care types and grant programs, and capitalises on stronger legislative and IT controls of the package, increasingly sophisticated technologies, growing analytics capability and multi–agency collaboration.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Child Care Early Learning Projects

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2009
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,986	2,014	2,040	2,062	2,089

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Child Care Early Learning projects assist in the support of early childhood education and care services to enable more families to access quality child care and early learning services.

Policy objective

This funding is available to meet requests for assistance and/or projects as they arise throughout the year, with proposals assessed against program objectives and priorities of early childhood and child care.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Child Care Early Learning projects provide funding for the collection of data and analysis to support policy development and underpin key activities such as evaluation, compliance, and national quality. This work has provided evidence to support the new childcare arrangements and serves to respond to implementation issues not covered by other measures and emerging compliance issues.

An example of a project that has been funded is the Random Sample Parent Checks to verify child care attendance reports submitted by child care services.

Funding has also been used to develop compliance guidance material, to 'nudge' services at risk of non–compliance, and to develop tools to assess providers' understanding of National Law.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is determined on an as needs basis according to program guidelines and ministerial directions.

Recipients

Recipients include contractors and child care service and providers.

Evaluation

Funding is for short–term contracts and is not subject to evaluation.

History of program

This program commenced with changes to general government service reporting from an output to a program outcome basis at the 2009–10 Budget.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – In Home Care

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The In Home Care (IHC) Program provides child care that supports families' workforce participation and child care requirements where other options are not available or appropriate.

The program provides consistency in service delivery and an equitable distribution of places for child care delivered in the family home. The program is targeted at those families that need this care the most, with a focus on quality early childhood education and care provided by qualified educators.

To better support families, the IHC service type is delivered through a network of IHC Support Agencies who assess families' eligibility and advocate for families, particularly those with complex and challenging circumstances, and help them find care that meets their needs. IHC Support Agencies are the primary conduit between families and services. These agencies also ensure the integrity of the care type and national consistency in service offering by ensuring care provided is within scope of the program guidelines.

Policy objective

The IHC Program is designed to support the provision of early childhood education and care in the home for families where other approved early childhood education and care services are not able to meet their needs. The program is targeted towards families working non–standard hours, geographically isolated or those with complex and challenging needs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

IHC services are required to provide subsidised care only for:

- children of individuals eligible for CCS
- families that demonstrate that no other types of approved child care is suitable or available at the times required by the child(ren) and where one or more of the following criteria apply:
  - the parents or carers of the child are working non–standard or variable hours, outside normal child care service hours
  - the parents or carers of the child are geographically isolated from other types of approved child care, including because they reside in a rural or remote location
  - the family has challenging or complex needs.

In Home Care is capped at 3,200 places nationally. One place is 35 hours of care per week, per child.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The amount of funding available under Appropriation Bill 1 is to support administration costs of IHC Support Agencies. Funding for the care of children of eligible families is through the CCS and the ACCS.

The CCS family hourly rate cap for IHC is $33.47[3] per hour. Families may also be eligible for the ACCS, which provides an IHC family rate cap of $40.16 per hour to support vulnerable or disadvantaged families and children.

Recipients

IHC Program funds are paid directly to IHC Support Agencies and covers both administration and travel reimbursement costs for services that assist rural and remote families.

Families eligible for IHC can receive CCS and ACCS. IHC may be used in combination with other types of care, including other child care service types or government funded or community–based services. However, IHC must not be used as a substitute option for other types of care or other government funded programs.

Evaluation

The IHC Program was evaluated as part of the Child Care Package.

History of program

The IHC Program commenced on 2 July 2018.

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[3] Indexed annually

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Early Years Education Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,425	1,800	2,700	3,070	–

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Australian Government is providing funding of $9 million towards the Early Years Education Program replication trial to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children to bridge the gap to school readiness. The program is aimed at children from birth up to three years of age. Children are referred to the program through child protection or family service case workers.

The Early Years Education Model is a multi–disciplinary model that offers high quality, intensive early education and care and wrap around support. This includes infant mental health and family support, in partnership with families and local community organisations and agencies. The model is designed to redress harm and overcome trauma to support children's learning and development.

This measure will replicate the success of the original Early Years Education Program trial across four sites in Queensland and Victoria, including in a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander site. Commonwealth funding will be supplemented by philanthropic and state and territory government support.

Policy objective

The Early Years Education Program aims to lift school readiness and broader education and health outcomes through increased access to high quality childcare for vulnerable and disadvantaged children and their families. The program will prioritise participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families to support efforts to meet Closing the Gap targets for school readiness and increased participation in pre–school.

Together with the work to expand Connected Beginnings and the Early Learning Teaching Trial, the Early Years Education Program aims to lift the quality of early learning and care to ensure children who attend have the best chance of success in the early years and to maintain these gains over time.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The delivery partners, Parkville Institute, will assess the eligibility of children to participate in the replication trial. Children will:

- be aged less than 36 months
- be engaged with family services or child protection services
- have early education as part of their care plan
- have an assessment of two or more risk factors (such as family violence, parental substance abuse or substantiated risk of abuse and neglect).

Participating families also need to meet eligibility criteria for access to the Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) (Child Wellbeing).

Funding available to recipients under the program:

Funding of $9 million has been provided to Parkville Institute via direct tender to support the delivery and evaluation of four replication sites of the Early Years Education Program as part of a time–limited trial.

Recipients

Parkville Institute Ltd.

History of program

The Early Years Education Program Replication Trial is an initiative of the early childhood package under the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan released in 2021.

1.1 Support for the Child Care System – Child Care Services Support – Early Learning Teaching Trial

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 01 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,300	250	300	–	–

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Funding of $1.9 million to 2023–24 has been provided to trial a new early learning teaching model to strengthen literacy and numeracy through explicit instruction, with a focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as they get ready for school. The trial will take place in two trial sites in an urban and a regional setting.

This initiative will support the design, implementation and evaluation of a trial of a new early learning teaching model that strengthens literacy and numeracy learning in early learning centres and undertake an evaluation of the outcomes.

The model will draw on international evidence, which indicates explicit instructional approaches can be more effective for some cohorts to teach specific skills in literacy and numeracy, along with local expertise regarding the benefits of different instructional models. The trial will be designed to complement play–based approaches in line with existing Australian early learning frameworks, which are known to have a significant positive impact on children's early developmental outcomes.

Policy objective

The objective of the Early Learning Teaching Trial is to assist in developing a contemporary Australian research evidence base and generate new data and insights to better understand the impact of explicit instructional approaches in early childhood settings. The trial is expected to benefit up to 200 children and their families, including up to 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families across three locations in urban and regional settings.

Together with work to expand Connected Beginnings and replicate the success of the Early Years Education Program, the Early Learning Teaching Trial aims to lift the quality of early learning and care to ensure children who attend have the best chance of success in the early years and to maintain these gains over time.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The program targets approximately 200 children and their families to participate across three trial sites, including approximately 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Participants must be:

- three years old and going into full time schooling in 2023 and
- from a vulnerable and disadvantaged background and would benefit from participation in the trial.

Funding available to recipients under the program:

Funding of $1.9 million has been provided to the University of Melbourne via direct tender for design, implementation and evaluation of the Early Learning Teaching Trial.

Recipients

The University of Melbourne.

History of program

The Early Learning Teaching Trial is an initiative under the early childhood package of the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan released in 2021.

1.2 Child Care Subsidy

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Child Care Subsidy	9,917,781	10,712,844	11,318,500	11,828,119	12,402,954

Note: From 1 July 2021, the Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) is reported under the Child Care Subsidy following administrative changes to the way ACCS is administered, resulting from the Better Child Care Regulation measure.

1.2 Child Care Subsidy

1.2 Child Care Subsidy

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*

START DATE: 2 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
9,917,781	10,712,844	11,318,500	11,828,119	12,402,954

Funding Type – Personal Benefit

Note: From 1 July 2021, the ACCS is reported under the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) following the administrative changes to improve the way ACCS is administered, resulting from the 2021–22 Budget measure: Commonwealth Deregulation Agenda.

Legacy programs Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate are reported under the CCS.

Brief description

The CCS provides assistance to help meet the cost of child care for parents engaged in work, training, study or other recognised activity and is paid directly to child care service providers to be passed on to individuals as fee reductions.

Policy objective

The CCS is a single, means–tested subsidy designed to ensure that more financial support is targeted to the families who need it most to access child care. The CCS is targeted to support families who rely on subsidised child care to work, train, study or undertake other recognised activity. The CCS provides more targeted support to lower– and middle–income families.

Eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy

Individuals will be eligible for the CCS where the following requirements are met:

- the child is in the primary care of the individual or the individual's partner
- the child is 13 years of age or under and does not yet attend secondary school (an individual may be eligible for a child who does not meet this criteria, such as children with a disability or medical condition in certain circumstances)
- the child meets the immunisation requirements
- the individual, or the individual's partner, meets the residency requirements.

There are several other factors that affect CCS eligibility. For example, the individual must be liable to pay for care provided under a complying written arrangement and the care must be provided by an approved child care provider in Australia and not as part of a compulsory education program such as school.

Most families will make a co–contribution to their child care fees under the CCS.

Determining entitlement to the Child Care Subsidy

The CCS provides more access to subsidised child care to the families who work the most hours, and higher levels of financial support to the families who earn the least. The percentage of subsidy a family is entitled to is based on combined annual family income. The number of hours of subsidised care a family is entitled to is determined by a three–step activity test.

Accordingly, the amount of fortnightly CCS to which a family is entitled is dependent on:

- the family income, which determines the subsidy percentage
- whether the family has two or more children aged five or under using child care
- the amount of work, training, study or other recognised activity undertaken by the parent(s)
- the actual hourly fee charged by the service and the hourly rate cap for the service type being utilised.

Family income

The percentage of subsidy a family is entitled to is based on combined annual family income.

Families earning $70,015 or less (in 2021–22 terms) receive a subsidy of 85 per cent of the actual fee charged, or of the relevant hourly rate cap (whichever is lower). As family income increases the rate of subsidy decreases, reaching zero per cent at $354,305. Families with incomes at or above this threshold have no CCS entitlement.

From 7 March 2022, the subsidy rate available to families with multiple children aged five or under increased by 30 per cent for their second and younger children, up to a maximum of 95 per cent.

Combined Family Income (in 2021–22 terms)	Subsidy per cent of the actual fee charged (up to relevant percentage of the hourly rate cap)
Up to $70,015	85 per cent
More than $70,015 to below $175,015	Decreasing to 50 per cent*
$175,015 to below $254,305	50 per cent
$254,305to below $344,305	Decreasing to 20 per cent*
$344,305 to below $354,305	20 per cent
$354,305 or more	0 per cent

*Subsidy tapers down by one per cent for each $3000 of family income.

On 10 December 2021, the CCS annual cap was removed for all families earning more than $190,015 (2021–22 terms), applying for the entire 2021–22 financial year onwards. The annual cap previously limited the amount of subsidy a family could receive per year to $10,655 per child (2021–22 terms).

Activity test

The number of hours of subsidised care a family is entitled to is determined by a three–step activity test, which more closely aligns the hours of subsidised care with the combined amount of work, training, study or other recognised activity undertaken. Both parents must meet or be exempt from the activity test to be entitled to CCS.

Step	Hours of activity (per fortnight)	Maximum number of hours of subsidy (per fortnight)
1	8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
2	More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
3	More than 48 hours	100 hours

In two–parent families, where both parents meet different steps of the activity test, the parent with the lowest level of activity determines the hours of subsidised care for the child. The hours of care are subsidised at the applicable rate, based on the family's combined annual income.

A broad range of activities meet activity test requirements, including paid work, being self–employed, doing unpaid work in a family business, looking for work, volunteering or studying. There are exemptions to the activity test for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity requirements.

Families earning $70,015 or less who do not meet or are not exempt from the activity test are entitled to 24–hours of subsidised care per fortnight under the Child Care Safety Net. This is provided at the highest rate of subsidy, 85 per cent.

Families who do not meet, or are not exempt from, the activity test are entitled to 36 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight to support their preschool–aged child's attendance at a preschool program in a centre–based day care service (where the child is in the year that is two years before grade one at school). The exemption is available for the preschool–aged child in the family only.

Service type and hourly rate caps

The hourly rate caps place an upper limit on the amount of CCS the Government will provide for care delivered by each type of service. The hourly rate caps are used, in combination with families' CCS percentage, to calculate the amount of subsidy per hour each family is entitled to receive. The hourly rate caps vary across service types to reflect differences in fees currently charged and operating costs.

Where a child care service charges a fee that is less than the hourly rate cap, families receive their applicable percentage of the actual fee charged. Where a service charges a fee that is equal to or above the relevant rate cap, families receive their applicable percentage of the hourly rate cap.

The hourly rate caps for 2021–22[4] are:

Service type	Hourly rate cap (children below school age)	Hourly rate cap (school aged children)
Centre-Based day care	$12.31	$10.77
Outside school hours care	$12.31	$10.77
Family day care		$11.40
In home care (per family)		$33.47

For the purpose of the hourly rate caps, a child is taken to attend school from the first day of scheduled physical attendance and where any of the following apply:

- the child has turned six
- the child attends the year of school before grade one
- the child attends primary or secondary school
- the child is home–schooled as recognised in the state or territory where the child resides, or
- the child would be attending school (the year of school before grade one, primary school or secondary school), except that the child is absent from school, or is on holidays.

A provider may also offer different types of care under the same service approval in a single location. For example, an approved centre–based day care service may provide care to both school–aged and non–school aged children.

Primary school–aged children are predominately supported in accessing early learning education and care in an Outside Schools Hours Care setting.

Indexation

The lower income threshold and the hourly rate caps are indexed annually from 1 July in line with the Consumer Price Index, which takes effect from the first day of the first CCS fortnight in the new financial year. The other income thresholds will increase by the same amount as the lower income threshold.

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[4] Indexed annually

Legislation

The *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* and the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance Administration) Act 1999*, give effect to the legislative elements of the Child Care Package, including the CCS.

The subordinate legislation that give effect to the Child Care Package is the CCS Minister's Rules 2017, the CCS Secretary's Rules 2017, the Family Assistance (Public Interest Certificate Guidelines) (Education) Determination 2018 and the Family Assistance (Immunisation and Vaccination) (Education) Determination 2018.

Legislation to support the Australian Government's response to the COVID 19 pandemic includes the *Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus Act 2020* and the *Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus (Measures No. 2) Act 2020.*

Funding available to recipients under the program

CCS is generally paid directly to approved child care providers to be passed on as a fee reduction to individuals. In limited circumstances CCS may be paid directly to individuals prior to end of financial year reconciliation.

Throughout the year all families have five per cent of their weekly entitlement to CCS withheld as a way to reduce the likelihood of families incurring a debt at the end of a financial year when reconciliation occurs. Families are able to vary the default withholding percentage online, either a decrease or increase, to suit their particular circumstances.

At the end of the financial year, CCS payments are reconciled when actual annual adjusted taxable income is known (generally after parents have lodged their tax return). Where actual adjusted taxable income is higher than estimated, families may have been overpaid and incur a debt. In the case where families receive more subsidy than they were entitled to, any withheld amount is used to offset the overpayment. Where families receive the correct amount of subsidy or less than they were entitled to, the amount withheld, and any additional amount is paid directly to them as a lump sum.

Recipients

Families who are eligible for and entitled to the CCS, with children attending a CCS–approved child care service.

Evaluation

The CCS was evaluated as part of the Child Care Package evaluation. The evaluation found that the introduction of CCS in 2018 reduced the net cost of child care for 62.2 per cent of families using child care, with the gains strongest for low income families.

An internal evaluation of the changes announced in the 2021–22 Budget relating to the additional subsidy for families with multiple children aged five and under will be conducted post–implementation.

History of program

The CCS was developed as part of the new Child Care Package in response to the 2014 Productivity Commission Inquiry into Childcare and Early Childhood Learning. Key recommendations from the Inquiry included the development of a single means and activity tested payment that is better targeted to low– and middle–income families and paid directly to services.

The 2017–18 Budget included changes to the CCS resulting from the Parliamentary debate on the legislation. The amendment passed by the Australian Parliament removed entitlement to the CCS for families with combined annual income of $353,680 and above (in 2020–21 terms).

Further changes to the CCS were announced in the 2021–22 Budget. These changes included:

- the removal of CCS annual cap on 10 December 2021, applying for the entire 2021–22 financial year onwards, and
- an increased subsidy rate of 30 percentage points for families with multiple children aged five or under for their second and younger children, up to a maximum of 95 per cent of fees.

1.2 Child Care Subsidy – Additional Child Care Subsidy

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999 – s233* **Additional Child Care Subsidy**

START DATE: 2 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
–	–	–	–	–

Note: From July 2021, the ACCS is reported under program 1.2: Child Care Subsidy (CCS) (instead of Program 1.1: Support for the Child Care System) following the administrative changes to improve the way ACCS is administered, resulting from the 2021–22 Budget measure: Commonwealth's Deregulation Agenda.

Funding Type – Personal benefits – Indirect

Brief description

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) is part of the Child Care Safety Net and provides additional support to vulnerable or disadvantaged families with targeted assistance to families and children facing barriers in accessing affordable child care.

The assistance provided by the ACCS is higher when compared to entitlements that families receive under the CCS.

Policy objective

As part of the Child Care Safety Net, the ACCS ensures that disadvantaged and vulnerable children most in need are supported to access high quality child care and early learning, and their parents are supported to enter or remain in the workforce where possible.

Eligibility for program and process for application

From July 2021, the ACCS is paid as the full subsidy and no longer a top up payment to the CCS. An individual must first be eligible for CCS in order to gain access to the ACCS. Separate eligibility criteria apply to the different elements.

The ACCS has four elements:

1. Additional Child Care Subsidy (Child Wellbeing)

- The ACCS (child wellbeing) element provides ACCS fee assistance to children 'at risk' of serious abuse or neglect. The subsidy targets families before they reach crisis point (and before they are drawn into the statutory system), as well as those children already known to child protection authorities.
- Families are eligible for up to 100 hours of assistance a fortnight and do not need to meet the CCS activity test.
- Assistance of 100 per cent of the actual fee charged, up to 120 per cent of the relevant CCS hourly rate cap, is provided irrespective of income.
- There is no limit on the total number of weeks of ACCS 'at risk' that can be accessed where a child remains at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Services can approve the first six weeks of assistance and must make a referral to an appropriate state/territory body.
- Ongoing assistance of up to 13–week blocks is assessed and approved by Services Australia.
- The family of a child assessed as 'at risk' for a period of six months or more remains exempt from the activity test for a further period of 18 months, after 'at risk' assistance ceases.
- The definition of 'at risk' provides coverage to children who have been abused or neglected and may continue to suffer harm as a result and is prescribed in a Minister's Rule.

2. Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship)

- The temporary financial hardship element provides short term support to help families adjust to a change in circumstances, ensure continuity of care and support the child's physical safety, health and wellbeing.
- Families are eligible for up to 100 hours of assistance per fortnight and do not need to meet the CCS activity test.
- Assistance is 100 per cent of the actual fee charged, up to 120 per cent of the relevant CCS hourly rate cap.
- Assistance of up to 13 weeks per event, with applications assessed by Services Australia.
- Circumstances determining eligibility are prescribed in a Minister's Rule.

3. Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent)

- Grandparent principal carers who receive an income support payment are eligible for up to 100 hours of assistance per fortnight and do not need to meet the CCS activity test.
- Assistance is 100 per cent of the actual fee charged, up to 120 per cent of the hourly rate cap rate.
- Grandparent principal carers are defined as those who provide at least 65 per cent of ongoing daily care for their grandchild and have the substantial autonomy for the day–to day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development.

4. Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work)

- The transition–to–work element provides support to families who are transitioning to work from income support by engaging in work, study or training activities.
- Assistance is 95 per cent of the actual fee charged, up to 95 per cent of the relevant hourly rate cap.
- Families are subject to the CCS activity test to determine the hours of assistance per fortnight to which they are entitled.
- To be eligible, recipients need to have a current employment pathway or participation plan in effect.
- Study activities are subject to a satisfactory progress requirement.
- The transition–to–work element allows for continuation of the higher subsidy for up to 12 weeks where recipients are employed and come off income support, as an incentive for families to move into jobs.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding available to individual recipients is by percentage and hours as outlined in each ACCS category as above.

Recipients

Recipients of ACCS funding must meet the criteria outlined to be eligible.

Evaluation

The ACCS was evaluated as part of the Child Care Package evaluation. ████████████████
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History of program

The ACCS was developed as part of the new Child Care Package in response to the 2014 Productivity Commission Inquiry into Childcare and Early Childhood Learning to enable access to ECEC for children with additional needs.

In response to feedback received from the ECEC sector, amendments to ACCS (child wellbeing) provisions were introduced in February 2020 and received Royal Assent on 7 September 2020. Effective from 1 July 2021, the amendments changed ACCS (child wellbeing) to improve access to child care for vulnerable and disadvantaged families, while better reflecting the policy intent in several areas:

- extending the backdating of ACCS (child wellbeing) certificates and determinations from 28 days to up to 13 weeks in exceptional circumstances
- extending the length of ACCS (child wellbeing) determinations from 13 weeks to up to 52 weeks for children on a long–term protection order, including those in foster care
- clarifying that provider eligible enrolments (with a 13–week limit) for ACCS (child wellbeing) includes foster children, enabling time for carers to claim CCS.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support (Early Childhood and Child Care)

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 budget:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
COPEs					
Universal Access to Pre–School – Research Component	2,679	1,000	–	–	–
Preschools Data Framework	2,770	8,903	6,591	4,581	4,691
Australian Early Development Census	12,315	4,496	12,508	10,559	6,018
Total 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support (ECCC)	17,764	14,399	19,099	15,140	10,709
National Partnerships					
Universal Access[1]	317,221	–	–	–	–
Preschool Reform Agreement[1]	166,701	454,590	458,695	462,354	326,589
Total 1.5 National Partnerships (ECCC)	483,922	454,590	458,695	462,354	326,589

[1] Replaced by the new Preschool Reform Agreement commencing 2022. Note in 2021–22: amount for Implementation Funding is included.

Note: Total figures for 1.5, including Schools:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Total 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support (ECCC & Schools)	190,847	240,373	213,170	131,455	86,360
National Partnerships Total 1.5 Early Learning and School Support (ECCC & Schools)	545,357	516,025	520,130	523,789	388,024

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Universal Access to Preschool – Research Component

APPROPRIATION: Annual Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2008

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,679	1,000	–	–	–

Funding Type – Procurement (please note that these figures may change should the National Collection be extended)

Brief description

National Partnership on Universal Access arrangements are intended to ensure that every child has access to a quality preschool education for 600 hours (15 hours a week) in the year before they start school.

Each National Partnership on Universal Access has allocated Commonwealth–Own Purpose Expense (COPE) funding for research and data projects to support the establishment and maintenance of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (National Collection). The COPE funding is retained in the Department. COPE funding under the first two National Partnerships supported projects such as improving data quality, research, and evaluation. The Universal Access National Partnership Agreement (2018–2021) concluded at the end of 2021. Ongoing funding for preschool was announced in the 2021–22 Budget, with the first four years to be delivered through a $2 billion Preschool Reform Agreement. Details of the Preschool Reform Agreement are at 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Preschool Reform Agreement. The remaining COPE funds for this program will be used to support implementation of new reporting and assessment measures under the Preschool Reform Agreement including maintaining the National Collection.

Policy objective

To provide universal access to quality early childhood education programs for all children enrolled in the year before full–time school for 600 hours per year, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher who meets NQF requirements and with a focus on participation by vulnerable and disadvantaged children, regardless of the setting in which programs are delivered.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Administered funding is allocated through a selection process through existing Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), Deeds of Standing Order, Requests for Tender and Requests for Quote with funding delivered via subsequent contracts/MOUs and funding agreements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided under contract, this is not a grant program.

Recipients

Recipients are mainly suppliers such as consultants, and other Commonwealth related entities, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Evaluation

A review of Universal Access National Partnership arrangements was factored into the funding extension for 2020 and was completed by the Nous Group. This report has formed the basis for the new Preschool Reform Agreement (see 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Preschool Reform Agreement).

History of program

Prior to the first National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education, $10 million was provided in 2007–08 to the states and territories for targeted projects to improve access to, and the quality of, preschool programs for Indigenous children and children living in low socio–economic communities.

On 29 November 2008, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education and set aside COPE funding for research, evaluation, and data improvement.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Preschool Data Framework

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,770	8,903	6,591	4,581	4,691

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Funding has been allocated for ongoing funding for preschool with the first four years to be delivered through a $2 billion funding agreement aimed at strengthening delivery of preschool and better preparing children to start school. This agreement will succeed the current Universal Access National Partnership agreement.

Each agreement has allocated Commonwealth–Own Purpose Expense (COPE) funding for research and data projects to support the establishment and maintenance of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (National Collection). COPE funding is retained by the Department. This funding will be used to support the implementation of the reform agenda, including improve preschool data collection and develop a new preschool performance framework.

Policy Objective

To develop a new preschool performance framework and improve preschool data collection to ensure that reforms, including new participations targets, can be implemented successfully.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Administered funding is allocated through a selection process through existing Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), Deeds of Standing Order, Requests for Tender and Requests for Quote with funding delivered via subsequent contracts/MOUs and funding agreements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided under contract, this is not a grant program.

Recipients

Recipients are mainly suppliers such as consultants, and other Commonwealth related entities, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Evaluation

To assess the process of the reform agenda, a mid–point review will be undertaken in 2024–25.

History of program

The history of the Universal Access National Partnership Agreement and the new Preschool Reform Agreement is described at 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Universal Access to Early Childhood Education and 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Preschool Reform Agreement.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Australian Early Development Census

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2009

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
12,315	4,496	12,508	10,559	6,018

Funding Type – Grant and procurement

Brief description

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a population–based measure of how children have developed by the time they start their first year of full–time school across five key areas of early childhood development, referred to as domains.

The five domains measured by the AEDC are:

- physical health and wellbeing – whether a child is healthy, independent, ready for school each day
- social competence – whether a child is self–confident, gets along with others and shares, how a child plays
- emotional maturity – whether a child is able to concentrate, help others, is patient, not aggressive or angry
- language and cognitive skills (school based) – whether a child is interested in reading and writing, can count and recognise numbers and shapes
- communication skills and general knowledge – whether a child can tell a story, communicate with adults and children, articulate themselves.

The AEDC has been collected every three years since 2009. The fifth national collection was completed between May and July 2021 and results were released on 1 April 2022.

Policy objective

The AEDC aims to help improve early childhood development outcomes of all Australian children by providing communities, governments, and policy makers with the information they need to plan and evaluate their efforts in achieving outcomes for children. The AEDC provides evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Administered funding is used to implement the AEDC program with allocations to state and territory governments via funding agreements and to contractors via the Whole of Government panel arrangement tender process.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided in line with program guidelines and can take the form of grants and procurements under contract.

Recipients

The Australian Government has contracts with:

- each state and territory education department
- the Telethon Kids Institute
- the Social Research Centre.

Evaluation

The program area and the appropriate funding recipient regularly review the AEDC Instrument, data collection products and the data collection process. A comprehensive technical review is undertaken every three years after the national collection of data takes place.

History of program

For the first national collection in 2009, the Department engaged the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) and the Telethon Kids Institute (TKI), in direct source arrangements to undertake key AEDC data cycle implementation functions. These organisations have pre–eminent expertise in child health research and the scientific aspects of the AEDC as they worked together to pilot the AEDC from 2004 to 2008 in over 60 communities in Australia.

The AEDC has been undertaken nationally every three years since 2009, with the fifth collection being conducted in 2021. For the 2021 AEDC Cycle, the Department finalised arrangements with state and territory education departments for continuation of funding for states and territories to implement the data collection and related engagement activities in their jurisdiction. The funding distribution remained along the same lines that occurred in the 2015 and 2018 cycles.

The Telethon Kids Institute, selected through a whole of government panel arrangement open tender process, was contracted to provide jurisdictional support services, develop AEDC engagement resources and provide strategic support to the Australian Government. The Social Research Centre was also selected through a Whole of Government panel arrangement tender process, to deliver the data collection, data management services and manage the AEDC website.

The Department, with CCCH and TKI, executes licensing arrangements for the each AEDC cycle with McMaster University, Canada and the data collection has ethics approval from the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Universal Access to Early Childhood Education

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009*

START DATE: 1 July 2008

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 budget:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
317,221	–	–	–	–

Note – as a National Partnership, this appropriation sits with Treasury.

Funding Type – National Partnership through the Department of Treasury

Brief description

Under the Federation, preschool is the responsibility of state and territory governments. Since 2008, the Australian Government has made $4.6 billion available in funding support to states and territories deliver 15 hours per week (600 hours per year) of preschool to children in the year before full time school. This funding has been provided through a series of national partnership agreements on universal access to early childhood education.

Universal access aims to ensure that all children can participate in a quality preschool program in the year before school for 15 hours a week, or 600 hours per year, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in line with the Education and Child Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the NQF. The National Partnership arrangements are designed to support participation by all children, but also include a particular focus on increasing participation by vulnerable and disadvantaged and Indigenous children.

The Universal Access National Partnership Agreement (2018–2021) will conclude on 30 June 2022. Ongoing funding for preschool was announced in the 2021–22 Budget, with the first four years to be delivered through a $2 billion Preschool Reform Agreement. Details of the Preschool Reform Agreement are at 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Preschool Reform Agreement.

Policy objective

Both the Universal Access National Partnership Agreement and the Preschool Reform Agreement aim to strengthen preschool delivery by supporting children in the year before full time school access a quality preschool program for 15 hours per week (600 hours per year). Through the Preschool Reform Agreement, the Commonwealth and States and Territories have agreed to areform agenda designed to improve participation and maximise the benefits of preschool for children in year before full time school.

Eligibility for program and process for application

As state and territory governments are responsible for the provision of preschool education in Australia the program has been implemented through a series of National Partnership Agreements and the Preschool Reform Agreement. The funding under the Preschool Reform Agreement is subject to states and territories implementing an agreed reform agenda. States are also to provide annual bilateral Implementation Plans that set out each state's strategy for providing universal access.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Recipients are states and territories funded in line with the conditions set out in the National Partnership.

Recipients

Funding has been appropriated to the Treasury and Specific Purpose Payments and payments are made from the Treasury to state and territory governments.

Evaluation

In 2020 an independent review of Universal Access National Partnership arrangements was undertaken. This was published on the Council of Australian Governments Education Council website on 18 June 2020. It is now available on the Department's website. This report has formed the basis for the new Preschool Reform Agreement (see 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Preschool Reform Agreement).

History of program

Agreement	Total funding for S/T	Per year funding	
		YEAR	$m
National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (2008–2013)	$955 million	2009	$113.6
		2010	$97.0
		2011	$297.0
		2012	$446.9
National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NPA UAECE) (2013–2014)	$655.6 million	2013	$421.7
		2014	$234.9
NPA UAECE (2015)	$404.5 million	2015	$404.5
NP UAECE (2016–2017)	$840 million	2016	$415.1
		2017	$425.0
NP UAECE (2018–2020)	$1,317.5 million	2018	$427.9
		2019	$440.1
		2020	$449.5
Extension for 2021	*$453.2 million*	*2021*	*$453.2*
TOTAL (incl. 2021)	**$4,625.8**		

Note: Funding provided to states and territories is via a National Partnership funded through a Special Appropriation (*Federal Financial Relations Act 2009*), while funding used for the National Data Collection is an Annual Appropriation.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Preschool Reform Agreement

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009*

START DATE: 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
166,701	454,590	458,695	462,354	326,589

Note: as a National Partnership, this appropriation sits with Treasury.

Funding Type – National Partnership through the Department of Treasury

Brief description

Ongoing funding for preschool was announced in the 2021–22 Budget, with the first four years to be delivered through a $2 billion Preschool Reform Agreement that runs from 2022 to 2025. This builds on the Universal Access National Partnership Agreement – Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (see details at 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – Universal Access to Early Childhood Education).

All states and territories have signed onto the Preschool Reform Agreement, the signed agreement has been published on the Federal Financial Relations website.

The Preschool Reform Agreement provides funding to states and territories to support the delivery of 15 hours of preschool a week (600 hours a year) for all children in the year before they start school.

Under the agreement the Commonwealth and states and territories have agreed to pursue a reform agenda that aims to lift preschool enrolments and attendance and maximise the benefits of preschool.

From 2022–23, states and territories must past on the Commonwealth's per–child contribution to benefit children in the setting in which they attend.

From 2024, the Commonwealth will work with state and territory governments to establish new bilateral preschool attendance targets. The Commonwealth will also work with states and territories to develop, trial, and implement a preschool outcomes measure.

Policy objective

Building on the Universal Access National Partnership Agreement, the Preschool Reform Agreement aims to strengthen preschool delivery by supporting children in the year before full time school access a quality preschool program for 15 hours per week (600 hours per year). Through the Preschool Reform Agreement, is designed to improve participation and maximise the benefits of preschool for children in year before full time school.

Eligibility for program and process for application

As state and territory governments are responsible for the provision of preschool education in Australia the program has been implemented through a series of National Partnership Agreements and the Preschool Reform Agreement. The funding under the Preschool Reform Agreement is subject to states and territories implementing an agreed reform agenda. States are also to provide annual bilateral Implementation Plans that set out each state's strategy for providing universal access. Implementation Plans are available on the Federal Financial Relations website.

Funding available to recipients under the program:

Recipients are states and territories funded in line with the conditions set out in the National Partnership.

Recipients

Funding has been appropriated to the Treasury and Specific Purpose Payments and payments are made from the Treasury to state and territory governments.

Evaluation

To assess the progress of the reform agenda, a mid–point review will be undertaken in 2024–25.

OUTCOME 1: SCHOOLS AND YOUTH
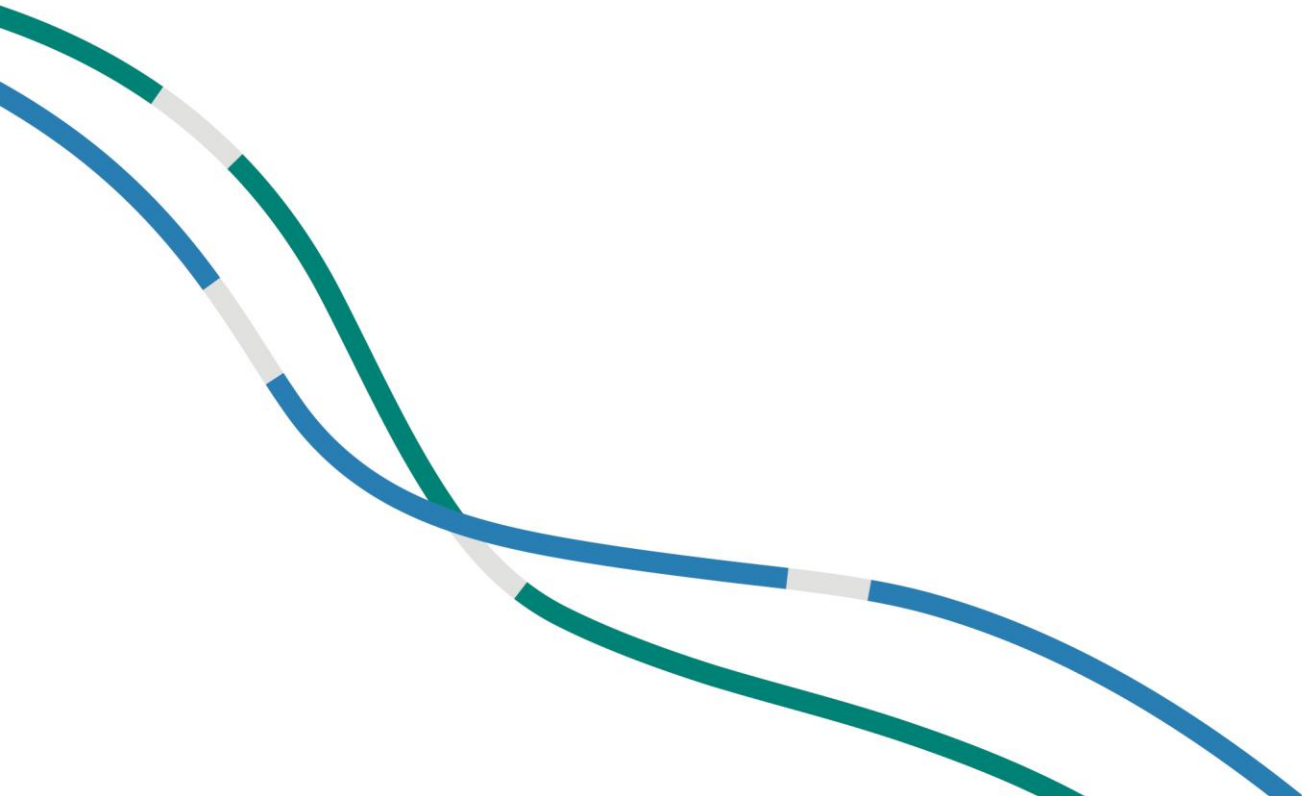
Outcome 1 – Schools and Youth

Improved early learning, schooling, student educational outcomes and transitions to and from school through access to quality child care, support, parent engagement, quality teaching and learning environments.

Contents

1.3 Government Schools National Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Australian Education Act 2013					
Australian Education Act 2013 – Government Schools SPP	9,711,774	10,272,131	10,798,362	11,212,293	11,647,746
Additional Support for Northern Territory Schools	14,242	12,263	10,035	7,536	4,745
Total 1.3 Government Schools National Support	**9,726,016**	**10,284,394**	**10,808,397**	**11,219,829**	**11,652,491**

1.3 Government Schools National Support – Recurrent Funding

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation (*Australian Education Act 2013*)

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
9,711,774	10,272,131	10,798,362	11,212,293	11,647,746

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief description

Funding for government schools is calculated according to a Schooling Resource Standard comprising a base amount for every primary and secondary school student, plus six additional loadings that provide extra funding for disadvantaged schools and students. The arrangements for the Australian Government's funding for government schools is contained within the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013.*

Policy objective

To support the operating costs of government primary and secondary schools.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All government primary and secondary schools are eligible for funding, with school characteristics based on data provided by state and territory governments.

Funding available to recipients under the program

There is no cap on the funds available to individual recipients under the program. Funds are determined according to the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*.

Recipients

State and territory governments.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation carried out.

All funding received through this stream must be acquitted by the approved authority's independent qualified accountant or auditor confirming that funds have been spent, or committed to be spent, in line with the requirements of the *Australian Education Act 2013 and the Australian Education Regulation 2013.*

History of program

During 2009–2013, funding for government schools was covered by the National Education Agreement (NEA) and National Schools Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs) in respect of government schools and payments were administered by the Commonwealth Treasury.

The *Australian Education Act 2013* came into effect on 1 January 2014 and outlines the framework for Commonwealth funding to be provided to all government and non-government schools and sets out how the Australian Government will work with states and territories in respect of government schools.

The *Australian Education Act 2013* was amended on 23 June 2017 to reflect the Quality Schools reform package, with new funding arrangements for government schools effective from 1 January 2018.

1.3 Government Schools National Support – Additional Support for Northern Territory Schools

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 2

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2027

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,242	12,263	10,035	7,536	4,745

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

An additional $78.5 million in transition support for Northern Territory government schools will be provided from 2018–2027 to support school education in accordance with the bilateral agreement between the Australian Government and Northern Territory. The additional funding is to support students in the Northern Territory, who face greater challenges in comparison to other states and territories, to achieve their best.

Policy objective

This funding is in addition to the Northern Territory's recurrent funding, to support the implementation of evidence-based reforms in schools to improve student outcomes. This funding will ensure a smooth transition to the new recurrent funding levels by 2027.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Australian Education Regulation 2013, Prescribed circumstances funding – Schedule 1, Part 1.

Funding available to recipients under the program

All additional funding will be provided to the Northern Territory Government to determine distribution to individual government schools.

Recipients

Northern Territory government schools.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been carried out.

All funding received through this stream must be acquitted by the Northern Territory Government confirming that funds have been spent, or committed to be spent, in line with the requirements of the *Australian Education Act 2013 and the Australian Education Regulation 2013.*

History of program

On 5 December 2018, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory signed the National School Reform Agreement, and the Northern Territory Minister for Education signed the Bilateral Reform Agreement. The agreements cover the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2023.

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Australian Education Act 2013					
National Education Reform Agreement – Non-Government	14,967,663	15,779,560	16,567,852	17,144,726	17,668,632
Capital Grants – Non-Government	180,253	193,262	196,317	205,371	215,033
Special Circumstances – Short Term Emergency Assistance	-	-	-	-	-
ACT Adjustment Assistance	1,676	491	-	-	-
Choice and Affordability Fund	107,682	110,912	114,240	117,667	121,197
Non-Government Representative Bodies					
Associations of Independent Schools	19,503	17,851	5,100	-	-
Catholic Education Commissions	25,510	24,162	6,904	-	-
Total Non-Government Representative Bodies	45,013	42,013	12,004	-	-
Total 1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support	**15,302,287**	**16,126,238**	**16,890,413**	**17,467,764**	**18,004,862**

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support – Recurrent Funding

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation (*Australian Education Act 2013*)

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
14,967,663	15,779,560	16,567,852	17,144,726	17,668,632

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief description

Funding for non-government schools is being calculated according to a Schooling Resource Standard, comprising a base amount for every primary and secondary school student, plus six additional loadings that provide extra funding for disadvantaged schools and students. The base per-student amount is discounted by the capacity of their school community to contribute towards the operating costs of the school. The arrangements for the Australian Government's funding for government schools is contained within the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*.

Policy objective

Funding contributes to the operating costs of non-government schools and systems and supplements funding raised by schools from other sources.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for funding, the Approved Authority of a school must apply online for approval by the Delegate of the Minister via the Manage Organisation link in SchoolsHUB. The applicant must hold registration from the relevant state or territory jurisdiction and satisfy the Commonwealth requirements, which include being a body corporate, not for profit and a demonstration that the key individuals of the Approved Authority are fit and proper persons.

Once approved, the Approved Authority must continue to comply with Commonwealth requirements, which include participating in the annual census of non-government schools and undertaking an annual acquittal of funding.

Funding can be used for a range of recurrent uses which typically include staff salaries and staff development costs, curriculum development and general operating expenses of the school.

Funding available to recipients under the program

There is no cap on the funds available to individual recipients under the program. Funds are determined according to the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*.

Recipients

Approved Authorities of non-government primary and secondary schools.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation carried out.

All funding received through this stream must be acquitted to confirm that funds have been spent, or committed to be spent, in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*.

History of program

Funding for non-government schools from 2009–2013 was provided under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*. The main basis of recurrent funding was the per capita funding rate of the school, as calculated for most schools by the socio-economic score (SES) of the school community and the number of eligible students. There was additional per capita support under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008* for Indigenous students (Indigenous Supplementary Assistance) and in recognition of schools in geographically remote locations (Remoteness Loading).

The *Australian Education Act 2013* came into effect on 1 January 2014 and outlines the framework for Commonwealth funding to be provided to all government and non-government schools and sets out how the Australian Government will work with states and territories in respect of government schools.

The *Australian Education Act 2013* was amended on 27 March 2020 to introduce the Direct Measure of Income policy settings which replaced the SES as the methodology for calculating capacity of a non-government school community to contribute to the cost of schooling. The change to use the Direct Measure of Income is consistent with the recommendations of the National School Resourcing Board's review of the Socio-Economic Status (SES) score.

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support – Capital Grants – Non-Government

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation (*Australian Education Act 2013*)

START DATE: 1 January 2014

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
180,253	193,262	196,317	205,371	215,033

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief description

The Capital Grants Program (CGP) provides funding for non-government school communities to assist non-government primary and secondary schools to improve capital infrastructure where they otherwise may not have access to sufficient capital resources. From 1 January 2014, capital funding is provided under the *Australian Education Act 2013.*

Policy objective

The objectives of the Capital Grants Program are to:

- provide and improve school capital infrastructure, particularly for the most educationally disadvantaged students in the non-government sector
- ensure attention to refurbishment and upgrading of capital infrastructure for existing students in the non-government sector, while making provision for needs arising from new demographic and enrolment trends
- pursue the Commonwealth's other priorities and objectives for schooling.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for a grant, non-government schools must demonstrate a financial need for the proposed project, be in receipt of Recurrent Funding, and meet requirements in relation to the sound administration of the school.

Funding can be used for a wide range of infrastructure projects from the planning to the fit-out stage. Typically, projects funded include school master-planning; classroom and other facility construction or refurbishment; and the upgrading of ancillary support such as IT or electrical services. The CGP is administered by Block Grant Authorities (BGAs). In each state, there is one BGA

for Catholic schools and another for independent schools. The Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory each have a joint BGA representing both Catholic and independent schools.

Non-government schools wishing to apply CGP funding must be a member of the relevant BGA in their state or territory.

Schools apply on a competitive need basis to the BGA. There is generally one project approval round each year. BGAs assess applications from schools and make recommendations for funding to the Department by 30 September of each year.

The departmental delegate reviews the recommended projects. Final approval of recommended projects is made by the Minister's departmental delegate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

There is no cap on the funds available to individual recipients under the CGP. BGAs are however limited by their annual funding allocation.

Recipients

Non-government primary and secondary schools.

Evaluation

BGAs are required to provide to the Department's annual financial accountability about the receipt and expenditure of Australian Government capital funds for a program year.

History of program

Since the 1960s, the Australian Government has played a role in the provision of funding for capital works in non-government schools. In 1964, the Australian Government commenced the provision of capital grants for science laboratories and equipment to both government and non-government schools. Support was extended in 1969 to finance building and associated capital facilities for libraries in secondary schools in both sectors. Since that time, some form of Australian Government capital grants program has operated in the non-government sector.

One of the features of the CGP has been its continuity. The CGP has been a source of capital funding for those non-government schools that require capital infrastructure and facilities but do not have the capacity to fully self-fund. The non-government school sector takes a strong interest in the CGP and regard the program as an essential component of Commonwealth support for their schools.

Prior to 1 January 2014, Capital funding was administered under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008.* From 1 January 2014 it is administered under the *Australian Education Act 2013.*

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support – Adjustment Assistance

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 2

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2027

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,676	491	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Adjustment assistance provides support for non-government schools to transition to the new funding arrangements as set out in the amended *Australian Education Act 2013*.

Policy objective

Adjustment assistance for ACT non-government schools will provide non-government schools in the ACT with financial assistance to support a smooth transition to new funding arrangements.

Eligibility for program and process for application

This funding automatically applies and will be paid in one instalment to approved authorities each year.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Adjustment assistance for ACT non-government schools will provide $31.12 million over 2018–2027 to the Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, and $14.95 million to the approved authorities of independent schools in the ACT.

Recipients

Approved authorities of non-government schools in the ACT will receive adjustment assistance for ACT non-government schools.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation carried out.

All funding received through this stream must be acquitted to confirm that funds have been spent, or committed to be spent, in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Education Act 2013* and the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*.

History of program

This measure was announced in the 2017–18 Budget and 2017–18 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support – Choice and Affordability Fund

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 2

START DATE: 1 July 2020

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
107,682	110,912	114,240	117,667	121,197

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Choice and Affordability Fund ($1.2 billion over 10 years 2020–2029) provides support for the non-government schools sector to support parental choice as well as other government priorities such as assisting schools during the transition to the new capacity to contribute measure.

Policy objective

The Choice and Affordability Fund will supplement Commonwealth recurrent funding to support parental choice as well as other government priorities such as assisting schools in regional and remote areas and in drought affected areas, assisting schools during the transition to the new capacity to contribute measure, enhancing student wellbeing and support initiatives, and lifting outcomes in underperforming schools.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding will be paid to state based Non-Government Representative Bodies (NGRBs) to support Non-Government schools. Arrangements are underpinned by supporting Guidelines and agreements with NGRBs.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Agreements with NGRBs result in an estimated funding distribution of $725.9 million for Catholic school representative bodies and $454.8 million for independent school representative bodies over the 10-year period.

Recipients

Funding is paid to NGRBs to support non-government schools.

Evaluation

The Government will undertake a review of funding arrangements in 2027.

History of program

This measure was announced by the Government in September 2018.

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support –
Non-Government Representative Bodies

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 2

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Association of Independent Schools	19,503	17,851	5,100	-	-
Catholic Education Commissions	25,510	24,162	6,904	-	-
Total Non-Government Representative Bodies	**45,013**	**42,013**	**12,004**		

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Associations of Independent Schools and Catholic Education Commissions in each state and territory have been approved as Non-Government Representative Bodies (NGRBs) under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). The Non-Government Reform Support Fund (the Reform Support Fund) provides funding to approved NGRBs to represent non-government schools and support them in the implementation of national and state policy initiatives.

Policy objective

In 2022, the Minister identified the following priorities for NGRBs:

(a) continuation of the following three national priorities from 2019, 2020 and 2021:
   o improve the quality of information on the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability and the efficiency and integrity of the data collection.
   o transition of NAPLAN to online delivery.
   o improve governance and financial management practices in non-government schools to strengthen financial viability, improve business decision making and build resilience to mitigate unforeseen circumstances.
(b) state based initiatives as agreed in the relevant bilateral agreement.
(c) local priorities were aligned broadly with the Quality Schools agenda (provided NGRBs have funding remaining after meeting their obligations under (a) and (b).
(d) other priorities identified by the Minister from time to time.

The Minister's priorities are subject to change.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Each NGRB must be invited by the Minister (section 89), apply (section 90) and be approved (section 91) as a NGRB under the Act.

Prior to inviting and approving an organisation, the Minister must be satisfied that the organisation represents the interests of the approved authority for the schools and is likely to meet the basic and ongoing requirements of the Act.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The Non-Government Reform Support Fund was announced as part of the Quality Schools package to provide $200.1 million for the fund from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022.

In the 2022–23 Budget, the Reform Support Fund was extended for 12 months to 31 December 2023, providing an additional $40.013 million in funding.

Additionally, in the 2022–23 Budget the Australian Government provided $5 million in 2021–22 as targeted support for non-government schools and school communities impacted by the flood emergencies in New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland (QLD) flood-declared LGAs in March 2022. This funding is being provided under the Non-Government Reform Support Fund (NGRSF) and must be spent or committed to be spent by 30 June 2022 for the purposes of supporting educational outcomes for students.

The total funding amount of $245.2 million over six years (January 2018 – December 2023) includes more than $104.5 million to the Independent sector and more than $140.5 million to the Catholic sector.

Recipients

Association of Independent Schools:

- Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales
- Independent Schools Victoria
- Independent Schools Queensland
- Association of Independent Schools of South Australia
- Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia
- Independent Schools Tasmania
- Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory
- Association of Independent Schools of the Australian Capital Territory.

Catholic Education Commissions:

- Catholic Schools New South Wales
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
- Queensland Catholic Education Commission
- Catholic Education South Australia
- Catholic Education Western Australia
- Catholic Education Tasmania
- Catholic Education Northern Territory
- Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

Evaluation

Each NGRB must submit an annual workplan proposing the projects they intend to undertake each calendar year, an annual report on the previous year's work plan and a strategic plan, which covers the period 2019–2022.

As a requirement of flood support assistance, the NGRBs in NSW and QLD submitted a revised 2022 workplan detailing the assistance to be provided to flood affected schools using the flood support funding.

History of program

The Reform Support Fund replaced the Student First Support Fund, which provided funding to NGRBs from 2014 to 2017.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – School Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
					COPEs
English Language Learning for Indigenous Children	1,084	-	-	-	-
Grants and Awards – Grants in Aid	1,408	1,430	1,452	1,474	1,496
Support for School Students with Autism	6,139	6,237	6,330	6,425	6,522
National Assessment Reforms	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200
National School Resourcing Board	960	979	994	1,012	1,030
Delivering Respect Matters (Fourth Action Plan (2019–22) to reduce violence against women and their children)	1,875	-	-	-	-
Life Education – Being Healthy, Being Active	700	900	1,700	1,700	1,700
Online Teaching and Learning Courses to Support Mathematics	2,825	2,824	-	-	-
National Phonics Check	4,300	-	-	-	-
Rural Inspire Initiative	500	-	-	-	-
High Achieving Teachers Program and Future Leaders Program	15,900	2,250	-	-	-
Respectful Interfaith School Education	1,000	500	-	-	-
Supporting Quality Boarding for Rural and Remote Students	-	19,250	3,500	3,450	1,900
Engaged Classrooms	3,650	2,050	300	-	-
Literacy Support for Tasmanian Students – Government	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
School Education Support	7,500	25,750	33,176	23,062	9,436
Quality Outcomes	32,983	35,965	36,032	36,420	34,651
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	550	550	700	-	-
National Schools Reform*	14,885	20,159	13,584	6,906	-
Australian Education Research Organisation	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Students Support Package	42,717	40,480	38,376	5,450	-
Supporting Australia's teacher workforce	3,113	2,213	2,216	2,229	2,453
Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives	14,794	43,114	41,315	13,789	1,900
Respectful Relations Education	2,000	7,123	196	198	363
Prioritising Mental Health**	-	-	-	-	-
Total 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support	**190,847**	**240,373**	**213,170**	**131,455**	**86,360**
Total 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support (Schools minus ECCC)	**173,083**	**225,974**	**194,071**	**116,315**	**75,651**

Notes:* These National School Reform figures include only National Schools Reform Program, and Nationally Consistent Collection of Data. ███████████████████████████████████

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**Funding for Prioritising Mental Health will be met within existing resources over three years from 2022–23.

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
National Partnerships					
National School Chaplaincy Program	61,435	61,435	61,435	61,435	61,435
Total 1.5 National Partnerships Early Learning and Schools Support	**545,357**	**516,025**	**520,130**	**523,789**	**388,024**
Total 1.5 National Partnerships Schools Support (Schools minus ECCC)	**61,435**	**61,435**	**61,435**	**61,435**	**61,435**

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – English Language Learning for Indigenous Children

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 31 March 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,084	-	-	-	-

Note: Additional funding of $2 million has been allocated from the National Schools Reform Fund over 2019–20 to 2020–21.

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Australian Government has provided $5.9 million from 2017–18 to 2020–21 to develop and trial an educational program tailored to the requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool children for whom English is an additional language or dialect (EAL/D).

Policy objective

The English Language Learning for Indigenous Children (ELLIC) trial aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool children, who are EAL/D, to learn English in a fun and engaging way. ELLIC is underpinned by a learning program and play-based interactive apps, designed in consultation with Indigenous communities and subject matter experts.

Eligibility for program and process for application

ELLIC is expected to be trialled in 20 Indigenous communities with high representation of EAL/D preschool children over the course of the 2021 and 2022 school years. The 'Go Live' phase of the trial is anticipated to commence in 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Participating educators in the trial will be provided with free educator training to support their participation. Program funding includes the provision of tablet devices and ICT to enable participation.

Recipients

Twenty preschools are expected to take part in the trial. Consultation with Indigenous communities, together with state and territory departments of education, is informing the selection of suitable preschool communities to invite for participation in the trial.

Evaluation

The design and development of the ELLIC Trial is being informed by a formative evaluation, conducted by the Australian National University (ANU). ANU conducted an evaluation of the Discovery, Alpha and Beta phases, and relevant findings and recommendations from the evaluation have been incorporated in the development and delivery of the 'Go Live' phase. ANU was contracted to evaluate the Trial due to specific expertise including working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, language acquisition and linguistics, and early childhood learning.

History of program

This program leverages off the success of the Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) program, which provides children in preschool the opportunity to gain experience in learning languages other than English on tablet devices.

PwC's Indigenous Consulting (PIC) was contracted in June 2018 under the Indigenous Procurement Policy via limited tender to project manage the ELLIC Trial from 2018 to 2021. The Department and PIC mutually agreed to cease the contract through a Deed of Settlement and Release on 12 September 2019. PIC delivered a concept app and off-app resources that were developed in consultation with stakeholders. These have informed the development of the next phase of the project.

The then-Minister agreed to a new phase of the trial with revised delivery arrangements. The new provider, Education Services Australia (ESA), signed a contract with the Department on 23 December 2019 to design, develop, implement and manage all aspects of the ELLIC trial.

The ELLIC Trial is currently in the 'Go Live' Phase, however external-facing activities have been paused, pending matters related to the company subcontracted by ESA to develop apps for the English Language Learning Australia (ELLA) and ELLIC projects.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Grants and Awards Program – Grants in Aid

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: Established in 1972

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,408	1,430	1,452	1,474	1,496

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Grants and Awards Program contributes to the 2019 Mparntwe (Alice Springs) Education Declaration. This Declaration outlines goals for Australian education, including that Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence, and that all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.

The Grants and Awards Program also supports the National School Reform Agreement objective that Australian schooling provides a high quality and equitable education for all students.

Nationally representative organisations

Grants and Awards Program – Grants in Aid (Grants in Aid) provides funding to national organisations to provide advice, information and research to inform the development of education policies and activities in line with Government priorities for education.

Grants in Aid funding is currently provided to four peak parent organisations – the Australian Parents Council (APC), Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO), Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA) and the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) and three peak principal organisations – the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), the Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA) and the Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA).

These organisations provide advice to government from the perspectives of principals and parents on issues including parental engagement, school environment, teaching, and school leadership. CSPA has also undertaken cross-sectoral research on effective parent engagement in primary and secondary schools and developed a series of toolkits and video case studies for families and schools.

Other Projects as determined by the Minister

Grants in Aid funding can be provided to key projects on an ad-hoc basis as determined by the Minister for Education.

Policy objective

The objective of Grants in Aid is to improve educational outcomes for all Australian students through the provision of advice, information, stakeholder views, research and services to inform Australian Government education policy.

Projects funded under Grants in Aid must meet at least one of the following areas of focus:

- research projects on education and schooling to inform Government education policy
- dissemination and promotion of information on Government research, policies, activities and programs to stakeholders of the organisation
- gathering the views of relevant community or industry sectors on education or schooling issues and representing those views to the Government
- developing websites and other communication activities on behalf of the Government, through the use of online communication services
- collaborating and cooperating with state and territory education authorities as well as other key stakeholder bodies to develop guidance or advice for national education initiatives that benefit the nation of Australia.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Organisations eligible for funding must be a:

- national education research body or
- nationally representative organisation

and meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:

- demonstrated capability and/or expertise in providing research into education and schooling
- demonstrated capability and/or expertise in gathering and representing the views of relevant community or industry sectors on education and schooling.

Grants in Aid funding is provided via a procurement process. All Australian Government procurement is conducted by open tender or limited tender.

Funding available to recipients under the program

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Grants in Aid Budget	**$1,408,000**	**$1,430,000**	**$1,452,000**	**$1,474,000**	**$1,496,000**
Education Ministers Meeting Secretariat[1]	$591,000	$591,000	$591,000	$591,000	$591,000
Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO)[2]	$265,000	$0	$0	$0	$0
Australian Parents Council (APC)[2]	$172,000	$0	$0	$0	$0
Catholic School Parents Australia[2]	$102,529	$0	$0	$0	$0
The Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)[3]	$50,000	$50,000	$0	$0	$0
Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA)[3]	$97,369	$48,685	$0	$0	$0
Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA)[3]	$76,627	$38,314	$0	$0	$0
Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA)[3]	$53,475	$26,738	$0	$0	$0
Total committed	**$1,408,000**	**$754,737**	**$591,000**	**$591,000**	**$591,000**
Total uncommitted	**$0**	**$675,263**	**$861,000**	**$883,000**	**$905,000**

1. Funding for Education Ministers Meeting Secretariat is quarantined for 2021–22 onwards and is subject to ministerial decision.
2. As at 9 May 2022, the Minister of Education will receive a briefing on funding arrangements for 2022–23 (noting that these contracts do not end until November 2022).
3. As at 9 May 2022, the former Minister of Education approved 6 months of funding in 2022–23. The Minister of Education will receive a briefing on funding arrangements for the remainder of 2022–23.

Recipients/projects funded

Education Ministers Meeting

Education Ministers Meeting National Projects

The Education Ministers Meeting National Projects includes the National Project Fund (NPF) and the National Education and Care Services (NECS) Ombudsman; NECS Privacy and Freedom of Information Commissioners.

The NPF supports EMM/Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) emerging priorities during the year, and in 2021–22 included the NAPLAN Online 2021 Independent Assurer, a National Early Childhood Workforce Strategy and support for the National Day of Action Against Bullying.

The NECS Commissioners provide ombudsman, privacy and freedom of information oversight of the education and care services regulation and quality assurance system. The office was originally established by Education Ministers in 2011.

Parent Organisations

Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO)

The ACSSO is the peak national organisation representing the interests of the parents, families and school communities of more than two million children attending government schools throughout Australia.

Australian Parents Council (APC)

The APC is the national federation of organisations representing parents of students attending non-government schools.

Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA)

The CSPA is the peak national organisation representing the interests of parents of students attending Catholic schools.

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)

The ICPA is a national peak parent organisation representing over 2,500 member families. The ICPA represents the interests of families and advocates for equitable access to education (from early childhood through to tertiary education) for those living in regional, rural and remote areas.

Principal Associations

Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA)

APPA is the national professional association for primary school principals in Australia. APPA represents affiliated state and territory government, Catholic and independent primary schools across the nation with over 7,000 members. APPA aims to contribute, lead and influence the primary school educational agenda through constructive and direct involvement with the governments across Australia.

Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA)

ASPA represents principals, deputy principals and assistant principals from public secondary schools across Australia. ASPA aims to encourage members to work together to achieve excellence in principalship for the benefit of young Australians by promoting quality teaching and learning, enhancing confidence in Australian schools, school leaders and principals, and meeting the professional needs of members.

Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA)

ASEPA is the national organisation that represents approximately 1,000 of Australia's state and territory Special Education leaders, across all sectors of schooling including early intervention, primary, secondary and special settings. ASEPA leads teaching and learning for those students who have special educational needs and disabilities.

Other Projects

Teacher Preparation and Workforce Study – Australian Catholic University

This research will provide new evidence on the quality of Australian initial teacher education (ITE) programs and the professional competence of graduate teachers, through longitudinal analysis of linked ITE and teacher workforce datasets.

Phase Three: Re-energising Parent Engagement in Australian Primary and Secondary Schools project – Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA)

This project will develop parent and teacher professional development resources to support parent engagement.

Evaluation

The Grants and Awards Program – Grants in Aid was last evaluated in 1998. The Review examined whether funding under the program was directed to organisations whose activities most closely targeted the objectives of the program and whether the funding provided to these organisations was adequate to allow them to engage effectively in activities that closely target the objectives of the program. The Review, undertaken by KPMG Consulting, found that funding was being directed towards appropriate organisations and that the current recipients were considered to offer independent and national parent representation and research services.

There are no new evaluations of this program pending.

History of program

The Australian Government (through the former Council of Australian Governments) has had various arrangements in place for Ministerial Councils since 1972. Its form has changed over a number of years. Contributions to the Council are ongoing.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Support for School Students with Autism

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: April 2008

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
6,139	6,237	6,330	6,425	6,522

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Positive Partnerships program is the education element of the Australian Government's *Helping Children with Autism* initiative, announced in the 2007–08 Budget. It aims to build partnerships between schools and parents and carers to improve educational outcomes of school students with autism.

The program is delivered by Autism Spectrum Australia (ASPECT) and provides:

- professional development for teachers, principals and other school staff to build their understanding, skills and expertise in working with children with autism spectrum disorder
- workshops and information sessions for parents and carers of school-age children with autism, to assist them to work with their child's teachers, school leaders and other staff to improve their child's educational outcomes
- a website providing online learning modules, webinars and other resources, including a range of resources for educational staff, parents and carers in different languages and for culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Policy objective

To build partnerships between schools and parents and carers to improve the educational outcomes of students with autism.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Positive Partnerships is available to staff of all government and non-government, primary and secondary schools across Australia and the parents and carers of school-age children.

Applicants can register via the Positive Partnerships website.

Recipients

During Phase 3 of the program, more than 46,000 teachers, school staff, parents and carers participated in face-to-face or online training.

The bulk of Positive Partnerships participants are families, teachers and school staff of children with autism who are in mainstream schools. About half of the participants are from regional and remote areas.

The very high uptake has been driven by teacher demand for the online training which can be accessed from anywhere and at any time, and which is free.

Phase 4 has the following targets:

- professional learning and follow up networking and support, face to face and online, for a minimum of 7,650 teachers, school leaders and other school staff annually across Australia
- workshops, information sessions and online resources for a minimum of 2,400 parents and carers annually across Australia.

In 2021, the total number of participants for Phase 4, which began on 1 April, was 22,865, more than double the annual target of 10,050.

Evaluations

Each phase of Positive Partnerships has been informed by an internal iterative evaluation, with the aim of continuous improvement during the phase, with an external evaluation towards the end of the phase.

History of program

The Positive Partnerships program was introduced in 2008, in response to the increasing prevalence of children with autism, to provide targeted support for these children, their parents, carers, teachers and other professionals.

A variation to the Phase 4 contract executed on 12 November 2021, extended the term of the agreement to 31 December 2024.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Assessment Reforms – Online National Assessment Platforms

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: November 2014

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Australian Government is working closely with states and territories to transition the National Assessment Program (NAP) online, including the NAP – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) to online delivery. The initial transition phase for NAPLAN online was to be over four years, from 2018 to 2021. NAPLAN assessments were available online on an opt-in basis for schools that were ready in 2018, with the original aim to have all schools online in 2021. Over 50 per cent of students participated online in 2019.

On 20 March 2020 Education Council agreed to cancel NAPLAN 2020 due to the disruptions and concern for student wellbeing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the decision was made by the Education Council on 12 June 2020 to defer the full transition to online to 2022. Nearly 70 per cent of students participated online in 2021.

Funding of $24.7 million has been provided for the initial development of a platform for online national assessments. The National Assessment Reform measure will provide $2.2 million in 2022–23 to support annual platform maintenance costs and related activities. States and territories will also contribute towards the ongoing platform maintenance.

Policy objective

Online NAPLAN testing will provide key benefits to schools, teachers and parents, including:

- Better, faster and more detailed information about how students are performing at key points in their school life.
- Keeping the focus on improving outcomes and opportunities for all children.
- Faster results mean students receive any required support earlier to make a real difference to their learning.
- Providing a more engaging test experience for many students.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

The Australian Government provided Education Services Australia $24.7 million to manage the initial development of the online national assessment platform. From 2018–19, the Australian Government is providing annual funding of $2.2 million to Education Services Australia, with joint funding from the states and territories, for platform maintenance costs.

Recipients

The Australian Government is co-funding Education Services Australia to maintain the online national assessment platform for use by schools.

Evaluation

The platform has undergone extensive testing and an independent assurance process. In addition, Platform Readiness Testing (PRT) has informed platform functionality, and an annual schedule of platform and user readiness testing will inform future enhancements.

History of program

In 2011, all Education Ministers endorsed the move to online assessment. Work commenced on a national approach to online assessment under the Online Diagnostics Tool measure (this measure ceased in 2014–15).

In 2014, the development of the online assessment platform was subject to an ICT Two Pass review, which was successfully completed in November 2014.

In October 2014, funding of $24.7 million was announced for the initial development of the online national assessment platform.

NAPLAN 2020 was cancelled in light of the disruptions to the school year caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Full transition to NAPLAN online will be completed for testing in 2022, and it is anticipated that around 1.2 million students will complete the NAPLAN tests this year.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National School Resourcing Board

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 29 October 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
960	979	994	1,012	1,030

Funding Type – Baseline Funding

Brief description

The National School Resourcing Board (the Board) provides greater independent oversight over Commonwealth school funding. The Board undertakes independent reviews of different parts of the funding model under the *Australian Education Act 2013*. These reviews will help ensure public confidence in the funding model and ensure states, territories, and other approved authorities comply with their obligations under the Act.

Policy objective

Over time, reviews undertaken by the Board will help ensure the school funding model is using the best available data and methods to allocate and distribute funding in schools. The reviews allow the Board to consider if funding is used in line with the Act.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Represents baseline funding to support the activities of the Board.

Recipients

National School Resourcing Board.

Evaluation

No evaluation is planned.

History of program

The Board was established in 2017 with membership nominations and appointments in accordance with the *Australian Education Act 2013.*

Recipients

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Delivering Respect Matters

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,875	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Resources developed under the Respect Matters program support the delivery of respectful relationships education nationally, with a view to changing attitudes towards domestic and family violence. The program includes:

- A stand-alone interactive online education platform that contains:
  - Age-appropriate materials (videos, digital storybooks and other classroom resources) for students in Foundation Year to Year 12
  - Education material to support teachers to deliver material in classrooms
  - A teacher account function to tailor content assigned to students
  - Information for parents and carers
- Professional learning modules designed to build the capability of in-service and pre-service teachers to deliver respectful relationships education
- Targeted respectful relationships education resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and students with a disability
- A curriculum connection to demonstrate to educators where the resources fit into the Australian Curriculum.

The Respect Matters program is an initiative under the Fourth Action of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010–2022*.

Work is underway to support the revision of resources in line with expert advice.

Policy objective

To bring about long-term change in the attitudes of young people to violence and reduce the prevalence of domestic, family and sexual violence.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The resources are freely available to the public.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is not available to individual recipients. Education Services Australia has been contracted to manage the Respect Matters materials on The Good Society and Student Wellbeing Hub websites through a digital hosting and maintenance arrangement. Additional funds will be provided to other relevant suppliers for project work to ensure content remains fit for purpose and there is uptake of the program.

Recipients

Resources are designed for use in classrooms by educators.

Evaluation

An effectiveness evaluation by an independent supplier will be undertaken in 2021–22.

History of program

The Respect Matters program was launched on 14 April 2021.

The Respectful Relationships Reference Panel was established on 23 April 2021 to provide advice to the Department on existing Respect Matters materials, identify experts to review existing website content and associated materials, provide guidance on an ongoing monitoring and advice mechanism for the program, consider and provide advice on the findings of an expert review of the resources, and provide advice on the development and dissemination of new resources.

The Department has also commissioned the following suppliers to undertake work to support the delivery of the program:

- Hosting and Maintenance of The Good Society website – Education Services Australia
- Expert Review of Respect Matters program materials – Monash University
- National Stocktake and Gap Analysis of RRE programs – Monash University
- Priority Cohorts project – Social Research Centre
- National Principles in RRE – Our Watch
- Expert Revisions to The Good Society website – Education Services Australia.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Life Education – Being Healthy, Being Active

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 1

START DATE: 31 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 November 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
700	900	1,700	1,700	1,700

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The 2019–20 Budget established funding for Life Education Australia to update modules, hold student forums to identify issues students face in the transition from primary to secondary school, develop complementary educator resources and training, better target Indigenous students, and to conduct an evaluation.

Other funding (2017–22) provides support for the Life Education Australia National Office to develop new modules, and review and refine existing modules.

The 2022–23 Budget measure of $6 million over four years will support the ongoing operation of Life Education Australia, the development of additional learning modules on online safety and respectful relationships for younger children and the implementation of recommendations from a program evaluation.

Policy objective

Community expectations are that the education system has a pivotal role in primary prevention and responds to relevant health issues, such as student anxiety and stress. Funding assists to achieve this by funding Life Education Australia to deliver preventative health education to primary school-aged children and young people. Life Education Australia delivers age-based education programs that cover topics including food and nutrition, cyber safety, bullying and harassment, peer pressure and decision-making, hygiene and personal care, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. By working with school communities, Life Education Australia equips young people with the knowledge, attitudes, strategies and skills they need to enhance their wellbeing and improve learning outcomes, including school retention.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is not provided to individuals.

Recipients

The only funding recipient is Life Education Australia, who will deliver the services to school communities**.**

Evaluation

An independent evaluator (Kantar) has been engaged by Life Education Australian to evaluate all aspects of the program. Kantar expects to submit their evaluation report in the first half of 2022.

History of program

Life Education Australia has been funded since 2002–03. This includes the Department of Health, which funded Life Education Australia over 2014–15 and 2015–16 ($1 million ex GST), focussing on a school-based alcohol and other drug prevention and education activities.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Resources and Professional Development for Mathematics

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 1

START DATE: 29 June 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,825	2,824	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The initiative will deliver Mathematics Massive Open Online Courses (Maths MOOCs) supported by face-to-face professional learning and a repository of teaching and learning resources through an online Mathematics Hub (Hub). The Maths MOOCs and Hub will build on the successful Australian Government funded, combined delivery model previously used for the Digital Technologies MOOCs and Digital Technologies Hub to build improvements in mathematics and numeracy teacher capability across Australia. The Hub has been launched, and the MOOCs will be made available in 2022.

Policy objective

The objectives of the online teaching and learning resources initiative are to:

- strengthen the capacity of teachers across Australia to teach mathematics and numeracy through freely available, nationally coordinated, high quality professional learning and resources
- inspire Australian school students to learn mathematics and numeracy and equip them to become our future mathematical and technological innovators.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Maths MOOCs will be freely available to all Australian Teachers and the Mathematics Hub will be free to access for teachers, school leaders, students and families.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding to deliver the initiative was provided via an open tender procurement process.

Recipients

Following an open tender procurement process, Education Services Australia (ESA) were contracted to deliver the initiative.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation will be conducted in 2022–23.

History of program

- Funding of $9.5 million (GST exclusive) was announced in the 2019–20 Budget under the measure *Online Teaching and Learning Courses* for a period of 4 years commencing in 2019–20.
- Changes were made to the program through MYEFO 2019–20. This included replacing the phonics component of this measure with a numeracy check.
- Legislative authority renaming the measure to *Online resources and professional development for mathematics teachers* was registered on 6 March 2020.
- The Minister approved an additional $1.0 million from the Emerging Priorities Programs in 2021–22 for ESA to develop explicit teaching modules on 23 April 2021.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Voluntary Phonics Health Check for Year 1 Students

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
4,300	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Funding of $10.8 million has been provided to introduce a free online Phonics Check for Year 1 students.

The initiative will provide for:

- the development of an online teacher-administered Year 1 Phonics Check
- the development of an online Literacy Hub providing professional learning materials for teachers, a simple phonics check and awareness check for families, and resources for families that complement the Phonics Check
- targeted assistance to support access to phonics resources and training for Australia's most disadvantaged schools from July 2021.

Policy objective

To ensure students struggling with learning to read are identified early using evidence-based assessment tools and resources, and that teachers have the resources they need to act on results.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Participation is voluntary and free for teachers and families wishing to use the assessment tool and resources.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided under contract, this is not a grant program.

Recipients

The Australian Government has contracted Education Services Australia (ESA) to deliver the initiative.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Rural Inspire

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 1

START DATE: 8 January 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 31 March 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
500	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Rural Inspire program is being expanded over 2019–2022, with the aim to include all states and territories (aside from the ACT) by the end of 2022. South Australia and New South Wales joined the program in 2020, Queensland and Northern Territory in 2021, and Western Australia and Tasmania in 2022.

As at March 2022, a total of 195 young people, including 64 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, have participated in the 2020 and 2021 school years.

Policy objective

The program aims to raise the achievements and aspirations of Year 11 (and in some cases Year 10) students in rural and remote schools, develop their motivation and increase their ability to choose and achieve positive career, life and learning goals.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Country Education Partnership manages all eligibility and application aspects of the program. It involves Year 11 students (and Year 10 in some cases) from rural and remote areas. It is anticipated over the three-year expansion, approximately 300 young people will participate in the program. The number of schools that will participate in the program will depend on the students who are selected to participate.

Participants, known as Rural Youth Ambassadors, are expected to have the following qualities:

- be enrolled in Year 11 (or Year 10 in some cases) within a rural/remote community
- demonstrate that they can meet timelines and achieve identified outcomes
- have a growth mindset, willing to learn, grow and develop
- hold a strong academic or vocational education record
- demonstrate leadership within their local communities
- be endorsed and supported by their school, family and community.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided to the Country Education Partnership.

Recipients

Students from rural and remote Australia.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation is being undertaken by EY with a series of reports being provided. The first interim report (February 2021) found that the program has had a strong positive impact on the aspirations, future pathways and outcomes of its participants by strengthening their leadership skills, confidence and building a greater awareness of career and education opportunities.

The second interim report (December 2021) found that the program had achieved many of its desired short-term outcomes to support participants to develop their leadership, communication and problem-solving skills and broadened their understanding of and exposure to opportunities.

The final program evaluation report is due 31 January 2023.

History of Program

The Country Education Partnership commenced the Rural Inspire program in Victoria in 2011.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – High Achieving Teachers Program and Future Leaders Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Act 1

START DATE: 1 January 2020[1]

TERMINATION DATE: 30 December 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
15,900	2,250	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding for the High Achieving Teachers (HAT) Program and Future Leaders Program (FLP) pilot consists of the following:

- $14.9 million originally awarded to Teach for Australia (TFA) for the HAT program to deliver two intakes in 2020 and 2021 following an open approach to the market in 2018
- An additional $15 million, which is made up of $7.465 million for an extension of the HAT Program (for TFA to deliver a third intake of the program) and $7.535 million for the new FLP
- $6.3 million awarded to La Trobe University for the HAT program between 2018–19 and 2022–23 to deliver two intakes of 40 program participants in 2020 and 2021. La Trobe's program was heavily impacted by COVID-19 and was not able to meet the target of 80 participants. At no extra cost, La Trobe agreed to add a third intake in 2022 to enable them to meet this target.

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[1] Start and end dates are for High Achieving Teachers Program. Future Leaders Program expected to commence on 1 February 2021 and end on 30 December 2022.

High Achieving Teachers Program

The HAT Program provides two alternative, employment-based pathways into teaching for high achieving graduates committed to pursuing a career in the teaching profession: the TFA Leadership Development Program and the La Trobe University Nexus Program. Employment-based pathways into teaching broaden the entry points into the teaching profession by allowing individuals to work while they complete a teaching qualification.

Both providers will:
- proactively recruit and select high-achieving university graduates with the knowledge, skills and experience that schools need.
- place program participants in teaching positions in Australian secondary schools experiencing teacher workforce shortages in 2020, 2021 and 2022, where they will teach with a reduced teaching load and a high level of support.
- support program participants to complete an Australian accredited teaching qualification (Master of Teaching (Secondary)) and develop into high-quality teachers during the two-year Program.

Future Leaders Program

Under the FLP, the TFA is funded to pilot a new approach to building the school leadership pipeline. The program will provide leadership development and training to high achieving teachers with leadership potential working at regional, rural and remote primary and secondary schools.

The pilot will operate in 2021–22, with approximately 100 teachers expected to complete the program over this time. Early evaluation results from the 2021 cohort of participants demonstrate the program is highly effective in helping to develop future school leaders and put them in a position to fill available leadership positions. In 2022, the program is operating in WA, NT, NSW and QLD.

Policy objective

The objective of the FLP is to test an approach to strengthen the school leadership pipeline in regional, rural and remote schools by providing targeted leadership training to high achieving teachers with leadership potential.

Current data and reporting on principalship points to a significant loss of quality and experience among principals in the near future as many are approaching retirement. In addition, evidence shows there is a lack of teachers and middle leaders with the willingness or preparedness to fill the emerging vacancy gaps. This presents a threat to the standard of school leadership, the quality of teaching in classrooms and to student outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

La Trobe University and TFA are responsible for recruiting and selecting program participants. All programs must select high-quality university graduates with professional or academic experience in a field other than teaching, who do not hold a teaching qualification and who possess the personal qualities and academic skills to become high-quality teacher. La Trobe University recruits participants with a focus on schools in regional Victoria. TFA recruits participants with a focus on individuals with a background in STEM.

For the FLP, high achieving teachers and middle leaders with at least two years' teaching experience will be eligible for the program. Eligible participants will live and work in regional and rural locations. Teachers in primary and secondary schools and across all school sectors will be eligible for the program. Successful participants must be endorsed by their school principal and be found suitable by TFA based on rigorous assessment of their aspirations, experience, competency and commitment to schooling and leadership in regional and rural Australia.

TFA are responsible for recruiting and selecting program participants. TFA has increased its intake from approximately 40 participants in 2021 to more than 60 in 2022. It has also expanded participating jurisdictions for 2022 to WA, NT and the Catholic sector in NSW and QLD.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Individual recipients do not receive funding directly under the HAT Program or FLP.

Recipients

The HAT program currently operates in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia and, over the life of the program, has placed around 440 program participants in disadvantaged schools.

For the FLP, there was a cohort of approximately 40 participants from WA and NT in 2021. In 2022, more than 60 participants have enrolled in WA, NT, NSW and QLD. Each cohort receives 12 months of training and development, including the opportunity to experience leadership responsibilities under the guidance and mentorship of existing school principals and leaders.

Evaluation

Approximately $700,000 in funding has been set aside from the HAT Program for an independent evaluation of both HAT and Future Leaders Program. Early findings from the FLP evaluation demonstrate that it is on track to meet program objectives and has strong support from participants, program providers, schools and other stakeholders.

History of program

The HAT Program commenced in 2020 after two providers were selected through a tender process conducted in 2018 and contracts were executed in 2019. The first intake of program participants commenced in schools in 2020 with further intakes in 2021 and 2022.

The TFA Program, which also offers an alternative pathway into teaching, has been operating since 2009.

The FLP was a new program when it began in 2021. State and territory education authorities are responsible for the training, development and selection of school leaders and principals. However, there is a need for national leadership to help strengthen the school leadership pipeline and to address current and emerging shortages of principals and leaders, particularly in regional and rural schools.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Respectful Interfaith School Education

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 15 June 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 31 August 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,000	500	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Respectful Interfaith School Education (Click Against Hate) was allocated $3 million in funding (2019–2023) for the Anti-Defamation Commission to upscale its Victorian program, delivered face-to-face in schools. Funding will support the program to expand to a national audience, reaching a minimum of 500 program cohorts across Australia by reimagining the program to suit online delivery.

The program equips young people with strategies and skills to combat hate experienced online and in the real world, assisting them to take action when it happens to them, or when they see it happening to others.

The expansion of Click Against Hate will assist tens of thousands of students to develop interfaith understanding, an appreciation of diversity, and provide them with strategies to respond to intolerance when it happens.

The program is expected to go live in Term 4 2022 or Term 1 2023, after completion of Beta testing/piloting.

Policy objective

Community expectations are that the education system has a pivotal role in building a cohesive society free of racism and intolerance. Australian Government funding of the program helps address these issues by providing students and teachers with interfaith understanding and strategies to combat issues when they arise.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is not provided directly to individuals.

Recipients

The only funding recipient is the Anti-Defamation Commission which will deliver the program online to school communities that opt in.

Qualified and experienced facilitators and educators will deliver the program to schools on an opt-in basis. The Anti-Defamation Commission will also work with the Department and with government and non-government school authorities to promote the program to schools that would benefit most from delivery.

History of program

The Anti-Defamation Commission has been running this program in Victoria since around 2010. In the context of Australian Government funding, this is a new program.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Supporting Quality Boarding for Rural and Remote Students

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	19,250	3,500	3,450	1,900

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

This program provides funding over four years from 2022–23 to establish a Commonwealth Regional Scholarship Program to assist families with the costs of boarding.

Policy objective

This program will support regional and remote students in their final years of schooling to attend boarding school where local secondary options may be limited. The scholarships will help to ensure that recipients can attend boarding school where it may otherwise have been unaffordable.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The scholarships will support up to 200 students (in two cohorts of 100 students) from low socio-economic status regional and remote communities. The Department is developing the program eligibility criteria and application processes for scholarship recipients. The scholarships will assist students who have shown academic improvement or a commitment to improve their academic achievements over time. This may include consideration of school attendance rates or teacher recommendations.

Eligible providers will be selected via a grants process to administer the program.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Students who are awarded a scholarship can receive $15,000 each year for three years.

Recipients

The scholarship program will support the families of up to 200 students from low socio-economic status regional and remote communities to assist with the cost of boarding school fees. The program targets students in their final years of schooling.

History of program

Funding of $10.85 million over 4 years was announced at the 2022–23 Budget to establish the Commonwealth Regional Scholarship Program.

INDIGENOUS BOARDING PROVIDERS GRANTS PROGRAM

START DATE: 01 January 2023

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	17,250	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding of $17.3 million will be invested in extending the Indigenous Boarding Providers Grants Program for one year (2022–23) to support in-need boarding providers with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote and very remote areas. The measure is estimated to support 2,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across 40 to 50 boarding providers.

Eligible boarding providers will be able to access grants to deliver specialised services for Indigenous students.

Policy objective

These grants will assist boarding providers to better support the wellbeing and educational engagement needs of remote Indigenous boarding students.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Boarding providers with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as defined in the guidelines (once developed).

Funding available to recipients under the program

$17.3 million will be invested in 2022–23.

Recipients

In-need boarding providers with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as selected through a grants process.

History of Program

This funding builds on the $15.7 million provided to this program in 2021–22, which was run by National Indigenous Australian Agency, which supported more than 40 in-need boarding providers and more than 2,000 students.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Engaged Classrooms

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 01 January 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
3,650	2,050	300	-	-

Funding Type – Grant and Procurement

Brief description

The Engaged Classrooms: supporting all students to achieve measure seeks to improve the classroom environment. The package has three elements:

- A suite of professional development resources developed by three education experts seconded to the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO). AERO will receive a grant of $3.5 million over two years to deliver this element.
- A national summit to discuss the challenges of returning to school after two years of disruption, along with proven strategies on how to improve classroom order.
- A national data set to build a longitudinal picture measuring the impact of COVID-19.

Policy objective

The Engaged Classrooms measure will support teachers to foster inclusive, respectful classrooms that are conducive to learning. Recent research indicates classrooms are becoming increasingly disrupted. The measure will assist teachers to improve the classroom environment, provide data and information to inform future policy development, and address some of the challenges and opportunities arising from returning to classrooms after the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Professional development

The Minister approved grant funding for AERO under section 71 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) on 14 February 2022. The department will finalise a funding agreement with AERO to ensure the project complies with the PGPA Act and the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines.

N/A for other elements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

AERO will be provided with a $3.5 million grant to develop best practice professional resources to help teachers engage their students and improve the learning environment.

The other two elements do not have individual recipients.

Recipients

- AERO – $3.5 million.

History of program

The program commenced in 2022.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Literacy Support for Tasmanian students

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 2

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 30 December 2027

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

As part of the *Quality Schools* package, additional funding of $20 million over 10 years is provided to support specialist literacy and numeracy programs for Tasmania's most vulnerable children, as Tasmania transitions to the new Commonwealth school funding arrangements from 2018.

Policy objective

The Tasmanian Government is using the funding to support literacy and numeracy initiatives in both government and non-government schools building on local initiatives under Tasmania's Literacy and Numeracy Framework and Literacy Action Plan.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

All funding will be provided to the Tasmanian Government to distribute in accordance with the grant agreement.

The Children's Book Council of Australia (Tasmania) will receive $50,000 per year over 3 years from 2018–19 ($150,000) via a grant from the Tasmanian Government.

Recipients

Tasmanian government and non-government schools, the Children's Book Council of Australia (Tasmania).

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been planned.

History of program

This program commenced in 2018.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – School Education Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Quality Initial Teacher Education	-	3,325	3,411	3,497	3,581
Quality Teacher Professional Development	-	3,215	2,165	2,165	2,455
Expansion of Employment Based Pathways into Teaching	7,500	9,900	11,600	7,400	3,400

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – School Education Support – Quality Initial Teacher Education

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	3,325	3,411	3,497	3,581

Funding Type – Re-direction of funding from Strengthening Teacher Education Accreditation Systems in the National School Reform Agreement (National Policy Initiative 5). Funding type to be confirmed.

Brief description

In response to recommendations from the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review, the Australian Government will seek state and territory government support to amend the initial teacher education (ITE) Accreditation Standards and make other changes to improve the quality of ITE courses and ensure graduating teachers are prepared well for the classroom.

Policy objective

This measure will improve ITE in Australia and drive improved education outcomes for school students. It will help ensure that graduate teachers have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be effective teachers.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is to be confirmed, dependent on Ministerial direction and outcome of discussions with states and territories.

Recipients

To be confirmed

History of program

The Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures are the national framework for accreditation of ITE courses endorsed by all Australian education ministers. Amendments to the Accreditation Standards require the agreement of all jurisdictions. The Accreditation Standards have been updated three times since they were implemented in 2011.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – School Education Support – Quality Teacher Professional Development

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022 (expected, subject to announcement)

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	3,215	2,165	2,165	2,455

Funding Type – Procurement/Grant

Brief description

Funding of $10 million over 2022–23 to 2025–26 will be provided for two initiatives to support the quality of the existing teacher workforce. The first is the development of three specialised micro-credential courses to support professional development in areas such as classroom management, phonics and explicit teaching methods. The second is funding for the Quality Teaching Academy at the University of Newcastle to expand its high-impact professional development program, Quality Teaching Rounds.

Policy objective

This measure supports the existing teacher workforce by providing teachers with access to evidence-based professional learning to strengthen teaching practice and improve student outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligibility requirements vary by initiative.

For the micro-credential initiative higher education providers, certified professional learning institutions and Teacher Regulatory Authorities will be eligible through a competitive tender process, for the design and delivery of micro-credential courses from 2022–23 to 2025–26.

In relation to Quality Teaching Rounds, grant funding will be provided to the Quality Teaching Academy at the University of Newcastle.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A total of $10 million is available to recipients across the two initiatives.

Up to $5 million is available to eligible providers for the design and delivery of micro-credential courses from 2021–22 to 2025–26.

The University of Newcastle will be provided $5 million to deliver professional learning in Quality Teaching Rounds to approximately 1,600 teachers.

Recipients

Successful higher education providers, certified professional learning institutions or Teacher Regulatory Authorities are likely to be the funding recipient(s) for micro-credentials.

University of Newcastle will be the funding recipient for Quality Teaching Rounds.

History of program

New program.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – School Education Support – Expansion of Employment Based Pathways into Teaching

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
7,500	9,900	11,600	7,400	3,400

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Additional funding of $39.8 million over five years is provided to Teach for Australia (TFA) and La Trobe University to deliver two additional intakes of their alternative, employment-based pathways into teaching for high achieving individuals. Both TFA and La Trobe University's Nexus program are High Achieving Teachers Program recipients.

Policy objective

This measure helps to address teacher workforce supply issues by attracting, accelerating and supporting high-quality candidates into teaching.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding to be provided to TFA and Nexus to deliver an additional two intakes through a variation of current contractual arrangements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

TFA – $35.0 million.

La Trobe University – $4.8 million.

Recipients

TFA and La Trobe University.

History of program

The High Achieving Teachers program commenced in 2020 following a tender process in 2018 resulting in the selection of two providers and the signing of contracts in 2019. An evaluation of the program commenced in 2021 with an initial report providing evidence that the program is exceeding expectations. A final report will be submitted in 2023.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Quality Outcomes – Other	2,129	2,162	2,194	2,228	2,262
Parliament and Civics Education Rebate	135	6,088	6,180	6,272	6,366
Australian Government Quality Teacher Program	4,288	4,357	4,422	4,488	4,556
Civics and Citizenship	1,106	1,377	1,398	1,419	1,440
Schools National Projects	2,150	2,184	2,217	2,250	2,284
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)	12,522	12,604	12,678	12,758	12,835
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)	3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640
Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships	700	700	700	700	700
Framework for Open Learning	518	527	539	553	568
Supporting Artificial Intelligence in Schools	300	-	-	-	-
Australian Constitution Centre	-	-	-	-	-
Arts Education	570	320	-	-	-
Connected Youth and Communities – Together with Humanity	1,925	2,006	2,064	2,112	-
Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia	3,000	-	-	-	-

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Targeted Quality Outcomes (Quality Outcomes Program – Other)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2005

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,129	2,162	2,194	2,228	2,262

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Quality Outcomes Program-Other (QOP-Other) provides funding for strategic projects that support key objective of improved student learning outcomes in schools and its national leadership role in school education.

Policy objective

The objectives of QOP-Other are to support improved learning outcomes of Australian school students through strategic and collaborative initiatives which:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning
- promote national collaboration on curriculum and assessment and reporting outcomes
- enhance the professional role of principals and teachers to support national initiatives in school education
- promote good practice in school organisation and leadership
- promote greater national consistency in schooling
- support specific Australian Government initiatives.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Approval of QOP-Other proposals is at the discretion of the Minister for Education.

QOP-Other funds are used to respond to Australian Government priorities using a consistent outcomes focused approach. All QOP-Other proposals must be aligned with QOP-Other and individual program objectives and must be consistent with the Education Ministers' objectives for education.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In 2021–22 funding was provided to a number of items including:

- Education Ministers Meeting (formerly Education Council) – $880,000
- Digital Technology Hub rebuild for DTA – $100,000
- 2022 Pilot of the National Schools Constitutional Convention (NSCC) for Year 9/10 students – $400,000 – The Current NSCC is for Year 11 and 12 students (refer to Civics and Citizenship section). This pilot expands the scope to Year 9 and 10 children for an event in 2022 only.
- Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) – $299,000 to Education Services Australia to support delivery of the program in 2022 in up to 5,000 preschools and 300 schools.

In 2022–23 funding is being provided to several items including:

- Education Ministers Meeting – $880,000 – This is an annual payment to meet the Australian Government's contributions towards standing activities.
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority – $1,226,000
- National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) – $50,000 – NSCP Evaluation – The NSCP supports the wellbeing of students and school communities through the provision of pastoral care services and support strategies. Under the NSCP Project Agreement, the Commonwealth is responsible for arranging the evaluation in consultation with State and Territory education departments.

Recipients

See above for details.

Evaluation

It is a condition of funding that project recipients and contractors support, assist and cooperate with any evaluation of QOP-Other commissioned by the Department so both the projects funded, and the program are subject to evaluation. In addition, if funding recipients and contractors undertake their own review or evaluation of QOP-Other projects, they must provide the Department with a copy of the findings for use in the overall program evaluation.

History of program

QOP-Other has been in operation since 2005 and provides funding for strategic projects that support improved student learning outcomes in schools.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2006

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
135	6,088	6,180	6,272	6,366

Funding Type – Procurement to administer the program, with subsidies paid to schools

Brief description

The Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) program provides a subsidy to schools for students travelling more than 150 kilometres to the national capital for a civics and citizenship excursion. Schools must visit Parliament House, the Australian War Memorial, the Museum of Australian Democracy and/or the National Electoral Education Centre to be eligible for the subsidy. The rebate is paid for students in Years 4 to 12.

Participation in the PACER program has declined significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic as students have been unable to travel to Canberra to visit the national institutions (from 2,046 schools and 112,191 students in the 2018–19 Financial Year (FY) to 52 schools and 2,958 students to date in the 2021–22 FY).

Policy objective

The aim of the PACER program is to encourage students' onsite civics and citizenship learning about national democratic, historical and cultural institutions in the national capital to improve their understanding of Australian democracy.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Recognised education providers (generally schools) must be located more than 150 kilometres from the Canberra GPO. The principal purpose of the excursion is to enhance student learning in civics and citizenship education. Students are eligible for the subsidy once per calendar year.

Students must visit at least three mandatory institutions while on the excursion and undertake relevant civics and citizenship education work at school.

The program requirements which specify eligibility requirements and acquittal processes, and information on how to apply are available on the PACER website.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Rebates (allocated per student) are paid to schools who meet the requirements at a rate based on the distance travelled. Rebates start at $20 per student and increase up to $340 per student.

Zone	Distance from Canberra	Rebates	Time limited rebate amounts for 2022 calendar year**
1	150 – 499 kms	$20	$30
2	500 – 999 kms	$30	$45
3	1,000 – 1,499 kms	$60	$90
4	1,500 – 1,999 kms	$100	$150
5	2,000 – 2,499 kms	$150	$225
6	2,500 – 2,999 kms*	$200	$300
7	3,000 – 3,999 kms	$310	$465
8	4,000 kms and over	$340	$510

*Includes all students from Tasmania because of additional air/sea travel expenses.

** On 12 February 2021 the Minister for Education approved a temporary 50% increase to the PACER rebates for all travel zones. This increase was for the 2021 calendar year. This increase was to assist schools meet the cost of participating in the program and stimulate travel to Canberra.

On 1 December 2021, the Education Minister approved a further extension of the 50% rebate amount for the 2022 calendar year. This extension will provide confidence and support schools in planning and travelling to Canberra.

Students from schools located on islands in remote regions receive an additional flat-rate payment of $120 per student (remoteness is determined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Classification of Remoteness).

Recipients

The rebates are paid to schools per student travelling.

Evaluation

The Department conducted an internal review of the PACER program during 2017 and 2018 to determine the program's effectiveness and impact and improve program management practices. There was no intent to release the report and recommendations publicly.

The review found that while the program was operating well and was supported by teachers, its impact as an incentive for organising a student excursion to Canberra for the purpose of civics and citizenship education had reduced. This reduction in impact was primarily due to the increased costs of travelling to Canberra, particularly for schools in regional and remote locations and in the non-eastern states and territories.

As at July 2019, the 12 agreed recommendations from the internal review had been actioned. From 1 July 2019 the Government increased the rebate for zones 4 and above in recognition of the increasing costs of travelling to Canberra, particularly from schools in regional and remote localities.

Joint Standing Committee (JSC) on the National Capital and External Territories

On 24 August 2018, the Department gave evidence at the Joint Standing Committee (JSC) on the National Capital and External Territories regarding Canberra's national institutions. The JSC report, Telling Australia's Story - and why it's important, was released on 3 April 2019. The report makes 20 recommendations for the national Institutions and the Australian Government, with two specific to the Department. As of April 2022, the final report was yet to be tabled. The Government response, which is being coordinated by Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, is outstanding.

History of program

The PACER program was established in 2006, replacing two previous programs:

- The Citizenship Visits Program (CVP) was available to schools travelling more than 1,000 kilometres and visiting Parliament House, including meeting specific requirements.
- The Education Travel Rebate was available to schools travelling more than 150 kilometres, not receiving the CVP, and visiting at least six institutions from a specified list.

PACER funding was confirmed and announced in the 2022–23 Budget.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Australian Government Quality Teacher Program (AGQTP)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: Commenced in 2000

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
4,288	4,357	4,422	4,488	4,556

* Note: Current AITSL funding agreement ends on 30 June 2025

Funding Type – Grant & Procurement

Brief description

The Australian Government Quality Teacher Program (AGQTP) commenced in 2000 with three separate components:

- funding for National Projects
- funding for teachers in the government and non-government sectors
- funding for the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

Funding to the National Projects and both the government and non-government sectors is ceased and the funding to AITSL is the only ongoing element.

Funding to AITSL remains to provide national leadership in the promotion of excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership. This supports national reforms including the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, and the Leadership Profiles.

Policy objective

- Equip teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in the 21st century
- Provide national leadership in high priority areas of teacher professional learning need
- Improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The full amount of funding is committed to AITSL.

Recipients

The sole recipient of the funding is AITSL. The current funding agreement with AITSL expires on 30 June 2025.

Evaluation

AITSL was included in the Review of the National Architecture for Schooling in Australia, commissioned by Education Council in 2019. Recommendations from the review were implemented through changes to Education Ministers Meeting arrangements, including to provide more opportunities for strategic engagement between the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee and the national education agencies, including AITSL.

History of program

In the 2009–10 Budget the National Projects component of the program was announced as a savings measure and ceased at the end of June 2009.

From January 2010, the component of AGQTP funding for the government sector was rolled into the National Education Agreement.

Funding for the non-government sector continued to flow directly to state and territory non-government education authorities until this element of the program ceased on 30 June 2014 as part of the consideration of the new school funding model.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Civics and Citizenship

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: July 2004

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,106	1,377	1,398	1,419	1,440

Funding Type – Grants & Procurement

Brief description

The Civics and Citizenship Education program supports civics and citizenship education in schools to help school students to become active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life. Funding is provided for national activities, which support civics and citizenship education including the following:

- *The National Schools Constitutional Convention (NSCC)* – brings around 120 Year 11–12 students to Canberra each year to discuss constitutional issues. The 2021 NSCC was held online with students participating from online hubs due to ongoing uncertainty around state and territory border restrictions due to COVID-19. The 2022 event was held online on 10–11 May 2022.
- *The National History Challenge* – provides an opportunity for students in primary and secondary schools to demonstrate their historical research skills. Students submit essays, DVDs, museum exhibits and performances on a set topic. The Young Historian of the Year and other winners attend a national presentation in Canberra.
- *The Simpson Prize* – encourages Year 9 and 10 students to reflect upon the significance of ANZAC Day and the ANZAC tradition. Students submit essays and audio-visual presentations on a set theme. They must draw on primary sources, including a selection chosen by the Australian War Memorial. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the winning students from each state and territory travelled to key battlefields overseas in April to attend Anzac Day services. The 2020 and 2021 award ceremony and prizes were altered due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The awards were re-formatted as an online event and the Minister for Education and Youth approved a computer package prize for the winning students to the value of $5,000 per student. Planning for the 2022 event is underway.
- *The World Schools Debating Championships* – enables Australia's participation in the World Debating Championships and related equity and development support for debating in schools.

- ***The International Geography Olympiad*** – supports Australia's participation in the International Geography Olympiad and Geography's Big Week Out.
- ***Civics and Citizenship Education Resources Hub development*** – will assist teachers to develop and deliver engaging civics and citizenship education.
- ***The Young Category of the Australian of the Year Awards*** – This grant funding aims to increase young people's understanding of our democracy and appreciation for civics and citizenship, engagement activities to support the youth voice in policy development, communication and promotion of Government supports and services for young people and showcasing strong leadership and inspiring young people.

Policy objective

The Civics and Citizenship Education program aims to help school students to become active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding for the majority of civics and citizenship projects is allocated through the negotiation of funding agreements with relevant organisations at the discretion of the Minister for Education.

The National Schools Constitutional Convention is currently delivered by National Curriculum Services Pty Ltd engaged through a procurement process.

Education Services Australia were engaged through a procurement process to develop the Civics and Citizenship Resource Hub.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Project	Organisation	Funding	Type of funding
National History Challenge	HTAA Pty Ltd	$510,207 2021–22 to 2024–25	Grant
Simpson Prize	HTAA Pty Ltd	$1,276,500 2015–16 to 2021–22*	Grant
National Schools Constitutional Convention	National Curriculum Services	$1,047,591 2021–22 to 2023–24	Procurement
Civics and Citizenship Resource Hub development	Education Services Australia for Stage 1 and 2	$804,609 2018–19 to 2021–22	Procurement
World Schools Debating Championships	Australian Debating Federation	$225,000 2019–20 to 2021–22	Grant
International Geography Olympiad	Royal Geographic Society of Queensland	$90,000 2018–19 to 2020–21	Grant
Young Category of the Australian of the Year Awards	The National Australia Day Council	$1,200,000 2021–22** to 2024–25	Grant

*Future funding for the Simpson Prize from 2022–23 to 2025–26 was approved by Government, as of May 2022 it is yet to be committed.

**2021–22 funded from Departmental funding.

Recipients

Funding allocated to individual organisations is outlined above.

Evaluation

The progress and success of projects are measured through contractual reporting requirements requiring the providers of these programs to develop an evaluation framework and regularly report on their performance against the framework.

An evaluation of the program is expected to be conducted in 2022–23.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into constitutional reform and referendums

The Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs resolved on 22 June 2021 to examine the 2019–20 annual report of the Attorney-General's Department and conduct an inquiry into constitutional reform and referendums. As part of this inquiry, the Committee considered opportunities to improve public awareness and education about the Australian Constitution. The Committee published its report on 22 December 2021. The report included recommendations to expand the National Schools Constitutional Convention (NSCC) program with the objective of including more students every school year (Recommendation 1) and to develop a public awareness and education program on the Constitution, constitutional framework and Australia's democratic system (Recommendation 3). The Department, in collaboration with the jurisdictions, is currently implementing a pilot NSCC for students in year 9 and 10. Funded through QOP-Other (refer to QOP-Other section). Outcomes of the pilot will be available at the end of 2022.

History of Program

The Quality Outcomes – Civics and Citizenship program is a successor program to the Discovering Democracy program, funded with $31.6 million, 1997–2004.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Schools National Projects

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2009

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,150	2,184	2,217	2,250	2,284

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Schools National Projects (SNP) appropriation funds the Australian Government's contribution to international assessment costs, and the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards.

Australia's participation in international assessments is a key part of the National Assessment Program (NAP), which is the measure through which governments, education authorities and schools can determine whether or not young Australians are meeting important educational outcomes.

The Australian Government pays 50 per cent of national costs to implement international assessments. States and territories pay the remaining 50 per cent in line with the Education Ministers Meeting Project Funding Formula. The Australian Government meets the full cost of international assessment participation fees.

Australia currently participates in the following international assessments:

- Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

The Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards is an annual poetry competition open to all school aged students.

Policy objective

The policy objective of the SNP is to help build a national evidence base to inform school education policy and support national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.

Participation in international assessments provides information on the progress of Australian school students relative to other comparable countries and assists education systems to identify strengths and weaknesses in policy and practice.

The aim of the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards is to capture the imagination of school students across Australia, inspiring them with a passion for poetry and a love of country.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Decisions about Australia's participation in international assessments are made by all Education Ministers. Ministers have agreed to participate in PISA and TIMSS on an ongoing basis as part of the NAP. Participation in PIRLS is subject to Ministers' agreement ahead of each round.

The Department conducts an open tender process to engage a National Project Manager (NPM) for each PISA cycle. Contracts are currently in place with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) for the provision of NPM services for PISA 2018 and PISA 2022.

The Department procures the services of ACER as the National Research Coordinator (NRC) for TIMSS and PIRLS. ACER is Australia's member institution of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The IEA is the international body responsible for TIMSS and PIRLS.

Funding for the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards is provided through a funding agreement with Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society. The Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society promotes and administers the poetry competition which is open to all schools and students.

After forecasted funding has been allocated to meet the cost for international projects and the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards, funding may be approved by the appropriate delegate for other projects that support the Australian Government's school policy agenda.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Project	Organisation	Funding ($'000s)	Type of Funding
PISA 2022 (2019 – 2024)	ACER OECD	3,099 700*	Procurement International fees
TIMSS 2023 (2021 – 2025)	ACER IEA	2,342 1,165*	Procurement International fees
PIRLS 2021 (2019 – 2023)	ACER IEA	1,625 357*	Procurement International Fees
Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards (annually)	Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society	55**	Grant

*Estimate – subject to currency *exchange rates*

**Increasing from 2023–24 to $60,000*

Recipients

ACER is the National Research Coordinator for TIMSS and PIRLS and is currently the National Project Manager for PISA 2022. Australia's international participation fees for these assessments are paid to the IEA (TIMSS and PIRLS) via ACER and directly to the OECD for PISA.

The Department funds the Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society to implement the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards competition.

Evaluation

Internal evaluations are conducted upon completion of each international assessment cycle based on the NRC/NPM's performance in completing deliverables under the contracts/agreements.

History of program

In 2008, the Australian Government agreed with the states and territories that the majority of Commonwealth programs would be rolled into the schools Specific Purpose Payment (SPP) of the National Education Agreement. It was also agreed that certain programs should remain separate from the SPP and continue to be funded as Commonwealth Own Purpose Expense. Included in this group are programs that support national initiatives in education, particularly Australia's participation in international education assessments, and the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards. The annual appropriation, SNP, was established for this purpose.

In May 2009, the then Minister approved funding for the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills project and work on national definitions of disabilities. Both of these projects have since concluded.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: December 2008

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
12,522	12,604	12,678	12,758	12,835

Funding Type – Grant (Baseline Funding)

Brief description

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is a statutory authority established by the Australian Parliament in 2008. Its functions include:

- developing and monitoring a national F-12 curriculum
- developing and administering national assessments
- collecting, managing and analysing student achievement and other data
- reporting on school and system performance.

It is established under the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Act 2008* and performs its functions in accordance with any directions given to it by Education Ministers.

Mr David de Carvalho is ACARA's CEO, and was recently reappointed for an additional three-year term, until March 2025.

Mr Derek Scott is the Chair of the ACARA Board. The Board has 13 members, comprising:

- one from each state and territory
- a representative from the National Catholic Education Commission and Independent Schools Australia
- an Australian Government nominee
- Chair and Deputy Chair.

Policy objective

Australian curriculum centres aim to improve the quality, equity and transparency of Australia's education system. National assessment provides the means to periodically assess students against previous performance, national benchmarks and their peers using an objective measure. Public reporting promotes accountability and engagement in school education.

Eligibility for program and process for application

ACARA brings advice on its forward work plan and resourcing requirements to Education Ministers for consideration. The Australian Government appropriates 50 per cent of the baseline funding required to run ACARA. The remaining 50 per cent of funding comes from the states and territories. There is no application process.

Funding available to recipients under the program

ACARA is the only recipient of the funds.

Evaluation

ACARA's Charter requires it to seek Education Ministers' endorsement of its Work Plan, and associated Budget.

ACARA also provides regular reports to Education Ministers on progress against its annual Work Plan.

ACARA was included in the Review of the National Architecture for Schooling in Australia, commissioned by Education Council in 2019. Recommendations from the review, including those to strengthen national agency governance arrangements, were progressed by the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC). The Chair of AESOC, Dr Michele Bruniges AM, wrote in December 2021 to the Board Chairs of the national agencies for schooling, advising that work on the national architecture reforms had concluded and outlined the approach for engagement with the agencies going forward. This included:

- AESOC holding annual special purpose strategic discussions with CEOs of the national agencies.
- The Chair of AESOC providing regular feedback to the national agencies on matters being considered by AESOC and EMM
- The Department's Deputy Secretary of Schools and Youth convening regular meetings with the CEOs of the national agencies.
- The Department's Deputy Secretary of Schools and Youth meeting regularly with the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) and Independent Schools Australia (ISA).

History of program

The Australian Government committed to developing and implementing an Australian Curriculum, collect and report on nationally comparable school performance information and manage the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2008.

On 8 December 2008, legislation to establish a national authority – ACARA – that would bring together the functions of curriculum, assessment and reporting received Royal Assent. ACARA's first Board was approved by the Minister in May 2009.

Initially the work of ACARA was funded under three appropriations:

- $20 million over four years for the development of the Australian Curriculum (announced in the 2008–09 Budget)
- $17.2 million ($16.2 million administered funding) over four years for the National Schools Assessment Data Centre (announced in the 2008–09 Budget)
- $13 million over four years to support research and data collection as part of the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership (announced in the 2009–10 Budget).

From 2010–11 onwards, these funding streams were consolidated into a single appropriation and forms the basis of ACARA's ongoing funding.

The Australian Government pays 50 per cent of ACARA's agreed Budget as determined by Education Ministers. The remaining 50 per cent is split between jurisdictions.

In April 2016, Education Ministers agreed a quadrennial budget of $103.7 million for ACARA's core operations from 2016–17 to 2019–20.

In September 2017, Education Ministers endorsed ACARA's revised 2017–18 Work Plan and associated Budget.

In January 2018, Education Ministers endorsed ACARA's fourth year Work Plan for 2020–21 and associated Budget.

In June 2020, Education Ministers endorsed ACARA's four-year work plan (2020–21 to 2023–24) and associated Budget.

In August 2021, Education Ministers endorsed ACARA's four-year Work Plan (2021–22 to 2024–25) and associated Budget.

Education Ministers are expected to endorse ACARA's next four-year Work Plan (2022–23 to 2025–26) and associated Budget in latter half of 2022.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2010

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640

*Current funding agreement ends on 30 June 2025.

Funding Type – Grant (Baseline funding)

Brief description

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) provides national leadership for the Australian Government and state and territory governments, in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership.

AITSL was established to drive reforms to improve teaching and school leadership in Australia's schools.

Policy objective

Since its inception in 2010, AITSL has managed Australian Government and Education Ministers Meeting (formerly Education Council) programs in:

- **Initial Teacher Education** – deliver the Commonwealth's response to the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group Report: Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers; and deliver reforms relevant to the Australian Government that are detailed in the national agreement on school education reform
- **Teaching Profession** – deliver national frameworks and support the delivery of nationally consistent approaches for quality teaching; and delivering on national reforms that raise the status of and promote a continuously improving teaching profession
- **School Leadership** – deliver national reforms and frameworks to support the school leadership profession; support the development of high performing school leaders; and raising the status of the school leadership profession; and
- **Strengthened evidence and data** – develop a rigorous evidence base that supports a national teacher workforce strategy, identifies effective teaching practices, and drives improvements in relevant national data collections.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Under its Constitution, AITSL is required to act in accordance with specific directions from the Minister for Education.

Under its Funding Agreement with the Department, AITSL is required to prepare an annual work plan. The work plan must be endorsed by its Board of Directors and agreed by the Department.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The full amount of funding is committed to AITSL.

The total value of the current AITSL funding agreement is $37.4 million. AITSL is funded from five sources: the Australian Government Quality Teacher Program (AGQTP), AITSL Baseline, the National Schools Reform program, the National Policy Initiatives and the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) Continuous Quality Improvement Measure.

Funding to AITSL, is provided in order for AITSL to meet its functions and objectives (per clause 2.2 of its Constitution) and in accordance with Education Ministers Meeting reforms or objectives and as tasked by the Minister for Education.

Evaluation

AITSL reports to the Minister and Education Ministers on progress against its annual work plan.

AITSL was included in the Review of the National Architecture for Schooling in Australia, commissioned by Education Council in 2019. Recommendations from the review, including those to strengthen national agency governance arrangements, are being progressed by the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC).

The Board

The current CEO of AITSL is Mr Mark Grant, whose one-year term is due to expire 30 June 2023.

AITSL is governed by a Board of Directors. The Minister appoints members to the Board, subject to Prime Ministerial/Cabinet endorsement. However, the constitution allows the Minister at their sole discretion to remove members from the Board. The current Board Chair is Professor John Hattie.

History of program

AITSL commenced operations on 1 January 2010. Since its establishment, AITSL has been responsible for the development of resources and tools to support teacher and school leader quality and high-quality professional learning.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2004

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
700	700	700	700	700

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships (ELTF) fund supports priority language projects.

The Community Languages Australia (CLA) project was funded from 2015–16 to 2018–19 to support the provision of community languages education. CLA will continue to receive funding from 2019–20 to 2021–22 to support the provision of languages education in community language schools

Funding in 2020–21 and 2021–22 has been used to support national coordination and resources for languages education, as follows:

- the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association (AFMLTA) to work with key stakeholders to undertake two research projects to inform future languages policy design at the national level
- First Languages Australia (FLA) to research and identify options for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers' professional development and capability, including creating new resources.

Policy objective

This program aims to assist the teaching and increased uptake of languages in schools and the broader community.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding allocations are approved by the Minister for Education.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Program	2021–2022 $ (GST excl)	2022–2023 $ (GST excl)	2023–2024 $ (GST excl)	2024–25 $ (GST excl)	Total funding 21–22 to 24–25 $ (GST excl)
Community Languages Australia	305,000	-	-	-	305,500
First Languages Australia	245,000	-	-	-	245,000
Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association	150,000	-	-	-	150,000

Recipients

Funding allocated to individual organisations is outlined above.

Evaluation

Nil planned at this stage.

History of program

From 2004 to 2016, the ELTF fund supported approximately 1,900 practising and pre-service language teacher's participation in an intensive professional learning program.

Funding for the ELTF professional learning program ceased in 2015–16, as result of a refocus of the Government's priorities in the Education Portfolio. Funds were redirected to help offset the funding needed to implement the Government's response to the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* with remaining funds directed to the CLA project.

An extension of funding for CLA was agreed to 2021–22. Distribution of the remainder of funds to priority languages projects was also agreed.

On 14 November 2019, the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association was contracted to undertake two research projects to inform future languages policy design at the national level. The final research reports will be provided to the department in June 2022.

On 20 April 2020 First Languages Australia was contracted to undertake research and identify options for supporting Indigenous language teachers' professional development and capability, and create new resources.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Framework for Open Learning Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1991
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
518	527	539	553	568

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Framework for Open Learning Program (FOLP) was established to support the integration of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) into teaching and learning across the schools, vocational education and training and higher education sectors.

Since 2017–18 FOLP funding has been used to support the National Schools Interoperability Program (NSIP).

Policy objective

FOLP aims to achieve national collaboration to share resources and expertise in ICT and undertake the Interoperability Program.

Eligibility for program and process for application

NSIP is a joint initiative of the state, territory and Australian governments to support the development of digital learning infrastructure nationally and improve access to information for all stakeholders in Australian school education. The Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) approves the annual Work Plans and funding for NSIP.

Recipients

Education Services Australia (ESA)

ESA is a national not-for-profit company owned by the Education Ministers of all Australian state, territory and federal governments. ESA exists to support the delivery of national and state and territory priorities for schools, higher education and vocational education and training. ESA has delivered a range of nationally agreed education initiatives and projects, with a strong focus on technology.

Evaluation

Under FOLP arrangements, funding recipients are required to submit regular progress reports to the Department. AESOC approves the annual Work Plan and funding for the NSIP.

History of program

FOLP was established in 1991 to promote the awareness and maximise the benefits of ICT to the education and training sectors.

FOLP was the subject of savings measures at MYEFO 2013–14, MYEFO 2014–15 and Budget 2015–16 which reduced the appropriation over the forward estimates. Funding of a number of projects under FOLP was ceased as a result of these savings. An indexation freeze in July 2014 resulted in further minor reductions to the appropriation over three years until June 2017.

Since 2017–18, the entire FOLP appropriation has funded the Australian Government component of funding to the management and operation of the NSIP.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Supporting Artificial Intelligence in Schools

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Education Services Australia 31 January 2023
University of Adelaide 30 September 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
300	-	-	-	-

*Note this is the administered funding component. There is also a departmental funding component in 2021–22 of $79,000.

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Funding of $1.5 million was allocated from 2018–19 to 2021–22 for school education initiatives under the $29.9 million Building Australia's Artificial Intelligence capability to support business measure of the Australian Technology and Science Growth Plan. Supporting Artificial Intelligence in Schools has developed a range of curriculum resources to assist schools with the delivery of artificial intelligence content in the Australian Curriculum and supporting continuation of the Digital Technologies Hub. These resources are engaging students and supporting the professional learning of teachers.

Supporting Artificial Intelligence in Schools are strengthening school students' digital literacy and familiarity with artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, thereby helping to ensure they have the capabilities they need to access the opportunities of the future.

Policy objective

The policy objectives are to:

- Inspire young children and their carers in STEM
- Increase participation in STEM subjects amongst school students
- Boost teacher engagement with the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies
- Encourage children and young people to pursue careers in STEM
- Ensure the next generations of young Australians have the necessary skills to participate in the 21st Century.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Department engaged a provider under the Australian Government Procurement Rules to undertake the research element of the program and another two providers to develop resources informed by the research that are freely available to all Australian schools (including through the Digital Technologies (DT) Hub).

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding varies depending on the various elements under the program.

Recipients

The Department contracted the University of Newcastle to deliver the research element and the University of Adelaide and Education Services Australia to deliver the resource development elements of the program. Education Services Australia are also continuing to maintain the DT Hub (originally funded through the 'Coding Across the Curriculum' initiative under the 'Restoring the Focus on STEM' program) and have progressively added resources developed under this initiative to the Hub.

Evaluation

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources is undertaking an impact evaluation of the artificial intelligence Capability Fund and its core initiatives, including Supporting artificial intelligence in Schools, which is expected to be completed in 2022.

History of program

Funding of $1.5 million is provided under the Australian Technology and Science Growth Plan, to build Australia's Artificial Intelligence capability to support business and industry. The funding is supporting the development of a range of curriculum resources to engage students and support the professional learning of teachers.

ESA submitted a proposal to the Department in July 2019 seeking funding to move the DT Hub to a platform that meets the DTA's service standards and IT security requirements. $294,069 in funding over three years from 2019–20 to 2021–22 was provided from QOP-Other (approved by the Minister on 20 December 2019).

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Arts Education

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: March 2023 (Transformational Learning through Creativity)
June 2024 (National Education Program)

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████
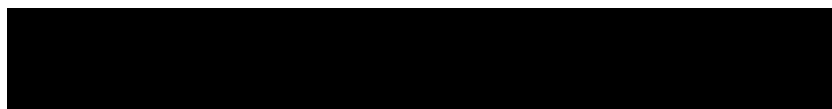
BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
570	320	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grants

Brief description

The Arts Education initiative promotes arts and music education programs in schools. Funding is provided for the following projects:

- *Transformational Learning through Creativity* – an arts education program delivered by the Song Room. Under the grant agreement the Song Room is required to deliver the program to 17 disadvantaged schools across Tasmania, South Australia, NSW and Victoria. It is estimated that over 6,000 disadvantaged children receive support from the organisation.
- *National Education Program* – delivered by Bell Shakespeare, supports the teaching of the works of the playwright and poet, William Shakespeare, through school performances, regional teacher mentorships and artist-in-residence programs. It is estimated that over 80,000 students receive face-to-face support from Bell Shakespeare.

Policy objective

Research finds that the benefits of studying arts includes higher literacy and numeracy scores, improvements in self-confidence, self-discipline and teamwork as well as increased school engagement and attendance. Disadvantaged schools will have improved access to these arts education packages as well as those in regional and remote areas and low socio-economic areas.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Closed non-competitive grants application processes were undertaken for the Song Room and Bell Shakespeare after guidelines for the grants were cleared by the Department of Finance. The restrictive process recognises the expertise and experience of these organisations to deliver successful arts and music education programs in schools.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Note: Funding as at May 2022.

Project	Organisation	Funding	Type of funding
Transformational Learning through Creativity Program	The Song Room Limited	$1,250,000 2019–20 to 2021–22	Grant
Bell Shakespeare	Bell Shakespeare Company Limited	$1,280,000 2019–20 to 2022–23	Grant

Recipients

Funding allocated to individual organisations is outlined above.

Evaluation

Funding for the Arts Education package was announced in the 2019–20 Budget. The Music Count Us In project, which was part of the package, ceased in February 2021 after successfully delivering its musical education program to over 700,000 school students across Australia.

History of program

The Music Count Us In project ceased in February 2021 after successfully delivering its musical education program to over 700,000 school students across Australia.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Connected Youth and Communities – Together for Humanity

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill 1

START DATE: 3 February 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Activity Completion Date 31 December 2025
                                                    (Grant Agreement end date 30 April 2026)

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,925	2,006	2,064	2,112	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The 2021–22 Budget included $8.1 million (GST exc) over four years (2021–22 to 2024–25) to fund Together for Humanity to deliver a program to equip students, teachers and parents for diversity, and to foster greater inter-cultural understanding and a sense of belonging.

Policy objective

Participation in the program will empower schools and their students to foster interfaith and intercultural understanding and improve social cohesion by bringing communities together.

This funding will enable:

- around 50,000 students (across approximately 100 schools) to participate in the Together for Humanity School Partnership Program
- around 13,000 students and 2,000 parents will participate in cross-cultural programs that bring them into contact with people from diverse backgrounds
- around 5,000 teachers will participate in professional development.

Around 40,000 students and teachers will participate in online programs. Together for Humanity will use a hybrid delivery model, providing some elements of the program face-to-face and others online.

This funding will enable Together for Humanity to increase the scope and impact of its existing program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the program may be undertaken.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

Funding is provided to Together for Humanity.

History of program

This is a new program, which commenced on 3 February 2022.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Quality Outcomes – Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia – Disadvantaged Youth Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	November 2021
TERMINATION DATE:	December 2024
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
3,000	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia's Disadvantaged Youth Program (the Program) was developed by the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia in recognition of young people who require additional assistance to participate in the Award.

The program provides young people with disability, aged 14 to 24, and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, refugee, and regional and remote communities, aged 14 to 18, with opportunities to develop a range of non-academic and academic competencies.

The program uses the same award structure and resources provided to mainstream participants in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia program, removing stigma that may prevent participation. The Award has a flexible structure, with three levels of recognition: Bronze; Silver; and Gold. Participants are expected to undertake activities in three areas—Service, Physical Recreation and Skill Development.

Funding of $3 million (GST exc) over 2021–22 is provided for the program to support 4,500 disadvantaged young people nationally over a three year period (2021–22 to 2023–24).

This funding will allow the program to:

- increase the reach of the program to a target of an additional 1,500 disadvantaged youth per year over three years
- provide additional specialist support to Award Centres for high-need participants to participate and complete the Award
- enhance partnerships with youth organisations and other community organisations to build pathways to employment for young people.

Policy objective

The program aims to build self-esteem and resilience, and encourage the development of problem-solving skills through volunteering, participation in sports and other recreational activities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Award leaders apply for funding on behalf of the Award participant.

Eligibility for funding includes:

- young people aged 14 to 24 with disability
- young people aged 14 to 18 from:
    o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
    o refugee backgrounds
    o regional and remote communities
    o low socio-economic circumstances
    o young people who are disengaged from their communities.

Funding available to recipients under the program

This is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on need. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Australia Award Centres can use up to $5000 to support each participant.

Recipients

As at August 2021, the program has provided assistance to more than 7,650 young people across Australia since 2015.

Of the 3,537 participants supported since July 2018, 726 (20.5 per cent) under the Award's program identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Evaluation

In late 2017, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia contracted The Insight Partnership to undertake an independent evaluation of the program to determine its impact.

The evaluation highlighted that participation in the Award has a positive impact on participants, both as self-reported by participants and by those leading or closely observing participants. There is also strong indication that the program has a beneficial impact on disadvantaged or vulnerable young people.

The program has a completion rate of just under 50 per cent which is on par with completions for the general award participants.

History of program

The Australian Government provided $2.865 million (GST ex.) over 2014–15 to 2020–21 to the program. This funding consists of:

- $1.4 million for 2014–15 to 2016–17 (which included $400,000 (GST ex.) from the Department of Health)
- $1.465 million for 2018–19 to 2020–21.

In the 2021 Budget, an additional $3 million (GST ex.) was announced to continue support for this Program over 2021–22 to 2023–24.

Total funding for the program over 2014–15 to 2023–24 is $5.865 million (GST ex.)

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: March 2015

TERMINATION DATE: 30 September 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
550	550	700	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) provided $12 million over four years (2014–15 to 2017–18) to increase the profile of STEM subjects in school through four initiatives:

- *Mathematics by Inquiry* (Australian Academy of Science): provides teaching and professional learning resources that support teaching mathematics through inquiry-based methods and help students learn mathematics in fun and innovative ways.
  - The program was extended until the end of 2020 using 2018–19 and 2019–20 funds from *Inspiring all Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM.*
  - Further funding was allocated as part of the Student Support Package to extend Mathematics by Inquiry to 2024–25 (see SSP-STEM factsheet).
- *Coding Across the Curriculum* (Education Services Australia): involved the creation of the Digital Technologies Hub and a one-off time-limited grant to Code Club Australia. The Digital Technologies Hub is an online resource portal that supports implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies across different year levels for teachers, students and families.
  - Further funding was allocated from *Supporting Artificial Intelligence in Schools* and *Quality Outcomes Program-Other* to rebuild, upgrade and continue delivery of the Digital Technologies Hub over 2019–20 to 2021–22.
- *Implementing a P-TECH (Pathways in Technology) pilot* (originally $0.5 million over two years for two sites in Victoria): this project provides seed funding to establish long-term partnerships between education and industry sectors that support young people to achieve a STEM related post-school qualification (diploma, advanced diploma or associate degree). Students then have the option to continue their study at the tertiary level or pursue employment in a STEM related field, including job opportunities with the school's industry partners. On 30 May 2016, the Government committed $4.6 million to expand the P-TECH pilot from two to up to 14 sites across Australia. This brings the total investment in P-TECH to $5.1 million.

- Curious *Minds (Summer Schools for STEM Students)* (Australian Mathematics Trust): a program that combines residential camps and a mentoring program with the aim of igniting girls' passion and participation in STEM. The Office for Women at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provided an additional $250,000 in 2014–15 to support the participation of female students in this project.
- Curious Minds was extended over 2018–19 and 2019–20 using $640,000 from *Inspiring all Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM.*
- The 2018 *Women's Economic Security Package* included $2.35 million to further extend and expand Curious Minds for a further four years from 2020–21 to 2023–24. This includes $150,000 in 2023–24 for an independent evaluation of the program.

Policy objective

To create and improve education resources and opportunities for students and teachers in the STEM learning areas, with the aim of increasing students' later engagement in STEM careers.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Given the range of programs and program managers, eligibility varies per program. Further information can be found on their individual websites.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is fully allocated per program, as listed above.

Recipients

The Australian Academy of Science (*Mathematics by Inquiry*), Education Services Australia (*Coding Across the Curriculum*), Australian Mathematics Trust (*Curious Minds*).

P-TECH: Government seed funding is provided to the Skilling Australia Foundation for services associated with establishing effective partnerships at the new pilot sites (up to $350,000 per site) and supporting partners to implement P-TECH styled learning programs suited to local circumstances. Beyond this, the success and sustainability of the P-TECH model is dependent on the commitment and investment (both cash and in-kind) of education and industry partners.

The Skilling Australia Foundation also has a national coordination role to ensure the network of P-TECH sites are connected and supported to share good practice and resources across all sites.

In addition to the two original sites in Victoria (Newcomb Secondary College, Geelong, and Federation College, Ballarat), the Government has announced 11 new pilot site schools:

- Hunter River High School, Port Stephens, New South Wales
- McCarthy Catholic College, Western Sydney, New South Wales
- Wyong High School, Central Coast, New South Wales
- St Patrick's Technical College, Northern Adelaide, South Australia
- Cecil Andrews College, Southern Perth, Western Australia
- Joseph Banks Secondary College, Perth, Western Australia
- Tec-NQ, Townsville, Queensland
- Aviation High School, Brisbane, Queensland
- A combined P-TECH involving Burnie High School, Parklands High School, Yolla District High School and Hellyer College, Burnie, Tasmania
- Casuarina Senior College, Darwin, Northern Territory
- Camberwell High School, Melbourne, Victoria.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation of Mathematics by Inquiry occurred at the end of 2020. An independent evaluation of the Coding Across the Curriculum project was completed in August 2018. These evaluations have been used to inform policy decisions about similar initiatives and future areas of focus for the Department.

An independent evaluation of Curious Minds will be undertaken in 2023–24.

An independent evaluation of the P-TECH pilot found significant benefits for all stakeholders involved. The evaluation also highlighted challenges around sustainability beyond the two-year period of Australian Government seed funding. The evaluation report is available on the Department's website.

History of program

The *Restoring the focus on STEM* initiative was announced on 14 October 2014.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Schools Reform

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
National Schools Reform Fund	7,590	14,000	8,128	-	-
Nationally Consistent Collection of Data	7,295	6,159	5,456	6,906	-
Australian Education Research Organisation	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
National School Reform Agreement	NFP	NFP	NFP	NFP	NFP

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Schools Reform – National Schools Reform Fund

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
7,590	14,000	8,128	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Policy objective

To date, projects funded under the National Schools Reform Fund targeted priority areas across the school education system, including but not limited to: improving data quality; implementing commitments; boosting student wellbeing; and strengthening the teacher workforce.

Brief description

The National Schools Reform Fund supports the implementation of priority reforms to help improve student outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Bids for funding for potential new or existing projects are coordinated by Schools and Youth Group biannually and as required. Ministerial approval is required before funds can be expended.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Amounts to individual entities are allocated on the basis of bids to fund initiatives to support priority reforms, in line with the program guidelines.

Recipients

Under the current guidelines attached to the program, recipients are usually other Commonwealth-related entities including the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, Education Services Australia, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority or states and territories. These entities work with consultants, academics and technical experts to deliver the projects. However, the Department will seek the Minister's agreement to updated guidelines to ensure the Fund can support a broader range of potential projects and recipients from 1 July 2022. This would ensure the Fund can continue to support implementation of the existing National School Reform Agreement, as well as build an evidence base for policy priorities under the next Agreement, due to be implemented from 2024.

Evaluation

Ongoing – individual projects are evaluated upon completion and incorporated into an annual summary of the National School Reform Fund.

History of program

The National Schools Reform Fund was set up in 2017–18 as part of the *Quality Schools* package to support implementation of the Government's education reform agenda.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Schools Reform – Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 December 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
7,295	6,159	5,456	6,906	-

Funding Type – Procurement & Grant

Brief description

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on School Students with Disability is a collection of data on Australian school students with disability, conducted as part of the Annual Schools Census. The NCCD focuses on four levels of educational adjustment provided to students with disability (Quality differentiated teaching practice (QDTP), Supplementary, Substantial and Extensive).

Since 2018, the NCCD has been used to calculate the Australian Government Student with Disability (SwD) loading, students counted in the Supplementary, Substantial and Extensive levels of educational adjustment attract the SwD loading on top of the base student funding amount as part of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

Funding of $20 million was provided through the 2017–18 Quality Schools Package NCCD Continuous Quality Improvement Measure to work with all education authorities on national projects to further enhance the quality of the NCCD.

In the 2021–22 Budget a further $20 million over four years was provided to continue the NCCD Continuous Quality Improvement Measure with an increased focus on assurance.

Policy objective

To improve the quality and consistency of the NCCD through supporting assurance and moderation projects and developing materials for a national learning portal (website) for teachers, parents and carers of students with disability. Projects under this measure will ensure the quality and integrity of data that underpins ongoing funding for students with disability.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Amounts to individual entities are allocated on the basis of applications and bids to fund initiatives to support consistency and continuous improvement of data collection, in line with the program guidelines.

Recipients

The Department issues requests for quotes for each project. Funding recipients are selected through a competitive process.

Evaluation

The program is in effect an evaluation and continuous improvement of the NCCD.

History of program

The NCCD is the main data source on Australian school students with disability.

Since 2018, the NCCD has been used to calculate the Australian Government students with disability loading. Students counted at the supplementary, substantial, and extensive levels of adjustment attract additional funding through the loading.

In 2017–18, funding of $20 million for NCCD Continuous Quality Improvement Measure (NCCD CQIM) was committed to work with education authorities on national projects to support the NCCD implementation. The major focus of this measure was the establishment of the NCCD Portal, which has become the most visited source for NCCD information for schools across Australia.

In the 2021–22 Budget, $20 million was provided to continue the NCCD CQIM over a further four years.

With the NCCD Portal now established, the focus of the measure is to pivot to projects providing hands-on support for school authorities completing the NCCD and greater assurance for the Government's funding for students with disability.

Continuing this work will provide schools with tools to ensure consistent learning supports for students with disability, based on their individual needs, and help maintain data integrity through a fit for purpose assurance process

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Schools Reform – Australian Education Research Organisation

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 16 April 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Australian Education Research Foundation (AERO) is a not-for-profit Australian Public Company, limited by guarantee, incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001*. AERO has as its members (owners) the Australian Government and state and territory governments, with all jurisdictions contributing funding for its ongoing operations. This funding totals $60 million over the years 2020–21 to 2022–23, with the Australian Government paying 50 percent (i.e. $30 million).

AERO has been established to fill an existing gap in the Australian school and early childhood education sectors, as outlined in chapter 5.5 of the Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools: *"Crucially however, no national body is expressly charged by governments with the task of delivering into teachers' hands the practical results of this evidence and research. This is a vital 'missing link' which a new national evidence and research institute will remedy. Many submissions and consultations called for just such a national research and evidence institute to be established to address this gap."*

AERO has an eight member skills-based expert Board, appointed by all Education Ministers. Further details about the Board, Senior Management, and AERO's operations is available at https://edresearch.edu.au/about-aero.

Policy objective

The establishment of AERO implements a National Policy Initiative under the National School Reform Agreement, which is to establish an independent national evidence institute to inform teacher practice, system improvement, and policy development. Establishing AERO further supports the goals of the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*.

AERO's functions are to strengthen the national education evidence base for school and early childhood education, including through:

- collaborating with government, the school and early childhood education sectors, the vocational education and training, higher-education and research sectors, and philanthropic organisations
- developing and implementing a national agenda for research
- mobilising high-quality resources for school and early childhood education
- Translating research and providing support directly to teachers in school and early childhood education to improve student outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

There are no eligibility requirements and no application process for these funds. Funding is based on Education Ministers' decisions, and the only recipient is AERO. The funding agreement endorsed by Education Ministers is renewed every three years.

Funding available to recipients under the program

AERO is the sole recipient of this program.

Recipients

AERO is the sole recipient.

Evaluation

Education Ministers need to approve AERO's Strategic Plan and Research Agenda on an annual basis. Negotiations with the states and territories on AERO's future funding beyond 2022–23 commenced during 2021, to be finalised by 30 June 2022.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Schools Reform – National School Reform Agreement

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
NFP	NFP	NFP	NFP	NFP

Note: The National School Reform Agreement is a 2018–19 MYEFO Measure and the estimates are not for publication as they are subject to negotiations with states and territories through the Education Ministers Meeting.

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The National School Reform Agreement is a joint agreement between the Commonwealth, states, and territories to lift student outcomes across Australian schools. The National School Reform Agreement commits all parties to implementing three overarching reform directions supported by eight national policy initiatives (NPIs) over the next five years – 2019 to 2023.

These reforms are based on evidence of what works, in areas where national collaboration will have the greatest impact on driving improved student outcomes.

The first reform direction supports students, student learning and student achievement. It includes initiatives to enhance use of the curriculum and online resources to assist teachers to identify individual student needs and their next steps in learning.

NPI	Description
A.i – enhancing the Australian Curriculum to support teacher assessment of student attainment and growth	A(i) and A(ii) are being jointly progressed as the Online Formative Assessment Initiative, which includes developing learning progressions and online resources to support teachers to enhance assessment processes and inform future teaching. Funding is provided to Education Services Australia (ESA) to progress discovery phase work with Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).
A.ii – opt-in online learning assessment tools to assist teachers	
A.iii – review senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training.	Funding was provided to ESA to review how students can be better supported to understand and be enabled to choose the most appropriate pathway to support their transition into work, further education and/or training.

While recognising that Australia already has some of the world's best teachers, the second reform direction strengthens our nation's ability to train, recruit and retain the best. This includes a national teacher workforce strategy that ensures supply and demand are met, regardless of sector or location.

NPI	Description
B.i – review teacher workforce needs of the future	AITSL was funded to develop a national teacher workforce strategy. The National Initiatives to Support for Teaching and School Leadership document developed aims to guide Education Ministers to take a coordinated national collaborative approach to workforce planning and future workforce needs, supported by the Australian Teacher Workforce Data collection. Funding is also provided to the Australian Council for Educational Research to administer the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Students (LANTITE).
B.ii – strengthening the initial teacher accreditation system	Funding for AITSL to progress development and implementation of a range of national reforms: the final year Teacher Performance Assessment, the revised national *Accreditation of the initial teacher education program in Australia: Standards and Procedures*, and national quality assurance measures to ensure consistency and gather evidence of impact data.

The third reform direction is focused on enhancing the national evidence base. These reforms will help build capability to track student progress, inform teacher practice and improve data quality.

NPI	Description
C.i – designing and implementing a national unique student identifier	Funding for a range of consultants/contractors to support implementation of this initiative to provide a unique number to every school student in Australia and to facilitate information sharing between schools, sectors and jurisdictions without using a student's name.
C.ii – an independent national evidence institute to inform teacher practice, system improvement and policy development	Funding for a range of consultants/contractors (for legal, advertising, recruitment, market research, digital development, corporate/personnel services), to support the establishment of the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO).
C.iii – improving national data quality, consistency and collection to improve the national evidence base and inform policy development	Funding for a range of consultants/contractors to undertake research, data linkage and analysis work to: 1. Establish agreed equity and proficiency standards (for numeracy and literacy assessed by NAPLAN) as part of the review of the National Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2.Develop a range of projects to enhance the national evidence base, including measures of child development status at school entry, student learning gain, general capabilities, post-school destination information, attainment, retention, wellbeing, and post-school outcomes throughout the life of the NSRA.

Policy objective

National collaboration across the Commonwealth, states, and territories to drive improved student outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

There are no eligibility requirements and no application process for these funds. Funding is based on Education Ministers' decisions in relation to each national policy initiative.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The funding profile for this measure will vary over time as governments negotiate and agree funding for national policy initiatives. The amounts will reflect the Australian Government's commitments to initiatives.

Recipients

Recipients are generally national agencies (AITSL, ESA, ACARA), commissioned to deliver elements of national policy initiatives, as well as contracted suppliers such as consultants, academics, and technical experts.

Evaluation

Under clause 29 of the National School Reform Agreement, an independent review must be commissioned on behalf of Education Ministers to assess the effectiveness of the national policy initiatives. The review, announced on 7 April 2022, will be undertaken by the Productivity Commission and completed by 31 December 2022 for consideration of Education Ministers.

History of program

This program commenced in 2019.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Supporting Transitions to Work and Study for Disadvantaged Youth	9,600	11,000	13,500	-	-
Good to Great Schools – Effective Instruction	1,890	1,990	995	-	-
STEM	6,120	5,925	6,525	5,450	-
Islamic Museum of Australia	700	700	300	-	-
Anti-Defamation Commission – Holocaust Education Digital Platform	750	750	750	-	-
Emerging Priorities	23,657	4,050	-	-	-
Clontarf Foundation	-	16,065	16,306	-	-

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Supporting Transitions to Work and Study for Disadvantaged Youth – The Smith Family's Growing Careers Project)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: April 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Funding will terminate by 30 June 2024.
                                                     Grant Agreement ends 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
9,600	11,000	13,500	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

- Funding of $38.2 million was provided over four years (2020–21 to 2023–24) to support the expansion of The Smith Family's Growing Careers Project.
- Under the expansion, up to 76,725 opportunities will be provided for disadvantaged students from Years 7–12 across Australia to access careers education activities.
- The Growing Careers Project provides disadvantaged students with access to The Smith Family's suite of programs. These programs are available in select schools that have partnered with The Smith Family. These schools are located across Australia and have high rates of socio-economic disadvantage. A full list of programs is below:

Future Ready Skills Training	Year level
Futurepreneurs Inspire – facilitated workshops that introduce students to concepts of entrepreneurship through 12 guided challenges and practice examples.	Years 7–9
Presenting your Strengths – students develop a short verbal pitch focusing on their strengths, key attributes and achievements.	Years 7–9
Your Career Interview Journey – students interview an adult in their lives about their career and learn about educational and career pathways.	Years 7–9
Job Read-e – a mobile based tool (app) which helps young people build their skills in seeking and applying for work. A series of job-seeking activities are undertaken by the student and they receive personalised feedback from a career's advisor.	Years 10–12

Early exposure to work environments / work experience	*Year level*
Careers Fair Scavengers Hunt – fun activity at a careers fair or expo that gives students, employers and higher education providers a chance to meet, and discuss pathways and career opportunities.	Years 7–8
SmArts – enrichment programs for students with interest in and/or talent for the creative arts. Boosts students' creative skills, self-confidence, knowledge of post school options and engagement in learning.	Year 8–10
Work Inspiration – employer-led initiative to ensure young people's first experience of the world of work is meaningful, inspiring and exposes them to a broad range of employment opportunities.	Years 9–11
iTrack – online career mentoring program. Connects students to those in employment and explores career goals and pathways and the actions needed to achieve them, including subject choices.	Year 10
Understanding career pathways and further study options	*Year level*
Future Seekers – provides students with early positive exposure to information about diverse job roles and the working lives people lead. Interactive activities encourage reflection on identity and opportunities to creatively and imaginatively reflect on future job roles and the world of work.	Years 7– 9
Exploring Education Pathways – showcases post-school training and education options, both vocational and higher education, including subject choices.	Years 9–11
Career Guidance and Coaching	*Year level*
Career coaching – individual careers coaching and support, typically over several months, for young people to increase their knowledge of career opportunities and develop a post school plan, including subject choices.	Years 9–12
Assistance with subject selection	*Year level*
University-led webinar on subject selection – University-led sessions providing insight into managing future studies, including information on course structures and understanding subject selections.	Years 11–12

Policy objective

To help disadvantaged young people to stay at school, complete Year 12 (or equivalent), and successfully transition from school to further education, training and work.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Smith Family manages all eligibility and application aspects of the Program.

Eligible recipients will be either on a Learning for Life Scholarship or attending a Learning for Life Partner School.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

The Smith Family manages a number of initiatives and programs to support students, with amounts for each applicant subject to the guidelines underpinning each program.

Recipients

High school students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Evaluation

The Smith Family has commissioned an independent evaluation of the program using part of the grant funding. The final evaluation report will be provided in April 2025.

History of program

The Smith Family has partnered with the Australian Government previously, however this is the first partnership in relation to the Growing Careers Project.

Recipients

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Good to Great Schools – Effective Instruction)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 11 February 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,890	1,990	995	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding of $5.8 million was provided (including $400,000 for an independent evaluation) for a pilot program in which 10 remote schools are participating in for Good to Great Schools Australia to expand their Direct Instruction literacy model to include numeracy and science. The program builds on the Flexible Literacy for Remote Primary Schools Program.

Policy objective

The project aims to increase teacher pedagogical skills in teaching literacy, numeracy and science through the use of Direct Instruction (DI) or Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) and to improve outcomes for students in participating remote and very remote schools.

Eligibility for program and process for application

There was no application process for schools. The program provider Good to Great Schools Australia will negotiate participation with individual schools and their education authority.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

Good to Great Schools is the recipient of grant funding to deliver the program.

Recipients

Remote and very remote schools which participate in the Good to Great Schools Program.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the program will be undertaken.

History of program

The program builds on the Flexible Literacy for Remote Primary Schools Program to expand to the learning areas of numeracy and science.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (STEM)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: April 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
6,120	5,925	6,525	5,450	-

Funding Type – Grant and procurement (ELSA)

Brief description

The Student Support Package (STEM) initiatives include:

- Three programs delivered by the Academy of Science (Primary Connections, Science by Doing and reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry) support student learning in science and mathematics and provide resources for teachers.
  - *Primary Connections* is a primary school science program, which aims to enhance teachers' confidence and competence for teaching science. The initiative provides comprehensive curriculum resources and professional learning which link the teaching of science with the teaching of literacy.
  - *Science by Doing* provides comprehensive online science resources for Australian teachers and students in Years 7 to 10. It includes curriculum units and professional learning modules and offers a practical way of implementing the Australian Curriculum.
  - *reSolve: Maths by Inquiry* provides teaching and professional learning resources that support teaching mathematics through inquiry-based methods that help students learn mathematics in fun and innovative ways.

The Australian Academy of Science is being funded to further extend these initiatives.

- *STEM Professionals in Schools* partners teachers with STEM professionals to enhance STEM teaching practices and deliver engaging STEM education in Australian schools. The program brokers and supports flexible partnerships between STEM professionals from industry, government and tertiary institutions, and primary and secondary teachers to engage students in quality learning in the STEM disciplines. CSIRO is being funded to continue delivering the program.
- *The Early Learning STEM Australia (ELSA)* pilot developed a series of play-based digital apps, linked to the Early Years Framework and the Australian Curriculum, to facilitate engagement in foundational STEM practices for preschool children and build the capacity of early learning educators. The University of Canberra is being funded to support the Foundation to Year Two expansion of the ELSA program to improve STEM literacy and numeracy in Australian schools.

- *Let's Count* is an early mathematics program for children aged three to five which is aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework. It supports early years educators and parents to develop the mathematics skills of the children in their care by noticing, exploring, and talking about mathematics using everyday activities. The Smith Family is being funded to expand the national reach of the Let's Count program to more early childhood and education services, and develop a Let's Count online facility and parent resource.
- *The Little Scientists program* aims to improve early learning educators' confidence and ability to introduce STEM concepts in a fun and engaging way to children in their care through training and support. FROEBEL Australia Limited (a program delivery organisation) is being funded to extend and evaluate the Little Scientists program.

Policy objective

To improve the STEM skills of students by providing classroom resources and professional learning for teachers.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

Existing Projects	2021–22 $'000s	2022–23 $'000s	2023–24 $'000s	2024–25 $'000s	2025–26 $'000s
Australian Academy of Science: *Primary Connections* *reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry* *Science by Doing*	2,150	2,125	2,125	2,150	-
STEM Professionals in Schools	1,000	1,000	1,150	1,150	-
ELSA pilot	1,200	1,200	1,350	1,350	-
Let's Count	1,270	1,100	1,250	150	-
Little Scientists	500	500	650	650	-
Total	**6,120**	**5,925**	**6,525**	**5,450**	-

Note: this includes funding for evaluations.

Recipients

Varies by program as outlined above.

Evaluation

Individual programs within this package will be evaluated separately.

History of program

- *Primary Connections*, *Science by Doing* and *reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry* were funded under the National Innovation and Science Agenda between 2018–20 ($3.740 million). Prior to that, *Primary Connections* and *Science by Doing* were funded under Maths and Science Participation and *reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry* was funded under STEM.
- STEM Professionals in Schools was funded under the National Innovation and Science Agenda between 2016–20 ($10 million)
- Let's Count was funded under the National Innovation and Science Agenda between 2016–20 ($4 million).
- Little Scientists was funded under the National Innovation and Science Agenda between 2016–20 ($4.16 million).
- The ELSA pilot was funded under the National Innovation and Science Agenda between 2016–20 ($8.041 million).

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Islamic Museum of Australia)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 22 April 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 November 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
700	700	300	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding of $3 million has been provided to the Islamic Museum of Australia over 2020–21 to 2023–24 to expand its education programs and facilities.

Funding will develop an education model that will include advanced educational resources and online learning platforms that allow access to educational programs aligned to the Australian Curriculum for students in years 4–10. The online learning platform will be made accessible nationally to all schools on an opt-in basis.

The initiative will also include an upgrade to the museum gallery, construction of a new multipurpose classroom, and will upgrade the Islamic Museum of Australia's online capabilities to service all Australian schools via a virtual museum tour.

Policy objective

The program seeks to strengthen social cohesion and tolerance and combat racism by providing school students and school communities with opportunities to deepen their interfaith understanding.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

The Islamic Museum of Australia is the recipient of grant funding.

Recipients

Schools and students will benefit from this program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the program will be undertaken.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Anti-Defamation Commission – Holocaust Education Digital Platform)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 16 April 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 November 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
750	750	750	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding of $3 million has been provided to the Anti-Defamation Commission (ADC) over 2020–21 to 2023–24 to its Holocaust education digital program.

The ADC will create a Holocaust education digital platform with a digitally enabled program that builds on the Click Against Hate platform. It will create a digital national network of certified Holocaust educators, leveraging Australian teachers to roll out the program in classrooms and connect into other schools involved across the nation.

To achieve this, ADC plans to:

- build a platform that can be utilised by students on a range of devices, catering for a broad range of accessibility needs
- complete production of a new education resource and integrate it into the platform, providing unique interactive experiences for students
- develop a digital onboarding and training program for teachers, so the program can be adopted with minimal manual intervention.

The program is expected to go live in 2023, after completion of Alpha phase and Beta testing/piloting.

Policy objective

The program seeks to strengthen societal cohesion and tolerance and combat racism by providing school students and school communities with opportunities to deepen their interfaith knowledge and understanding by educating communities about the Holocaust.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

The ADC is the recipient of grant funding.

Recipients

Schools and students will benefit from this program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the program will be undertaken.

History of program

This is a new program, which commenced 16 April 2021.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Emerging Priorities Program)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2020–21 Financial Year

TERMINATION DATE: 2022–23 Financial Year

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
23,657	4,050	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant and Procurement

Brief description

The Students Support Package (Emerging Priorities Program (EPP)) supports flexible responses to school education priorities and addresses the impacts of unexpected events on schools and students, including recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Policy objective

The EPP aims to improve the educational outcomes of school students, the engagement of students and their families with school education, and the wellbeing of school leaders, teachers and students.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

Amounts are subject to consideration of grant applications and individual circumstances.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Five existing projects have been funded under the EPP in accordance with EPP Program Guidelines – published 21 July 2021.

An Open Competitive Grant Opportunity has been undertaken to allocate remaining EPP funding in accordance with Grant Opportunity Guidelines – published 24 January 2022.

Recipients

Existing Projects	2020–21 $m	2021–22 $m	2022–23 $m	TOTAL $m
Education Services Australia *Maths in Schools*	1.0	0.5	0.0	**1.5**
The Smith Family *Catch-up Learning*	0	2.75	0.25	**3.0**
Bullyproof Australia Inc *Australian Martial Arts Youth Development Alliance (AMAYDA) Resilience Program*	0	1.2	0.80	**2.0**
Stand Tall Australia Ltd *Stand Tall Australia*	0	0.3	0	**0.3**
Australian Science Teachers Association *Science ASSIST*	0	0.25	0	**0.25**
Total	**1.00**	**5.00**	**1.05**	**7.05**

The acting Minister for Education and Youth announced the finalisation of the Open Competitive Grant Opportunity on 28 April 2022, and both successful and unsuccessful grant applicants were notified of the outcomes.

Evaluation

An evaluation of projects funded under the EPP is expected to be conducted during 2022–23.

History of program

The EPP was announced in the 2020–21 Budget. Additional funding of $10.4 million was announced in the 2022–23 Budget.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Students Support Package (Clontarf Foundation)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	16,065	16,306	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Clontarf Foundation program aims to increase Year 12 attainment and improve post-school pathways of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boys through participation in activities including sport and the promotion of healthy lifestyles designed to increase engagement. The 2020–21 Budget, included $39.8 million over four years to expand and extend its existing program, which supports the education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Currently, the Clontarf Foundation supports over 10,000 participants in 138 academies across Australia, with the additional funding to support an additional 2,000 places in the existing program by December 2022, and continue support available for 12,500 places for the 2023 calendar year.

The Department will take over management of this grant from the 2023 calendar year. Grant funding has most recently been managed by the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA).

Policy objective

The Clontarf Foundation program aims to increase Year 12 attainment and improve post-school pathways.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

The Clontarf Foundation is the recipient of grant funding.

Recipients

Schools and students will benefit from this program.

Evaluation

As part of their grant agreement arrangements, an evaluation was undertaken for NIAA (then PM&C) in 2017 – this is published on the NIAA website.

History of program

Funding of $146.3 million over five years from 2020–21 will be provided for a package of initiatives to improve education outcomes of young Australians, particularly disadvantaged students and those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to contribute to social cohesion *(Student Support Package).*

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Supporting Australia's Teacher Workforce

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Australian Teacher Workforce Data Collection	1,513	1,413	1,416	1,429	1,453
Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education	1,600	800	800	800	1,000

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Supporting Australia's Teacher Workforce

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Supporting Australia's Teacher Workforce — Australian Teacher Workforce Data Collection

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,513	1,413	1,416	1,429	1,453

Funding Type – Grant and Procurement

Brief description

The Australian Teacher Workforce Data collection (ATWD) provides a national picture of the teacher workforce by linking state and territory teacher workforce data with initial teacher education data.

The funding will support the ongoing collection and analysis of data nationally as well as commissioning research to explore issues affecting the teacher workforce as identified by the data.

Policy objective

Data from the ATWD will inform policy development and assist workforce planning at local and national levels to meet future workforce needs.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

Specific allocations are subject to consideration of projects and initiatives to support and conduct the ATWD collection.

Recipients

Funding to support the project is shared between all states and territories and the Australian Government and is provided to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) as the project manager.

Evaluation

Annual public reporting and reporting on progress to Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) and Ministers.

History of program

The need for better data sharing on the teacher workforce was a recommendation of the 2014 Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) Report, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* on how to improve teacher education in Australia. Since 2016, all governments have financially supported the development of the collection and since 2020 all have contributed data to the collection. The first public report using the data, the ITE Pipeline Report, was released in December 2020. The second, the Teacher Workforce Characteristics Report, was released in December 2021.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Supporting Australia's Teacher Workforce — Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,600	800	800	800	1,000

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

Since 2011 there has been a requirement, within the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures), that initial teacher education (ITE) programs would select students in the top 30 per cent of the Australian adult population for personal literacy and numeracy skills.

In 2015, all Education Ministers agreed that from 1 July 2016 the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) would be used as the means to demonstrate students have achieved the required standards of personal literacy and numeracy.

The Australian Government has responsibility for administering the LANTITE.

Policy objective

Implementation of improvements to the LANTITE are deemed critical by the Commonwealth to ensure all ITE students and (from 2023), all prospective ITE students, have fair and equitable access to undertake the LANTITE.

Eligibility

The LANTITE is partially funded on a cost-recovery basis and candidates are charged fees of $98 for a single component (literacy or numeracy) and $196 for both components. The cost of sitting the test cannot be added to students' HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP loans.

Funding available to recipients under the Program

The Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) is the sole recipient.

Recipients

The Department manages the LANTITE on behalf of states and territories on a cost recovery model delivered through a service provider, ACER, which has administered the LANTITE since its inception.

Evaluation

In 2019, following four years of implementation, the Department contracted dandolopartners to review how the test has been implemented across different jurisdictions and higher education providers (HEPs) with the intent that outcomes would inform future policy decisions regarding the test.

The Department also receives annual and quarterly administrative reports produced by ACER for ongoing program evaluation.

History of program

In response to the TEMAG report, in 2015 all Education Ministers agreed to amend the Standards and Procedures to stipulate that, commencing from 1 July 2016, the LANTITE will be the means to measure if an ITE student possesses personal literacy and numeracy skills equivalent to the top 30 per cent of the Australian adult population.

In the first four years (2016–19) of national implementation, more than 174,000 sessions of the LANTITE were delivered to over 80,000 individuals. In 2020, more than 19,900 unique candidates attempted one or both components of the test.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
City-Country Partnerships Measure	8,860	8,965	7,166	-	-
Building on Country Boarding Schools Measure	2,640	26,980	26,980	9,970	-
Scaling Up Proven Reading Programs Measure	3,294	7,169	7,169	3,819	1,900

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives – City-Country Partnerships Measure

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 January 2022
TERMINATION DATE:	31 December 2024
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
8,860	8,965	7,166	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The City-Country Partnerships (CCP) Program will enable the development of formal partnerships between high performing metropolitan independent schools and remote schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The program will help boost outcomes of Indigenous students, particularly in reading, mathematics, attendance and school completion.

This measure is part of the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

Policy objective

The City Country Partnerships Measure aims to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes, attendance, and educational engagement, which are key drivers that will accelerate progress toward the 2031 Closing the Gap Target of 96 per cent Year 12 or equivalent attainment (Target 5). This proposal builds on the success of existing school partnerships, such as those between Wesley College and Yiramalay School in the Kimberley and between Haileybury College and Haileybury Rendall School Darwin.

This model is a mechanism to lift outcomes in remote schools, through:

- improving principal leadership and operational management
- addressing workforce shortages through teacher transfers
- providing pedagogical leadership to teachers to lift the quality of teaching in remote schools.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A delivery organisation will be selected through a competitive grant process to engage with schools and communities to identify and implement successful partnerships. The grant round has closed and the Department is in the process of considering applications. The grant round was open from 21 February 2022 to 21 March 2022 and was managed by the Community Grants Hub in accordance with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines. Once the Department's assessment is finalised, a decision will be sought from the delegate (the Minister). Once engaged, the delivery organisation will develop a process for identifying partnerships, including working with Indigenous communities, and interested schools. The delivery organisation will be required to seek sign-off on partnership arrangements from the Minister for Education, though the Department.

Funding available to recipients under the program

	Funding 2021–22 – 2023–24 ($ million)			
	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	Total
DESE Administered: Measure	$8.733	$8.836	$7.035	$24.604
Delivery Organisation	$1.905	$1.905	-	$3.810
Agreed Formal Partnerships	$6.828	$6.931	$7.035	$20.794
DESE Administered: Evaluation	$0.127	$0.129	$0.131	$0.387

Recipients

The recipients of this funding will be a delivery organisation, schools identified as partners, and an independent evaluator.

History of program

This program forms part of the $126 million Schools and Youth Closing the Gap package, aimed at increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people attaining a Year 12 qualification, through the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives – Building Boarding Schools on Country Measure (SPP)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1 & 2

START DATE:	5 August 2021
TERMINATION DATE:	30 June 2025
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,640*	26,980	26,980	9,970	-

*Excludes $6.8m funding administered by the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

This measure over the forward estimates from 2021–22, will enable three new residential schools to be built, and a fourth facility to be upgraded. The new system of four studio schools is expected to service approximately 2000 remote Indigenous students.This measure is based on a funding request from Studio Schools of Australia (SSA) in partnership with Indigenous communities to build three new Studio Schools in or near Nhulunbuy, NT, Windjana Gorge in the Kimberley region of WA, and the Pilbara region of WA, and upgrade the Yiramalay school in the Kimberley region. The measure also includes the construction of an Indigenous Education and Research Centre at one of the school sites. Funding will be provided through block grant authorities (BGAs) for construction, and to SSA for ongoing operation and maintenance of the facilities.

Policy objective

Establishing new on Country boarding facilities would ensure schooling options reflect local needs, cultural backgrounds, and aspirations. Students who must board away from home face challenges staying connected to school as a result of homesickness and other difficulties transitioning into boarding schools and life in major cities or regional areas far from home. This measure aims to reduce those difficulties by bringing boarding options closer to home and increase student attendance, retention and outcomes as key drivers of Year 12 attainment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding to SSA will be managed through the relevant BGAs.

Funding available to recipients under the program

	Funding 2021–22 – 2025–26 ($ million)					
	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	Total
DESE Administered: Measure	$2.575	$26.850	$26.850	$9.775	-	$66.050
DESE Administered: Evaluation	$0.065	$0.130	$0.130	$0.195	-	$0.520
NIAA Administered	$6.800	-	-	-	-	$6.800

Recipients

The recipient of this funding will be SSA and an independent evaluator.

History of program

This program forms part of the $126 million Schools and Youth Closing the Gap package, aimed at increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people attaining a Year 12 qualification, through the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Closing the Gap – Schools and Youth Initiatives – Scaling Up Proven Primary Reading Programs

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
3,294	7,169	7,169	3,819	1,900

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

The Scaling Up Proven Primary Reading Programs measure comprises three initiatives – the MultiLit program, an expansion of the Good to Great Schools Australia (GGSA) pilot and the implementation of the Scaling Up Success in Remote Schools project (building on the Kimberley Schools Project). Funding of $25 million has been provided to scale up and expand evidence-based literacy programs that are already successfully improving the key drivers of Year 12 attainment, including student attendance, retention and outcomes with a focus on reading and literacy.

- $10 million to implement targeted teaching practices and increase attendance in remote WA schools, drawing on the proven success of the Kimberley Schools Project (Scaling up Success in Remote Schools project).
- $8 million to grow the MultiLit (Making Up Lost Time in Literacy) program delivering phonics-based reading instruction in primary schools.
- $5 million to expand the pilot run by GGSA, bringing total current funding to GGSA of $10.8m, which is improving teacher practice and reading outcomes through explicit instruction.

Policy objective

To improve outcomes in the drivers of Year 12 attainment, with a focus on reading and literacy outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

MultiLit and GGSA were both chosen through closed selections as programs that have demonstrated success in improving student outcomes.

The Department has procured the services of Edith Cowan University (ECU) to design the Scaling Up Success in Remote Schools project, including consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. ECU will identify site selection and identify relevant delivery partners, which will be informed by a range of factors, including relevant data on population and socioeconomic data, state intelligence, teacher attrition rates, stakeholder consultation and local community need and aspirations.

Funding available to recipients under the program

	Funding 2021–22 – 2025–26 ($ million)					
	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	Total
Administered: Scaling Up Success in Remote Schools	-	$3.888	$2.888	$1.525	$1.700	$10.000
Administered: MultiLit	$2.500	$1.500	$2.500	$1.500	-	$8.000
Administered: Good to Great Schools Australia	-	$0.750	$1.750	$1.750	$0.750	$5.000
Administered: Evaluation	$0.044	$0.031	$0.031	$0.044	$0.200	$0.350

Recipients

Funding for the MultiLit program is provided under a grant arrangement and is available to MultiLit only.

Funding for GGSA pilot is provided under a grant arrangement and is available to GGSA only.

The recipients for the Scaling Up Success in Remote Schools Project funding are still to be determined following the outcome of the design consultancy with ECU.

History of program

This program forms part of the $126 million Schools and Youth Closing the Gap package, aimed at increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people attaining a Year 12 qualification, through the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Respectful Relationships Education

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s					
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Respectful Relationships Program	-	4,123	196	198	363
National Consent Survey	2,000	3,000	-	-	-

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Respectful Relationships Education – Respectful Relationships Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2023

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
-	4,123	196	198	363

Funding Type – Grant and Procurement

Brief description

Continued delivery of national respectful relationship education for primary and secondary school students through the redevelopment of the respectful relationships education online platform and new evidenced-based classroom materials, in line with the Australian Curriculum. The investment provides the opportunity to engage further with state and territories to strengthen collective ownership of nationally available resources.

Policy objective

Respectful relationships education provides an effective strategy to reduce violence against women and girls. There is a continued need for national leadership and investment in respectful relationships education. Consistent with the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (National Plan) and the next 10-year plan (2022–2032), embedding primary prevention approaches at the school gate through the provision of freely available national respectful relationships education resources is key to ensuring children and young people are supported to develop more respectful attitudes towards women and to reduce future incidents of gender-based violence.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

Specific allocations and recipients are subject to procurement and granting processes, which are yet to occur.

Recipients

Suppliers to be decided.

History of program

The 2022–23 Budget included a $1.3 billion (over six years) for the Women's Safety Package, commencing 2021–22. Of this, $222.6 million will be provided to strengthen initiatives to prevent gendered violence.

As part of this package, $40.1 million will be provided for further initiatives aimed at the prevention of family, domestic and sexual violence, including funding to support the continued development and delivery of respectful relationship education materials nationally.

The existing online platform, *The Good Society*, is the centrepiece of the Respectful Relationships program and contains around 300 resources for students from Foundation to Year 12. In response to public criticism of some elements of the website following its launch in April 2021, the department commissioned Monash University's Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre (Monash University) to undertake a review. Monash University critically assessed all materials against key indicators including being age appropriate and educationally sound, trauma informed and aligned to the Australian Curriculum and meeting the policy intent under the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan.

Redeveloping the platform and updating content will ensure the new resources reflect the recommendations of the Monash review and align with the revisions of the Health and Physical Education Australia Curriculum.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Respectful Relationships Education – National Consent Survey

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 29 April 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,000	3,000	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief description

Funding of $5.0 million over two years in 2021–22 and 2022–23 will be provided to the Australian Human Rights Commission to undertake a survey of secondary school-age students on understanding and experiences of consent education.

Policy objective

To improve prevention and response measures, the objectives of the project are to establish a benchmark on the understanding and experience of consent education and sexual harassment among children and young people against which change can be measured in three years' time, through:

- identifying the extent of consent education provided in schools
- assessing understanding and awareness of these concepts
- identifying the experience, nature and reporting over the lifetime and in the past 12 months
- using a child rights and gendered lens, analyse trends in the understanding, experience, nature and reporting these concepts
- make recommendations that will enable the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people to be enhanced and protected.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The sole recipient of this funding is the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Recipients

Australian Human Rights Commission.

History of program

This survey forms part of the Australian Government's $189 million package to strengthen prevention and early intervention efforts in family, domestic and sexual violence.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – Prioritising Mental Health – Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
-	-	-	-	-

Funding for this program will be met within existing resources with $8.919 million in administered funding over three years from 2022-23.

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief description

The Student Mental Health and Wellbeing package will develop nationally consistent mechanisms to better manage mental health and wellbeing concerns in schools, including a national measure of student wellbeing, national guidelines for the accreditation of mental health and wellbeing programs and trauma informed professional development support for teachers.

Policy objective

The Student Mental Health and Wellbeing package is comprised of three distinct, yet interrelated objectives:

National measure of student wellbeing: The national measure will develop an understanding of what wellbeing is, how it is measured across the country, and the current state of student wellbeing nationally. A national understanding will contribute to the further development of policy and programs to effectively support and track improvements in wellbeing and how these relate to student outcomes.

National guidelines: The National Guidelines for Accreditation of Mental Health and Wellbeing Programs will provide schools the tools and information they need to be able to select the right program to suit the needs of their school community.

Trauma-informed teacher training: Trauma-informed training will provide support for teachers to confidently manage, identify and assist students with mental health concerns and associated classroom behaviours. The training will be free and available to all teachers.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is provided via a procurement process, with all Australian Government procurement conducted by open tender or limited tender.

Recipients

Still to be determined, with end benefits flowing and being provided to schools and students.

History of program

This program was announced in the 2022–23 Budget, as part of continued funding for the Australian Government's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan.

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support – National Partnership – National School Chaplaincy Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation *(Federal Financial Relations Act 2009)*

START DATE: 29 October 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
61,435	61,435	61,435	61,435	61,435

Note – as a National Partnership, this appropriation sits with Treasury.

Funding Type – Treasury appropriation, national partnership

Brief description

The National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) (2019–22) was announced in the 2018–19 Budget. The NSCP supports student wellbeing through the delivery of pastoral care services provided by chaplains, and strategies to support the wellbeing of the broader school community.

This included ongoing funding of $61.4m per year. In 2019–20, an additional $1.96 million was provided to 297 bushfire-affected schools who requested access to the services of a NSCP chaplain.

School chaplains are required to undertake cyberbullying training provided by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner. This additional training, which commenced in July 2019, supports school chaplains to manage student wellbeing issues, assisting them to respond to the challenges in the school community and provide appropriate referral pathways.

A Project Agreement for 2019 to 2022 has been signed by all states and territories. Under the agreement, each state and territory must invite all schools in its jurisdiction to apply for NSCP funding. A new agreement (now known as the Federation Funding Agreement) will need to be negotiated with states and territories for commencement in the 2023 school year, alternatively the existing Project Agreement will be extended for an additional year pending the finalisation of a new Federation Funding Agreement commencing in the 2024 school year. The path taken will be a decision for the Education Minister in consultation with the Department of Treasury.

It is the responsibility of state and territory authorities to put in place appropriate processes that ensure participation by schools and students in the NSCP is voluntary, that chaplains may be from any faith and that chaplains are not permitted to proselytise.

Policy objective

Improve student wellbeing through the delivery of pastoral care services and student support strategies provided by chaplains.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All states and territories are participating in NSCP Project Agreement which is formed under the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.* All state and territories formed a cross sector panel consisting of government, Catholic and independent school representatives to select and prioritise schools for funding in their jurisdiction. All schools were invited to apply to participate in the NSCP and the cross-sector panel selected the schools to participate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Schools are eligible to receive up to $20,280 per year (or up to $24,336 per school in remote/very remote areas).

Recipients

Over 3,000 schools have been selected by the cross-sector panel in each jurisdiction to receive funding.

Evaluation

In 2017, the Department commissioned an evaluation of the NSCP (2014–2018). The findings of the evaluation have informed decisions about future program design and funding arrangements.

In 2021–22, the Department will commission an evaluation of the NSCP (2019–2022).

History of program

- 13 May 2014 – NSCP announced as part of the 2014–15 Budget.
- 19 June 2014 – High Court of Australia found that payments made by the Commonwealth under the NSCP were beyond the constitutional authority of the Commonwealth.
- 11 November 2014 – all state and territory Education Ministers sign the Project Agreement for the new NSCP 2015–18.
- 1 January 2015 – new NSCP commences.
- 8 May 2018 – Renewed funding for the NSCP announced as part of the 2018–19 Budget.
- 29 October 2018 to 24 January 2019 – all state and territory Education Ministers signed the Project Agreement for the renewed NSCP 2019–22.
- On 3 July 2019, cyberbullying training for NSCP chaplains commenced.
- On 17 January 2020, additional funding for school chaplains was announced to support students from bushfire declared communities.
- On 10 March 2020, NSW, QLD, SA and Vic received bushfire funding.
- On 7 May 2020, Tasmania received bushfire funding.
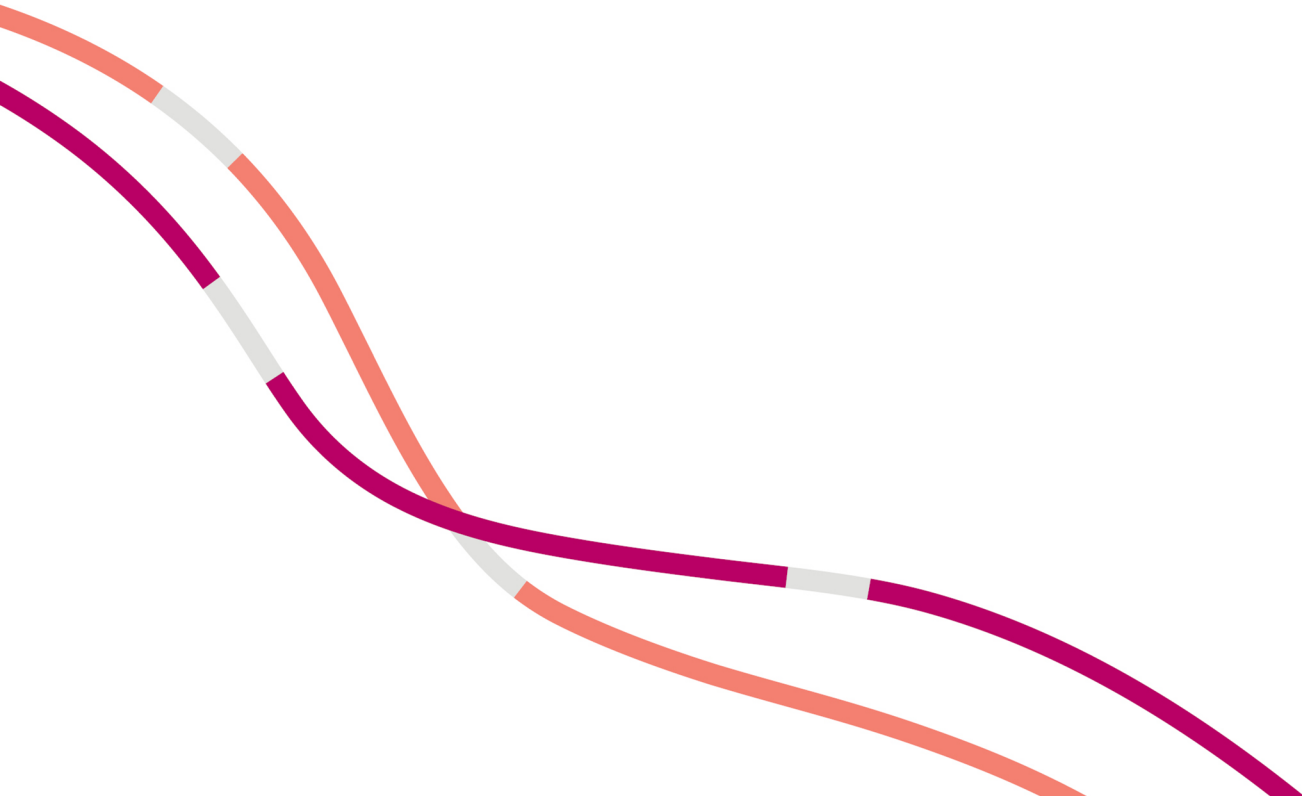
OUTCOME 2: HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL

Outcome 2 – Higher Education, Research and International

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education, and international quality research.

Contents

2.1 Commonwealth Grant Scheme

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Commonwealth Grant Scheme – Cluster Funding and Place Loadings	7,206,905	7,198,709	7,172,847	7,362,284	7,678,388
Commonwealth Grant Scheme – Transition Fund Loading	348,420	154,245	48,946	-	-
Total 2.1 Commonwealth Grant Scheme	**7,555,325**	**7,352,954**	**7,221,793**	**7,362,284**	**7,678,388**

2.1 Commonwealth Grant Scheme

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

2.1 Commonwealth Grant Scheme – Cluster Fund and Place Loadings

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2005

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
7,206,905	7,198,709	7,172,847	7,362,284	7,678,388

Funding type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

Through the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS), the Australian Government subsidises tuition costs for domestic higher education students across several qualification levels and discipline areas.

Policy Objective

A highly skilled workforce and educated community is important for economic productivity and social wellbeing. The CGS contributes to this objective through:

- making a direct contribution to the cost of education of Commonwealth-supported students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees
- meeting medical workforce training needs through the provision of support for initial-entry medical programs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Section 30-1 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) sets out eligibility for CGS funding. To be eligible a provider either needs to be listed on Table A under section 16–15 of HESA and have entered into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth or meet all the following criteria:

- be allocated places by the Minister
- be listed in Chapter 2 of the CGS Guidelines
- have entered into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth
- can only receive funding for national priorities which includes teaching and nursing, n.b. Bond University does not receive CSPs.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The Australian Government provides funding based on the number of Commonwealth Supported Places an institution delivers in each funding cluster or the Maximum Basic Grant Amount for bachelor, sub-bachelor, and non-research postgraduate courses and designated (medicine courses) courses, whichever is lower.

Since 2021, universities have had the flexibility to manage the mix of course levels that is most appropriate for their students and communities within their funding envelope.

The Job-ready Graduates package simplified funding clusters and student contribution bands, so funding is better aligned with the cost of delivering teaching and scholarship.

Continuing students (enrolled before 1 January 2021) studying units in disciplines with increased student contribution amounts will be grandfathered meaning they continue paying the same, lower amount as they would have had these reforms not been implemented. The current Commonwealth contribution rates can be found on the DESE website.

Recipients

Ongoing funding is currently provided to the 38 public universities listed on Table A of HESA and six private universities and non-university higher education providers listed in Chapter 2 of the CGS Guidelines. Public universities receive most of the funding under the CGS as private providers only deliver around one per cent of total CSPs.

History of program

The CGS replaced the operating grants system from 2005. The CGS provides funding to each eligible higher education provider for a specified number of CSPs in a given year.

From the beginning of 2012 until the end of 2017, public universities were able to decide how many domestic students they enrol in bachelor level courses (excluding medicine) and receive funding for these CSPs. This arrangement was known as the 'demand driven funding system'. In the 2017–18 MYEFO, the Australian Government announced that it would cap the amount of funding it pays to public universities for bachelor courses (non-designated courses). The intention of this policy was to deliver savings to the budget and more closely link funding levels to performance.

All other eligible providers (non-Table A providers) are funded for CSPs based on allocations by the Government.

2.1 Commonwealth Grant Scheme – Transition Fund Loading

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
348,420	154,245	48,946	-	-

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

The Transition Fund Loading (TFL) ensures universities are compensated for any base funding losses during 2021–2023 as a result of the implementation of the Job-ready Graduates (JRG) package.

These amounts were calculated in 2021 (for all years from 2021–2023) and have been published in the Commonwealth Grant Scheme Guidelines 2020. These amounts will not be subject to any change or reconciliation process.

Policy Objective

The objective of the TFL is to ensure that universities have financial stability and certainty during a transition period of 2021 to 2023 to adjust to the revised funding arrangements implemented under the JRG package. These revised funding arrangements include changes to the Commonwealth contribution and student contribution amounts for various fields of education.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Transition Fund Loading is limited to Table A universities. Universities do not need to apply for TFL funding, as it will be paid to universities that receive base funding losses in any year from 2021–2023 (calculated for each individual year) as a result of the implementation of the JRG package.

Recipients

All universities except for the University of South Australia and Macquarie University will receive TFL payments across 2021 to 2023 (University of South Australia and Macquarie University do not get TFL as their base funding increased under JRG). The individual amounts to be paid to each university can be found in Chapter 7 of the Commonwealth Grant Scheme Guidelines 2020 and are shown below.

Provider	2021	2022	2023
Australian Catholic University	$18,285,366	$5,840,065	$7,059,894
Central Queensland University	$9,375,852	$4,435,346	-
Charles Darwin University	$1,691,107	-	-
Charles Sturt University	$4,983,540	-	-
Curtin University	$14,391,145	$9,330,049	$3,524,622
Deakin University	$18,256,205	-	-
Edith Cowan University	$10,892,573	$8,934,642	$6,531,839
Federation University Australia	$4,574,875	$1,114,043	-
Flinders University	$3,037,021	-	-
Griffith University	$9,484,283	-	-
James Cook University	$1,710,162	-	-
La Trobe University	$10,823,720	-	-
Macquarie University	-	-	-
Monash University	$32,377,194	$19,057,398	$1,553,368
Murdoch University	$9,208,339	$8,957,821	$8,445,300
Queensland University of Technology	$16,324,821	-	-
RMIT University	$17,180,282	$9,383,283	$1,324,269
Southern Cross University	$5,932,284	$3,454,829	$755,869
Swinburne University of Technology	$10,913,819	$6,649,482	-
The Australian National University	$4,335,173	$2,658	-
The University of Adelaide	$4,201,132	-	-
The University of Melbourne	$14,875,246	$10,013,005	$5,046,922
The University of New England	$3,746,400	-	-
The University of Newcastle	$12,825,842	$8,290,002	$3,298,106
The University of Queensland	$24,704,496	$18,744,969	$10,722,434
The University of Western Australia	$7,838,817	$4,910,309	$1,986,768
University of Canberra	$7,144,539	$6,550,444	$4,261,265
University of New South Wales	$22,833,351	$16,499,906	$9,828,192
University of Notre Dame Australia	$1,737,194	$1,195,455	$818,459
University of South Australia	-	-	-
University of Southern Queensland	$8,741,362	$6,910,851	$3,593,949
University of Sydney	$16,117,001	$11,241,571	$1,673,225
University of Tasmania	$17,080,563	$2,355,425	-
University of Technology Sydney	$20,273,844	$14,571,559	$8,692,091
University of the Sunshine Coast	$16,894,494	$7,880,182	$3,867,135
University of Wollongong	$12,013,411	$10,503,934	$7,807,491

Provider	2021	2022	2023
Victoria University	$7,105,126	-	-l
Western Sydney University	$13,964,915	$13,771,063	$7,099,169

History of program

The TFL was announced as part of the Job-ready Graduates package in mid-2020. TFL amounts were listed in the CGS Guidelines in late 2021.

2.2 Higher Education Superannuation Program

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Higher Education Superannuation Program	131,494	125,148	118,512	111,800	105,029
Total 2.2 Higher Education Superannuation Program	**131,494**	**125,148**	**118,512**	**111,800**	**105,029**

2.2 Higher Education Superannuation Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1983

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
131,494	125,148	118,512	111,800	105,029

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

Under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)* the Higher Education Superannuation Program (HESP) provides supplementary funding to eligible higher education providers to meet certain superannuation expenses incurred for staff who are members of relevant state government emerging cost superannuation schemes. These state-based emerging cost superannuation schemes have been closed to new members for some time. The number of current members in these schemes is declining but costs are expected to continue emerging for up to the next 70 years. For universities in Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, the Commonwealth pays 100 per cent of the supplementation amount up-front and then recovers a proportion of the funding from these states under historical cost-share arrangements.

In 2015, superannuation supplementation payments resumed to universities in New South Wales (NSW) after a gap of fourteen years. Payment arrangements for NSW universities are different to the arrangements for other states and are governed by the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments in December 2014.

For NSW universities, the Commonwealth pays 78 per cent of the cash requirements forecast by NSW State Super, and universities bill the NSW government separately for the remaining 22 per cent.

HESP is administered in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 – Other Grants Guidelines (Education) 2012*.

Policy Objective

The program provides supplementary funding to assist eligible higher education providers to meet certain superannuation expenses incurred for staff who are members of relevant state government emerging cost superannuation schemes, which are largely unfunded.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To receive a grant under the program, a provider must have former employees who are members of one of the following superannuation schemes or funds:

- New South Wales State Superannuation Scheme
- New South Wales State Authorities Superannuation Scheme
- New South Wales State Authorities Non-Contributory Scheme
- Victorian State Superannuation Fund – Revised Scheme
- Victorian State Superannuation Fund – New Scheme
- Western Australian Government Employees Superannuation Scheme
- South Australian Superannuation Fund
- Tasmanian Retirement Benefits Fund
- Catholic Superannuation Fund
- Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme
- Public Sector Superannuation Scheme.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The level of supplementary funding under HESP is demand driven.

Funding is determined by the Minister and a liability exists for the life of members and their beneficiaries. The program has an estimated remaining life of up to 70 years with an expected total liability of approximately $7–$8 billion over that time.

Cost Sharing arrangements are in place with:

- Victoria
- Western Australia
- South Australia
- Tasmania
- NSW – governed by the terms of a MOU signed in December 2014.

Recipients

Only the Higher Education Providers listed below are eligible to receive grants under this program:

- Deakin University
- La Trobe University
- Monash University
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- The University of Melbourne
- Federation University of Australia (formerly University of Ballarat)
- Victoria University
- Curtin University of Technology
- Edith Cowan University
- The Flinders University of South Australia
- The University of Adelaide
- University of South Australia
- University of Tasmania
- Charles Darwin University
- University of Canberra
- Australian Catholic University
- The University of Sydney
- The University of New South Wales
- Macquarie University
- University of Newcastle
- Southern Cross University
- University of Technology, Sydney
- University of New England
- University of Western Sydney
- University of Wollongong
- Charles Sturt University

Evaluation

N/A.

History of program

Up until 1974, the states were responsible for the majority of Higher Education funding, including the funding of superannuation entitlements. From 1974, the Australian Government assumed full responsibility for the funding of higher education.

Prior to the 1983 introduction of the Superannuation Scheme for Australian Universities (SSAU), now known as UniSuper, university staff belonged to various institution-based and state-based superannuation schemes. While most of the institution-based schemes were rolled into UniSuper, staff in the state-based emerging cost schemes continued as members. Emerging cost superannuation schemes benefits are only funded as and when they become payable to the individual. To assist higher education providers in meeting the costs associated with staff in these largely unfunded state-based superannuation schemes, HESP was introduced. Only the NSW emerging cost superannuation schemes are partially funded.

In 1987, the Australian Government decided that it would limit its exposure to accruals of superannuation since 1982 to 14 per cent of salaries and share the costs of past accruals in line with the funding arrangements that operated at the time benefits accrued. From this point forward the Commonwealth and states shared responsibility for the cost of benefits accrued before 1974; the Commonwealth was responsible for the cost of all benefits accrued between 1974 and 1982 and for costs up to 14 per cent of salaries for the post-1982 period, with the states responsible for any residual in this last period. Cost-share tables were developed to allow implementation of this cost-sharing arrangement.

Cost-sharing arrangements with the NSW Government broke down in 2000, with NSW ceasing cost-recovery payments in that year and the Commonwealth ceasing supplementation payments to NSW universities in 2003. The 2014–15 Budget included provision in the Contingency Reserve for the resumption of payments under the HESP to eligible NSW universities, subject to the agreement with the NSW Government.

The Commonwealth and NSW Governments have now resolved the issues surrounding cost-sharing arrangements for NSW universities with the signing of a MOU executed on 5 December 2014. Under the MOU both governments share responsibility for funding the cost of superannuation expenses incurred for former NSW university employees who are members of eligible old state-based superannuation schemes on a cost share basis of 78:22 per cent for the Commonwealth:NSW respectively.

NSW universities start to receive funding from both governments when assets in the superannuation reserve accounts are run down to a one-year asset buffer level. The first payments to NSW universities by the Commonwealth resumed in March 2015.

Financial Statements

The Department recognises both a provision for unfunded university liabilities (Provision for Grants), and also the state's share of the liability (Grants Receivable) and its associated provision for Doubtful Debts if relevant, all of which are actuarially valued annually for the Department's Financial Statements.

2.3 Higher Education Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
National Disability Coordination Officer Program	4,480	4,556	4,624	4,698	4,769
National Microcredentials Marketplace	1,060	530	-	-	-
Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching	7,126	7,281	7,920	8,071	9,714
Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships	15,449	4,500	-	-	-
Tertiary Access Payment	25,768	40,298	50,930	52,899	52,824
Tertiary Access Payment (University)	1,816	-	-	-	-
Central Coast Health and Wellbeing Precinct	2,500	2,500	750	-	-
Central Queensland School of Mining and Manufacturing	15,000	1,500	-	-	-
Collaboration Pilots – Industry 4.0	3,560	3,140	-	-	-
Collaboration Pilots – Naval Shipbuilding	521	-	-	-	-
Disability Support Program	8,023	8,132	8,367	8,572	8,791
Higher Education and Offshore Credentials	-	9,036	6,131	4,696	6,888
Improved Support for Regional Universities	14,021	10,862	12,561	14,640	14,522
Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund	267,749	265,033	272,725	278,928	286,018
Jobs and Growth in Tasmania	65,000	25,000	12,000	-	-
National Institutes	233,895	239,055	245,962	251,993	258,417
National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund	226,264	231,255	237,938	243,771	249,986
Quality Initiatives	528	540	556	569	584
Women in STEM	6,549	7,882	6,448	2,815	-
Total 2.3 Higher Education Support	**899,309**	**861,100**	**866,912**	**871,652**	**892,513**

2.3 Higher Education Support – National Disability Coordination Officer program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2008

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
4,480	4,556	4,624	4,698	4,769

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program provides people with disability an equitable opportunity to access and participate in tertiary education and reach their graduate employment goals. A national network of 30 NDCOs, employed through 15 host providers, work with a range of stakeholders (schools, TAFE institutes, employment agencies and disability services) to improve coordination and collaboration among service providers and build their capability to support people with disability.

Policy Objective

The NDCO program aims to:

- improve linkages between schools, tertiary education providers, employment service providers and providers of disability programs and assistance at all government levels
- improve transitions for people with disability between school / community and tertiary education, and then to subsequent employment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Current grant agreements with 15 host providers end on 30 June 2022. On 31 March 2022, the delegate approved a six-month extension to the grant agreements to 31 December 2022, enabling a transition period for host providers and NDCOs, while government considers the findings and recommendations from the program's recent review. During the transition period, NDCOs will prioritise work towards key elements of the review recommendations, engaging with the department to provide advice on the design and implementation of a new program model.

Under the current grant agreements, NDCO host providers have received a total of $594,000 (GST exclusive) for each of their regions. During the transition period, each region will be eligible for a

milestone payment of $69,621 (GST exclusive) and a travel allowance payment of between $600 and $15,000 payable to those host providers delivering the program in outer metropolitan and regional areas.

Recipients

- Centre for Disability Studies (The University of Sydney)
- Community Solutions Group
- Deakin University
- Edge Employment Solutions Inc.
- Inner Melbourne VET Cluster
- Mission Australia
- Steps Group Australia Ltd
- TAFE Queensland
- TAFE SA
- The Busy Group Ltd
- University of Newcastle
- Verto Limited
- Western Sydney University
- Wodonga Institute of TAFE
- University of Tasmania

Evaluation / Review of the NDCO Program

ORIMA Research reviewed the NDCO Program in September 2021 to understand the barriers that exist, and the support needs required to better assist students with disability in the transition to, and participation in, tertiary education and subsequent employment.

The review also examined the current landscape of government programs and services, engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders to seek their views on the challenges, gaps and opportunities that face people with disability in accessing tertiary education and employment. Stakeholders included: people with a disability and family members; host providers; coordination officers of the NDCO Program; government representatives; and other external stakeholders, such as providers of related tertiary education and employment services.

History of program

The NDCO program commenced on 1 January 2008, combining the previous Regional Disability Liaison Officers (RDLO) network and the Disability Coordination Officer (DCO) program. The RDLO network commenced in 1994 and was hosted by universities in 10 regions of Australia. The DCO program commenced in late 2002 and built on the RDLO network.

2.3 Higher Education Support – National Microcredentials Marketplace

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: TBC

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,060	530	-	-	-

Funding Type – *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Act 1997*

Brief Description

The Microcredentials Marketplace (the Marketplace) will be a nationally consistent platform for students to compare short courses against tertiary education provider offerings and credit point value.

The Marketplace will also show arrangements for recognition of courses across tertiary education institutes. This will support student decision-making and help students understand how they can stack short-courses and credentials to build credit value and contribute to a qualification or larger skill set.

Policy Objective

The objective of the program is to provide students with greater flexibility to combine microcredential programs to contribute to a full qualification and support the engagement of Australians in lifelong learning. Additionally, the Marketplace will function as a monitoring and recording system, providing valuable data on the demand and use of microcredentials.

This program was announced in June 2020 as part of the Australian Government's Job-ready Graduates Package, with the aim of developing an educated and highly skilled workforce that would support Australia's post-COVID-19 recovery. It will also build upon the recommendation of the Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework, which proposed recognition of microcredentials to allow education providers to offer short, highly targeted courses.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A tender process was run in March and April 2021 to evaluate potential suppliers to deliver the platform. The Department invited seven suppliers to apply for the grant, based on their experience developing prototypes in the microcredentials space and/or building online student-centric platforms within the tertiary education sector. The Grant Selection Panel assessed applicants in accordance with recommendations from the DSS Community Grants Hub and recommended the Grant Opportunity be awarded to the Universities Admission Centre (UAC).

Recipients

The grant was awarded to the Universities Admission Centre (UAC), due to their demonstrated experience delivering successful national digital initiatives across the higher education sector through Course Seeker and as a current delivery partner for the National Credentials Platform.

Evaluation

Universities Admission Centre will be required to provide progress reports and a final assessment as part of the funding conditions.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2014

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
7,126	7,281	7,920	8,071	9,714

Funding Type – Procurement and Grant

Brief Description

The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) is a suite of Government-endorsed surveys, and occasional ad-hoc sector performance and student outcome related surveys that cover the student life cycle from commencement of study through to employment, including: the Student Experience Survey (SES); the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS); Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L); and the Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS). Results from the surveys are published on a purpose-built website, ComparED. ComparED helps Australians to make informed choices by bringing together survey data from higher education providers about students' experiences and graduate job outcomes.

This program has also funded the Higher Education Admissions Information Platform, Course Seeker, a recommendation of the Higher Education Standards Panel (the Panel) in its 'Improving the Transparency of Higher Education Admissions' report of October 2016 (available on the Department's website). Course Seeker is a national course comparison tool, where students can search over 8,500 courses and then compare up to four higher education courses at once. The department is working with Tertiary Admissions Centres to develop an arrangement for sharing ongoing costs and resources post-August 2021.

Policy Objective

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching improves incentives for higher education providers to strengthen their focus on quality teaching, provides quality assurance for the higher education sector, and informs student choice of provider and study area. The program encompasses all registered higher education providers and includes customised modules and supplementary surveys to capture information from international students and graduates. ComparED allows students to view over 100 higher education providers and simultaneously compare up to six different providers and/or study areas, focusing on student experiences, skill development, the teaching practices, employment outcomes, facilities and student support services.

Course Seeker provides comprehensive transparent information about the Australian tertiary admissions process which allows students to see all their options and make informed choices. It also assists students by narrowing down course options, filtering by ATAR, qualification, mode of study, study area or location. Students can then apply for their preferred course via the relevant channel such as their state Tertiary Admissions Centre or directly through an institution.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To ensure value for money in the conduct of Government-endorsed surveys, QILT is administered by an independent survey administrator under contract to the Department. In the first half of 2020 the Department undertook a competitive tender process to select an administrator for the period 2020–2023, selecting the Social Research Centre as the QILT administrator.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The 2022–23 Budget provides $33 million in ongoing administered funding from 2022–23 to 2025–26 for QILT and the Higher Education Admissions Information Platform. Between 2021–22 and 2023–24, $12.3 million (including GST) will be paid to the Social Research Centre for independent administration of QILT. A new tender process to select the administrator will be conducted prior to 2024.

Recipients

Recipients of QILT funding in the foreseeable future will be:

- The contracted QILT administrator for 2020–2023, the Social Research Centre for surveys in the higher education sector.
- The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for the administration of an international component of the Student Outcomes Survey of vocational education and training completers.
- English Australia for the administration of surveys in the English language intensive courses (ELICOS) sector.

Evaluation

In May 2020, the Department appointed the Social Research Centre as the QILT administrator for the next contract period from 2020–23 following a competitive tender process. The Student Experience Survey will be reviewed in 2022–23.

History of program

The QILT program was a 2014–15 Budget measure.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
15,449	4,500	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships (RRES) program supports students from regional and remote Australia to study undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational education courses from Certificate IV to PhD level. The scholarships are valued at up to $18,000 each and assist scholarship recipients with the costs of study for the duration of their course. A further $500 is available to scholarship recipients to support an internship.

Policy Objective

The RRES program aims to improve educational opportunities and attainment for regional and remote Australians by supporting students undertaking higher level tertiary study.

Eligibility for a scholarship

Eligibility requirements for RRES have varied across the different rounds.

All Rounds (Rounds One to Six)

- the applicant must be an Australian citizen or holder of a permanent humanitarian visa
- the applicant's permanent home address must be in a regional or remote area
- the applicant must provide evidence to demonstrate financial need
- the applicant must undertake a course of study from Certificate IV to PhD level
- the applicant must not have already commenced their course of study.

One Eligibility Round

- the applicant must undertake a STEM, health or agricultural science course of study (as classified by the Australian Standard Classification of Education 2001, broad fields of study)
- applicants for Round One must have commenced study in Semester 1, 2018.

Round Two Eligibility

- the applicant must undertake a STEM, health or agricultural science course of study (as classified by the Australian Standard Classification of Education 2001, Broad Field of Education)
- applicants for Round Two must have commenced study in Semester 1, 2019.

Round Three Eligibility

- the applicant can study any eligible course of study
- applicants for Round Three must have commenced (or be intending to commence) study any time during 2019.

Round Four Eligibility

- the applicant can study any eligible course of study
- the applicant must have commenced (or be intending to commence) study any time during 2020.

Round Five Eligibility

- the applicant can study any eligible course of study
- the applicant must have commenced (or be intending to commence) study any time during 2021.

Round Six Eligibility

- the applicant can study any eligible course of study
- the applicant must have commenced (or be intending to commence study any time during 2022.

Applying for a scholarship

The RRES program scholarships are administered by the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) under contract with the Department. Applicants must access the online QTAC scholarship portal, provide responses to the requested criteria and upload documentation as evidence of eligibility. The QTAC undertake assessment and shortlisting procedures for all applications and administer payments to successful recipients each Semester, after their institution's census date.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Scholarship recipients may receive up to $18,000, based on course length and type of study or training. A further $500 is available to recipients to support an internship.

Recipients

Recipients for rounds one and two are regional and remote students studying Certificate IV to PhD level qualifications in STEM, health or agricultural fields (as classified by the Australian Standard Classification of Education 2001, 'Broad Fields of Education').

Recipients for rounds three to six are regional and remote students studying Certificate IV to PhD level qualifications in any field of study.

Evaluation

Regular reporting by QTAC informs the program's evaluation.

History of program

The Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships program commenced in 2018, and aims to improve access to educational opportunities for regional students. Program funding was increased in November 2018, to $58.1 million (an increase of $34.1 million).

In March 2019, amendments were made to *Schedule 1AB of the Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997 (FF(SP) Regulations),* removing the requirement for RRES recipients to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), health or agriculture.

A new $1 million Creative Arts Scholarship (CAS) program was announced in December 2021, with 50 undergraduate scholarships becoming available in 2021. The CAS ran in parallel with Round Five of the RRES program, for students commencing studies in 2021 only.

To date, five application rounds have been completed, with over 4000 scholarships awarded:

- Round One, for students commencing in Semester 1, 2018, supported 504 students with scholarships
- Round Two, for students commencing in Semester 1, 2019, supported 1087 students with scholarships
- Round Three, for students commencing in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, 2019, supported 481 students with scholarships
- Round Four, for students commencing in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, 2020, supported 1099 students with scholarships. Special consideration was granted for applicants affected by natural disaster, including bushfire, floods and drought
- Round Five, for students commencing in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, 2021, supported 950 students with scholarships. Special consideration was granted for applicants affected by natural disaster, including bushfire, floods and drought. Additionally, all 50 CAS scholarships were allocated.

Round Six opened on 31 January 2022, with over 1000 scholarships available for students commencing studies at any time in 2022. Scholarships will be available on a rolling basis until fully allocated, with special consideration given to applicants affected by natural disaster.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Tertiary Access Payment

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

University

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,816	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Tertiary Access Payment

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
25,768	40,298	50,930	52,899	52,824

Funding Type – Annual Appropriation

Brief Description

The Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) is a one-time, non-indexed, means-tested payment for students from inner regional, outer regional, remote, and very remote areas who need to relocate to access higher-level tertiary study at an education provider located at least 90 minutes by public transport from their family home. Eligible students must undertake full-time, higher-level tertiary education (Certificate IV and above) in the year immediately following completion of Year 12.

Policy Objective

The TAP helps inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote school leavers with the increased costs associated with relocating to a new city or town to undertake tertiary study and provide support to assist with the first year of study. It provides an incentive for students to start tertiary study immediately after completing secondary school, rather than taking a gap year to save money or qualify for other types of income support. Research indicates students who take a gap year are, on average, less likely to complete their tertiary education, leading to lower attainment and completion rates for these students, compared to metropolitan counterparts. The TAP responds to Recommendation 2, Action 7 of the Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education (the Napthine Review).

The TAP is also expected to contribute to the Government's Closing the Gap targets, by improving participation rates of Indigenous students from outer regional and remote areas through providing improved financial support for further study.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for the TAP school leavers must:

- be from an inner regional, outer regional, remote, or very remote area as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard – Remoteness Area classification
- be undertaking a qualifying tertiary education course in the year following completion of Year 12 or equivalent level of education
- have relocated to study at an education provider or Regional University Centre located at least 90 minutes by public transport from their family home
- be enrolled in a Certificate IV or above qualification, with a minimum course duration of one academic year
- be enrolled in at least 75 per cent of the course's normal full-time study load, or an approved concessional study load
- be studying face to face, or in dual delivery method, for at least part of the course
- show that parent(s) or guardian(s) have a combined income of $250,000 or below in the relevant tax year or be exempt from providing parental income
- meet Australian citizenship or residency requirements.

Applications for the TAP are made through Services Australia.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Differential rates of payment are available to eligible students to reflect that participation and attainment rates decrease, and associated costs increase, the further away students are from a major city.

Eligible students from outer regional, remote and very remote areas will be paid up to $5,000 in their first year of study, with the payments made in two instalments; the first instalment of $3,000 will be paid 42 days after the qualifying tertiary course commencement date after enrolment is confirmed. The second instalment of $2,000 will be paid following confirmation of continued enrolment.

Eligible students from inner regional areas will be paid a single instalment of $3,000 in their first year of study. The $3,000 will be paid 42 days after the qualifying tertiary course commencement date, after enrolment is confirmed.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the first year of the TAP examining the program's appropriateness and effectiveness concluded in October 2021. The evaluation findings informed changes announced 17 December 2021 and implemented 1 January 2022 including moving to sole administration by Services Australia to simplify application processes for students and to deliver consistency.

A second stage evaluation is planned in 2023–24.

History of program

The TAP was implemented in response to the Napthine Review with an allocation of $177.8 million over four years. It was originally to be administered entirely through Services Australia, with policy responsibility with the department.

A decision in August 2020 resulted in amendment to the delivery, with 40 universities to administer the TAP to university students and Services Australia to administer to students at vocational education and training (VET) and non-university higher education providers (NUHEP).

In 2021, over 8,160 payments were available for eligible students from outer regional, remote and very remote areas. Of these payments 7,140 were allocated to 40 participating universities to administer. Services Australia administered the remaining 1,000 scholarships for students studying at VET and NUHEPs. Take up was lower than anticipated with a total of 2,123 students assessed as eligible (2,063 at universities and 61 at VET and NUHEPs).

An independent evaluation of the program was undertaken to measure the program's success against its outcomes and objectives. Stakeholders including the department, Services Australia, participating universities, peak bodies and students were consulted.

On 17 December 2021, changes to the TAP were announced:

- extending eligibility to include students from inner regional areas
- differential rates of payment, with outer regional, remote and very remote students continuing to be able to access up to $5,000, and inner regional students $3,000
- streamlining application, assessment and payment administration to all students through Services Australia.

On 1 January 2022, an amended payment opened for applications for students enrolled and studying at university, VET and NUHEP providers through Services Australia.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Central Coast Health and Wellbeing Precinct

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
2,500	2,500	750	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

Funding of $12.5 million over six years from 2017–18 (including $2.5 million each year in 2021–22 and 2022–23 and $750,000 in 2023–24) is provided for the Central Coast Health and Medical Campus of the University of Newcastle, to assist with the establishment of the Central Coast Medical School at Gosford Hospital.

This funding will be used to:

- develop a new Doctor of Medicine program to meet the specific needs of the Central Coast
- recruit and retain world-calibre clinical and academic staff to the medical school
- transfer 30 commencing medical places (150 at full capacity) from the university's existing Newcastle campus.

The funding provides $32.5 million capital support for the construction and fit-out of the new Central Coast Health and Wellbeing precinct. It is also supported by separate funding of $3.3 million over four years to increase student load in health-related disciplines relevant to the new medical precinct. This $3.3 million funding commenced from January 2019 and is being rolled out through the standard payment schedule to the university.

Policy Objective

This measure is designed to increase higher education accessibility and participation in the Central Coast region.

The Central Coast Medical School will be a new standalone branch of the university's existing medical school, enabling the entire five-year medical course to be delivered at Gosford. Medical, nursing and allied health students from the Central Coast will be able to study, train and work without leaving their home region. The medical school precinct will build regional health workforce capacity and provide access to world-class facilities to meet the health-care demands of the Central Coast's growing and ageing population.

Eligibility for program and process for application

As a Table A provider, the University of Newcastle is eligible for grants under Division 41–Other Grants, Paragraph 41–10 (1) (Item 1) of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. Item 1 provides for grants to promote equality of opportunity in higher education.

Over the course of 2014–2017, the University of Newcastle sought capital and transitional funding for its *Central Coast Health and Wellbeing Precinct* proposal, which includes the new medical school campus at Gosford.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A total of $12.5 million will be provided to the University of Newcastle over the grant period as specified in the Conditions of Grant.

Recipients

University of Newcastle.

Evaluation

Progress against the measure is being assessed in line with annual reporting requirements specified in the Conditions of Grant. The department paid $3.75 million in grant funding in the 2018–19 financial year. In May 2020, the Conditions of Grant were revised due to a delay in construction, which postponed the start of the medical program from 2020 until 2021. The revised Conditions of Grant re-align grant payments with the university's deferred expenditure estimates, with a final grant payment of $750,000 scheduled for the second half of 2023. The project remains on track for completion by 31 December 2023.

History of program

This $12.5 million grant to the University of Newcastle is a 2017–18 Budget measure titled *Central Coast Health and Medical Campus — additional funding*.

This funding builds on $32.5 million capital support provisioned for the construction and fit-out of the new Central Coast Health and Wellbeing Precinct from 2016–18. The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications is managing implementation of the $32.5 million capital funding commitment which is being provided from its Community Development Grants program. This capital funding will leverage an additional $20 million capital funding from the University of Newcastle and $20 million from the NSW Government.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Central Queensland School of Mining and Manufacturing

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 20 December 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
15,000	1,500	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

Funding of $30 million has been provisioned to CQ University (CQU) for the Central Queensland School of Mining and Manufacturing (CQSMM) project. This funding will support the construction of two purpose-built facilities and the purchase of state-of-the-art technical equipment. Work on the new School of Mining in Rockhampton and School of Manufacturing in Gladstone commenced in January 2021 and is scheduled for completion by mid-2022.

The project will also support CQU to provide manufacturing, mining and gas-related education and training services to other key areas in Central Queensland through a 'hub and spoke' model. The new facilities will also provide the opportunity for students to gain specialist skills in cutting-edge technologies, including virtual reality, drone operations and 3D printing.

Policy Objective

The project aims to address the needs of Central Queenslanders by providing students with the skills and training to meet the needs of industry, particularly for emerging jobs and technologies in the mining and manufacturing sectors. The investment will support Central Queenslanders to train locally in these industries which should, in turn, support more local jobs. It will also mitigate the risk of future skills shortages through preparing skilled workers in Central Queensland across all of the important traditional trade, higher education and short course disciplines that feed employees into the mining and resources, and manufacturing and service industries.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A total of $30 million was announced in the 2019–2020 MYEFO for the CQSMM. A Conditions of Grant was agreed between the Commonwealth and CQU on 20 December 2019 with the project period ending on 30 June 2026.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Grant funding of $30 million is available for CQU to deliver the project, subject to conditions of grant being met:

- $18.5 million for the School of Mining at the Rockhampton campus
- $11.5 million for the School of Manufacturing at the Gladstone campus.

Recipients

CQ University.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation required under the Conditions of Grant. However, the Conditions of Grant requires monitoring of measurable outcomes until 2026 to allow the impact of the project to be determined post-construction.

History of program

In May 2019, further funding of $30 million was provisioned for the establishment of the CQSMM at Gladstone and Rockhampton.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Collaboration Pilots – Industry 4.0

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: First half of 2021

TERMINATION DATE: June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
3,560	3,140	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grants

Brief Description

This pilot involves the design and delivery of studies in advanced manufacturing and applied technologies (Industry 4.0) using a multi-university advanced apprenticeship-style model. The pilot can support qualifications up to the level of Associate Degree, depending on the needs of students and employers in partnership with education providers. Embedded micro-credentials allow participants who do not complete their course to exit with a recognised qualification such as an Undergraduate Certificate. The pilot is being delivered to up to 120 participants by seven partner universities, which have Industry 4.0 Test Labs or equivalent facilities. Participants are sourced from small and medium enterprises in key manufacturing pipeline industries in each state and the Northern Territory. This trial expands the existing collaboration between Swinburne University of Technology and Siemens Ltd to build Australia's manufacturing capabilities.

Policy Objective

The pilot's objective is to improve graduate job-readiness in sectors that are vital to Australia's future productivity, through enhanced collaboration between universities and industry. The pilot tests the ability of an advanced apprenticeship-style model to build closer university-industry links, drawing on work-integrated learning to enhance skills and capacity in local manufacturing chains.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Partner universities were chosen based on the presence of Industry Test Labs or equivalent facilities. Approval of this program was a decision of the Government. It is not part of a broader grant program.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Up to $7.2 million has been allocated to seven partner universities. Individual universities receive a grant to cover course development and delivery for their participation in the pilot.

Recipients

- Swinburne University of Technology
- RMIT University
- University of Tasmania
- University of Technology, Sydney
- The University of South Australia
- The University of Western Australia
- Charles Darwin University

Evaluation

Participating universities provide regular progress reports and a final assessment as part of the conditions of funding. The department has commenced planning for a mid-term pilot evaluation, which will provide detailed information about the pilot's impacts, benefits, and outcomes, including opportunities and challenges for future consideration.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Disability Support Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 2004

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
8,023	8,132	8,367	8,572	8,791

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Higher Education Disability Support Program (DSP) provides funding to Table A higher education providers to assist domestic students with disability to access, participate and succeed in higher education. The majority of program funding is allocated to providers based on enrolment numbers of domestic students with disability at a provider. Funding is also paid to providers to reimburse up to 50 per cent of the costs of equipment and educational support for students whose needs exceed $10,000 in a calendar year. Support may include sign-language interpreters, invigilation costs, screen-reading and dictation software.

The program also provides annual funding of $150,000 to the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET), hosted by the University of Tasmania. This is an online resource that provides information, advice and resources to disability practitioners, teachers and students with disability on inclusive practices within the post-secondary education sector.

Policy Objective

To promote equality of opportunity in higher education by providing support to domestic students with disability to access, participate and succeed in higher education.

Eligibility for program and Process for Application

The DSP is administered in accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 – Other Grants Guidelines (Education) 2012.

The Conditions of Grant for the ADCET component were agreed between the Commonwealth and the University of Tasmania on 9 May 2019 and end on 30 June 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In 2021, a total grant amount of $7,764,995 was allocated to 37 eligible higher education providers. The allocation comprised $3,494,248 for reimbursement for high-cost claims, and $4,270,747 in grants for enrolments-based funding.

Recipients

Recipients are providers listed at Table A of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

Evaluation

2015 Review of the Higher Education Disability Support Program – KPMG

A 2015 Review of the DSP found that the program was successful in supporting higher education providers to meet the needs of students with disability and meet their obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and *Disability Standards for Education 2005,* but there were opportunities to improve program design. This included allocating funds to providers based on numbers of students with disability enrolled at a provider, ensuring a more equitable distribution of program funds.

The program changes resulted in 55 per cent of the program funds allocated to providers through an enrolments-based grant amount, and 45 per cent to reimburse providers for high-cost claims for educational support and equipment. The regulatory administrative burden on providers has been reduced due to the threshold for the claims-based amount increasing from $500 to $10,000 and requiring less claims to be submitted.

Changes to the DSP commenced on 1 January 2020, through amendments to the *Other Grants Guidelines (Education) 2012.*

History of program

Funding commenced in 2005.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Offshore and Higher Education Microcredentials

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APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003* **(domestic)**

START DATE: 1 July 2022 (domestic)

           1 July 2022 (offshore)

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing (domestic)

           30 June 2024 (offshore)

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	9,036	6,131	4,696	6,888

Funding Type – Grant (for domestic component), Procurement (for offshore component)

Brief Description

There are two components to this initiative: an offshore component and a domestic component.

The Offshore component will involve establishing an industry-led, micro-credentials competitive fund to provide $8 million in seed funding for Australian industry to develop up to 70 globally relevant micro-credentials over financial years 2022–23 and 2023–24. The industry-led, micro-credentials will be licensed to tertiary education providers for delivery to international students online and offshore and will be informed by skills needs identified by the National Skills Commission, or a global authority such as the International Labour Organisation.

The domestic component, the Microcredentials in Higher Education Pilot, will test the development and delivery of micro-credentials for domestic learners. Piloted micro-credentials will be in areas of national priority, will be between three and six months long, and will encourage higher education providers to engage with industry. Students participating in the pilot will be supported by expanded access to FEE-HELP.

The pilot will be complemented by the accelerated build-out of the Australian Skills Classification (ASC), with separate funding allocated to the National Skills Commission to achieve this. The ASC will function as a common taxonomy of skills to inform the development of micro-credentials and promote a systemic approach among universities.

Policy objective

The domestic component will test shorter forms of higher education qualifications, enabling universities to offer courses that address current and emerging workforce skill gaps. It will fund the creation of least 20 new micro-credentials and support up to 6000 places for students, through to the end of 2025, to undertake a higher education micro-credential course.

The objectives of the offshore component are set out in the *Australian Strategy for International Education 2021–2030,* released on 25 November 2021. The industry-led micro-credentials competitive fund will support tertiary education providers to diversify their education products and to deliver them offshore and online to new groups of international students. The international micro-credentials will be developed by industry and assist providers in offering industry relevant learning to support global skills needs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The domestic component is limited to Table A providers under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. The department intends to undertake one funding round per year and will invite Table A providers to apply in the middle of the year.

Regarding the offshore component, funding for the industry-led microcredentials is for professional associations and commercial bodies. These organisations can apply through a competitive selection process based on their ability to develop a microcredential in an area of global skills needs. Eligibility criteria, including a description of a microcredential, are further articulated in the Approach to Market ESE22–14 listed on Austender.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In the domestic component, funding is separate for development and delivery. Delivery funding is $2 million in 2022–23, which rises to $6.7 million in 2025–26. The maximum delivery funding per micro-credential is dependent on the field of education and funding cluster rate, proportional to the Equivalent Full Time Student Load (EFTSL) value of the micro-credential multiplied by the enrolments. Funding for design is $2 million, which will only be offered in 2022. The maximum development funding per micro-credential is $100,000.

Regarding the offshore component, available funding in 2022–23 is $5 million for up to 43 micro-credentials and available funding in 2023–24 is $3 million for up to 27 micro-credentials. Individual cost per micro-credential is subject to market responses sought through open competitive tender processes.

Recipients

In the domestic component, recipients are providers listed at Table A of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

Regarding the offshore component, funding is for professional associations and commercial bodies.

Evaluation

The initiative includes $75,000 to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework, to be followed by a formal evaluation in 2024–25 for which $350,000 is available. For the domestic component, universities will also have regular reporting requirements under the pilot, reporting on the design, delivery, student outcomes, and funding acquittal.

Regarding the offshore component, open competitive tender processes are subject to evaluation in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. The offshore program component will also be evaluated in 2024–25.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Improved Support for Regional Universities

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,021	10,862	12,561	14,640	14,522

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

Initial funding of $24.2 million was provisioned to establish and support the operations of 16 community-owned, Regional University Centres (Centres), previously known as Regional Study Hubs. Funding of $14.0 million was also provided for 500 Commonwealth supported places (CSP) to encourage higher education institutions to partner with the Centres. In April 2019, a further $15 million (including funding for CSPs) was provisioned for additional Centres. An additional $21 million to expand the program was provisioned in response to the Napthine Review, bringing total funding to $74.2 million.

Policy Objective

The program aims to address a demonstrated gap in access and support for study in regional and remote communities, and to complement, rather than replace, existing and planned tertiary education investments and activities in regional areas, such as satellite campuses and study centres. The Centres provide a unique opportunity to support regional and remote students to participate in high quality tertiary education while remaining in their community.

There are currently 26 Centres operating around Australia, in all states and the Northern Territory. Data provided to the Department by the Centres indicates that over 2400 students received support from the Centres in 2021.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for funding, Centres must be community-owned and a body corporate or be able to demonstrate that they are a prospective body corporate.

Funding is negotiated with Centres as part of developing Conditions of Grant.

Commonwealth Support Places

To encourage higher education institutions to support the Centres and regional students, the Government initially committed around $14 million for an additional 500 Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) at Centres by 2022. This included 185 CSPs for students commencing in 2019, evenly distributed across the first 16 successful Centre applicants (11.5 CSPs per Centre).

The additional $15 million in funding announced by the Government in 2019 to establish new Centres and the $21 million in funding announced as part of the Napthine Review response also included additional CSPs to support Centres.

The $21 million announced as part of the Napthine Review response also included funding to undertake a Partnerships Project. This project, completed in 2021, consulted with stakeholders and considered the role of university and other partnerships in the operation of Centres, including the role of CSPs. The project considered how best to support these partnerships through the program to improve efficiency and will inform future policy development for current and new Centres. The key findings and next steps are being considered.

Centres

The Centres are located across all states and the Northern Territory.

Regional University Centre Grant Recipient	State	Location/s (including planned locations)
		Established Centres
Geraldton Universities Centre	WA	Geraldton
Gippsland East Local Learning and Employment Network	VIC	Bairnsdale
Country Universities Centre Snowy Monaro	NSW	Cooma
Country Universities Centre Far West	NSW	Broken Hill
Country Universities Centre Goulburn	NSW	Goulburn
Country Universities Centre Clarence Valley	NSW	Grafton
Country Universities Centre North West	NSW	Narrabri Moree
Country Universities Centre Western Riverina	NSW	Griffith Leeton
West Coast Heritage	TAS	Zeehan Circular Head
Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA)	NT	Nhulunbuy Ramingining Milingimbi Galiwin'ku
Rural City of Murray Bridge	SA	Murraylands Riverland
Goondiwindi SILO (Schools Industry Links Outreach) Inc	QLD	Goondiwindi
Pilbara Universities Centre	WA	Port Hedland Karratha
Wuyagiba Bush Hub Aboriginal Corporation	NT	Wuyagiba
Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains	SA	Nuriootpa

Regional University Centre Grant Recipient	State	Location/s *(including planned locations)*
		Established Centres
UniHub Spencer Gulf	SA	Port Pirie Port Augusta
Great Southern Universities Centre	WA	Albany
Copper Coast Council University Centre	SA	Kadina
Country Universities Centre Balonne	QLD	St George Dirranbandi
Country Universities Centre Maranoa	QLD	Roma
Country Universities Centre Macleay Valley	NSW	Kempsey
Country Universities Centre Parkes	NSW	Parkes
Taree Universities Campus Regional University Centre	NSW	Taree
Country Universities Centre Southern Shoalhaven	NSW	Ulladulla
Country Universities Centre Bass Coast	VIC	Wonthaggi
Country Universities Centre Ovens Murray	VIC	Wangaratta Mansfield Corryong

Evaluation

A two-stage evaluation of the program will be completed, with a first-stage formative evaluation undertaken during the first half of 2021. A secondary evaluation will be conducted in 2023–24 and will follow on from program improvements as a result of the evaluation findings from 2021, as well as the implementation of new Centres.

History of program

The Centres received an initial funding allocation of $15.2 million in the 2017–18 Budget. Additional funding of $7.5 million was allocated in November 2018 to support a total of 16 Centres, with a further $14 million to support an additional 185 commencing bachelor CSPs from 1 January 2019, increasing to about 500 CSPs by 2022 for rural and regional students studying at the Centres.

In April 2019, an additional $15 million was provisioned to establish further Centres, bringing total program investment to $53.2 million.

A competitive grants process for the additional Centres opened on 3 October 2019 and closed on 13 December 2019. The application process was extended from the original deadline of 28 November 2019 to allow more time for bushfire-affected communities to apply. Nine centres were announced as part of this process, expanding the program in regions of Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia.

In June 2020, $21 million was announced to expand the Centres, including funding for up to eight new Centres, as well as key projects such as the establishment of a Regional University Centres Network to provide central support for the Centres, a program evaluation, a partnerships research project and a scoping study for determining future locations for Centres based on greatest need and likely success.

A competitive grants process for the up to eight new Centres opened on 28 February 2022 and closed on 25 March 2022.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
267,749	265,033	272,725	278,928	286,018

Note: In 2020–21, funding under the *Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund* (IRLSAF) is for January to July 2021 only as the program was introduced on 1 January 2021.

Funding Type – Program

Brief Description

The IRLSAF funds eligible universities to support Indigenous students and students from low socio-economic status (SES) and regional and remote backgrounds, underprepared students and universities operating in regional areas. The IRLSAF realigns new and existing funding by combining the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), National Priorities Pool, Regional Partnerships Projects Pool Program (RPPPP), Regional Loading, and Enabling Loading. Funding for these programs will be distributed according to current policy until 2023. During this time, the Australian Government will work with the sector to design a more refined model to support equity outcomes for implementation from 2024.

Please note the financial year funding figures in the above table include funding for the five IRLSAF programs: the HEPPP, National Priorities Pool Program, RPPPP, Regional Loading and Enabling Loading.

Policy Objective

The purpose of the IRLSAF is to promote equality of opportunity in higher education by providing grants to higher education providers, to encourage the enrolment of Indigenous persons, people from a regional area or a remote area, and people from a low SES background. The IRLSAF also provides funding to ensure that underprepared students undertaking enabling courses can do so for free and additional funding to universities operating in regional areas in recognition of the additional costs associated with being in these areas.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Table A providers are eligible to receive grants under all program components of the IRLSAF.

HEPPP funding is awarded to Table A providers on a formula-basis by percentage share of enrolments of domestic undergraduate students from low SES, regional and remote and Indigenous backgrounds.

Regional University Centres are also eligible to receive grants under the RPPPP. Funding under the RPPPP will be awarded on a project basis via a two-phase competitive grant round. The Phase 1 grant round was held during February – March 2022, with outcomes anticipated to be announced shortly.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding for the IRLSAF's component programs will be distributed according to current policy until 2023.

Recipients

Table A providers as listed in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and Regional University Centres (for the RPPPP only).

Evaluation

The Department commissioned the development of the Student Equity in Higher Education Evaluation Framework (Evaluation Framework) under the National Priorities Pool to support and guide evaluation of university-delivered HEPPP activities and inform a future national program evaluation. Work to deliver the Evaluation Framework was undertaken by the University of Queensland during 2021. The Department is currently considering implementation of the Framework in the context of broader policy initiatives.

The final model of the IRLSAF will be designed in conjunction with the university sector, and will be implemented in 2024. The final IRLSAF model will be a more refined and cohesive version of the individual programs that comprise it, ensuring that student equity outcomes are achieved in a cost-effective manner.

A stocktake, review and analysis of the enabling loading and regional loading under the 2022 National Priorities Pool Program is currently open for expressions of interest.

History of program

On 9 October 2020, the Australian Parliament passed the legislation for the Job-ready Graduates Package, which included introducing the IRLSAF.

2.3 Higher Education Support – Jobs and Growth in Tasmania

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: Funding commenced from 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
65,000	25,000	12,000	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Australian Government has committed $150 million to the University of Tasmania (UTAS) for the Jobs and Growth in Tasmania: The Education and Research Driven Economic Revitalisation of Northern Tasmania (Jobs and Growth in Tasmania) project. The funding will support UTAS to establish four world-class teaching, learning and research facilities in Launceston and Burnie. The facilities will better enable delivery of courses that address skills shortages and the social, economic and technical needs of communities in North and North-West Tasmania.

The project supports the broader relocation of existing UTAS functions in Launceston from the Newnham campus to the Inveresk campus, including the establishment of the Launceston-based Institute for Applied Science and Design. Construction of the first stage of the relocation, the Library and Student Experience building, is complete, and was formally opened at the new Inveresk campus on 22 February 2022. Construction has commenced on the remaining two buildings, the Rivers' Edge learning and teaching building and the Willis Street research facility, and these are expected to be completed by early 2024.

The project also supported the development of a new campus at West Park in Burnie. Construction of the main West Park learning and teaching facility is complete and the Field Building was formally opened by Commonwealth, state and local representatives on 10 September 2021.

Policy Objective

The project aims to address the needs of North and North-West Tasmania by providing increased regional educational opportunities to generate long-term jobs and economic growth in the regions. Through investment in critical infrastructure, it will provide first-rate teaching, learning and research facilities to attract more domestic and international students, and support the future of science and research in Northern Tasmania. This initiative is part of the Government's Smart Cities agenda with the relocation of the UTAS Newnham campus to Inveresk forming the centrepiece of the Launceston City Deal.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A total of $150 million was announced in the 2016–17 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook for the project. A Conditions of Grant was agreed between the Commonwealth and UTAS on 6 December 2017 with the project period ending on 30 June 2034.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Grant funding of $150 million is available for UTAS to deliver the project, subject to conditions of grant being met:

- $130 million for construction of three facilities as part of the relocation of the Newnham campus to Inveresk in Launceston
- $20 million for the construction of one new facilities as part of the redevelopment of the West Park campus in Burnie.

Recipients

University of Tasmania.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation is required under the Conditions of Grant. However, the Conditions of Grant require monitoring of measurable outcomes until 2034 to allow the impact of the project to be determined post-construction.

History of program

The 2016–17 MYEFO provided $150 million from 2017–18 to relocate and expand UTAS' campuses in Launceston and Burnie. In October 2019 the Government agreed to extend the funding profile for the project to 30 June 2024.

On 8 July 2019, Infrastructure Australia added the Northern Transformation program to its Infrastructure Priority List demonstrating that the initiative has undergone a rigorous business case assessment with proven significant community benefits.

2.3 Higher Education Support – National Institutes

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2005

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
233,895	239,055	245,962	251,993	258,417

Note: This table outlines funding announced at the 2022–23 Budget. Since then, this program has received $5 million in 2021–22 ($238.9 million) in redirected funding from Outcome 3.1 as part of the 2022 Pre-election Fiscal Outlook. This change in funding for Outcome 2.3 and Outcome 3.1 will be published against specific programs in the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2022–23.

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

National Institutes provides funding to the Australian National University (ANU), the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) at the University of Melbourne, the Australian Maritime College (AMC) at the University of Tasmania (UTAS) and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), in recognition of their national role in particular areas of higher education.

Policy Objective

The National Institutes program provides funding to:

- the ANU to support the institution's research schools, known collectively as the Institute of Advanced Study, with research and postgraduate training and responsibilities
- the AMC at the UTAS to support the provision of specialist training for people entering the maritime industry
- the BIITE to support its role as Australia's only Indigenous institution of higher education, serving students from rural and remote communities
- the VCA at the University of Melbourne to support its role in Victoria's artistic community.

Eligibility for program and process for application

National Institutes receive funding based on historical allocations. All allocations are specifically approved by the Minister under Part 2–3 'Other Grants' of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA).

Funding available to recipients under the program

Grants to support National Institutes are provided under Part 2–3 'Other Grants' of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA). Amounts are determined by the Minister and indexed annually.

Calendar Year Summary					
Provider	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
University of Tasmania	$8,180,000	$8,466,000	$8,661,000	$8,866,000	$9,108,000
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	$7,844,000	$8,118,000	$8,305,000	$8,521,000	$8,734,000
Australian National University	$212,915,000	$220,367,000	$225,436,000	$231,297,000	$237,079,000
University of Melbourne	$11,002,000	$6,212,000	$6,355,000	$6,520,000	$6,683,000

Recipients

Funding is provided to:

- The Australian National University
- Australian Maritime College at the University of Tasmania
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne.

Evaluation

The Government is examining options for the evaluation of the program.

History of program

In 2005, the Australian Government replaced the operating grants system with the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS). Three institutes had special funding arrangements under the old grant system that could not be funded under the CGS. These three institutes were designated 'National Institutes' and receive a component of their funding under the National Institutes Program.

In 2011, the *Other Grant Guidelines* were amended to include the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne as a National Institute to enable it to receive funding commencing in 2012.

2.3 Higher Education Support – National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
226,264	231,255	237,938	243,771	249,986

Funding Type – Special appropriation

Brief description

The National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund (NPILF) is a part of the Job-ready Graduates package of higher education reforms. The NPILF allocates grants to eligible higher education providers to encourage those providers to engage with industry to produce job-ready graduates.

Policy objective

The key objectives of NPILF are to:

- increase the number of internships, practicums and other innovative approaches to work-integrated learning
- increase the number of STEM-skilled graduates and improve their employment outcomes
- reward universities for the development of partnerships and collaboration with industry.

Eligibility

Table A providers are eligible to receive a grant under the NPILF.

Funding

The NPILF was established under the Other Grant Guidelines (Education) Amendment (No.3) 2020, made under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).

As provided for under these legislative guidelines, the total amount of funding available over the 2021–2024 calendar years is $900 million, with $225.25 million available in 2021. Table A higher education providers will receive an NPILF grant amount which corresponds to the number of CSPs they are allocated each year, based on the last year of verifiable data. The funding amounts will be indexed by CPI in line with broader HESA provisions. Funding amounts for 2021 and 2022 are outlined in the table below.

Band Criteria (CSPs)	2021 funding allocation	2022 funding allocation (indexed)
0 – 9,999	$3.25 million	$3.28 million
10,000 – 14,999	$4.75 million	$4.79 million
15,000 – 21,999	$7.00 million	$7.06 million
22,000 and above	$8.75 million	$8.83 million

Evaluation

2021 was a learning year, followed by the pilot period over 2022–2024. Eligible providers were required to submit a pilot plan in August 2021, with proposed target goal metrics and case study topics based on the three key policy objectives. During the pilot, eligible providers will be required to report on progress annually and submit a final report detailing outcomes against their pilot plan by the end of the 2024. A review of the pilot will be undertaken prior to 2025. This review will consider refinements to the funding allocation methodology to incorporate a performance-based component from 2025, drawing on learnings from the pilot phase of the program.

Band Criteria (CSPs)	2021 funding allocation	2022 funding allocation (indexed)

2.3 Quality Initiatives– Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI)

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 6 May 2016

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
528	540	556	569	584

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

In the 2012–13 Budget, the Australian Government agreed to ongoing funding for the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI) of $500,000 per annum (indexed). Funding is subject to Conditions of Grant being agreed between the Government and AMSI for specific projects. To date, two projects have received funding. These are:

- Vacation Schools and Scholarships project received $1.98 million over four years from 2012 to 2016 to raise the engagement, curiosity and participation of school students in mathematical sciences, while encouraging students to continue studies in mathematics and science to advanced levels.
- Securing Australia's Mathematical Workforce (SAMW) project received $2.5 million (indexed) over five years (2016 to 2021) to build on the earlier project. The SAMW project concluded on 31 December 2021. To date, the Government has not committed to providing funding for a program to replace SAMW.

Policy Objective

The SAMW project supported university students in mathematical sciences to advance their knowledge, entrepreneurial skills and work-readiness through annual summer and winter schools, vacation research scholarships placements and industry research training symposia. The program also provided support to strengthen participation of women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in graduate programs in the mathematical sciences.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding is provided under Part 2.3 Other Grants, section 41–10, Item 11(a), of the *Higher Education Support Act* 2003 (HESA), for 'Grants for activities that assure and enhance the quality of Australia's higher education sector'. The Conditions of Grant for the SAMW project were agreed between the University of Melbourne and the Government in May 2016. The SAMW project was delivered by AMSI, which is a joint venture of higher education institutions, led by the University of Melbourne.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A total of $2.5 million (indexed) in Commonwealth grant funds was provided to AMSI from 2016 to 2021 for the SAMW project.

Recipients

The University of Melbourne is the lead agency receiving the grant, for multiple higher education institutions.

Evaluation

The conditions of grant required AMSI to commission, an independent evaluation of the benefits accruing to the Australian community in 2019–20, including a cost benefit analysis, for projects funded under the grant. A report on the outcomes of the evaluation was received in April 2020. In June 2020, the Minister approved a 12-month program extension in response to COVID-19.

History of program

In May 2012, the then-Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb AC, released the report *Mathematics, Engineering, and Science in the National Interest*. The report provided increased enrolments in mathematics, statistics and science courses at university and schools. In response to the report, the 2012–13 Budget announced a $54 million package to improve student engagement, including $2 million for the AMSI *Vacation Schools and Scholarships* project.

The SAMW project was announced by the Minister for Education and Training on 14 April 2016, in his address to the Knowledge Nation Summit*.*

2.3 Higher Education Support – Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
6,549	7,882	6,448	2,815	-

Funding Type – Grants

Brief Description

The four-year Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program has potential to support up to 600 women employees to study part-time to upskill in a STEM field or move into a STEM career. The program assists employers to upskill female workers with job-relevant skills and qualifications, and facilitates collaboration between providers and industry.

Policy Objective

The objective of the program is to address the under-representation of women in STEM fields by increasing the number of women with STEM qualifications in the labour force, and boost the participation of women in STEM in higher education. This program helps women who want to upskill in STEM or gain job-relevant skills to build a STEM career. It also aims to produce graduates with well-developed workplace skills in STEM sectors vital to Australia's productivity.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Higher education and non-university higher education providers (NUHEP) providers registered by the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), in partnership with employers, were invited to apply for the program between December 2020 and January 2021. A total of 18 providers were approved in 2021 to deliver 37 STEM courses at the Diploma, Associate Degree or Advanced Diploma level. A second application round is being conducted from April to May 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is distributed to providers based on the approved number of employees participating in the program, in line with the government contribution amount for a Commonwealth Supported Place. For each employee participating in the program, an eligible employer can also receive up to $5,000 per annum in recognition of the costs associated with supporting employees to study.

Recipients from the 2020–21 application round

The following higher education providers were approved under the 2020 application round to deliver courses under the program (withdrawn providers not included):

- Academy of Information Technology
- Central Queensland University
- Charles Darwin University
- Curtin University
- Flinders University
- Griffith University
- La Trobe University
- Queensland University of Technology
- RMIT University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- TAFE SA
- The University of Notre Dame Australia
- University of Southern Queensland

Evaluation

Participating higher education providers and participating eligible employers will be required to report on progress twice annually for the duration of the course, as part of the conditions of funding. Providers will also be required to submit a final report following completion of the course.

The Department has commenced planning for a mid-term pilot evaluation, which will provide detailed information about its impacts, benefits, and outcomes, including opportunities and challenges for future consideration.

2.4 Higher Education Loan Program

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)	2,044,656	1,790,635	1,873,465	1,959,727	1,897,762
HELP Tuition Protection Fund s167-1 *Education Legislation Amendment (Tuition Protection and Other Measures) Act 2019*	2,679	2,783	2,892	3,008	3,129
Total 2.4 Higher Education Loan Program	**2,047,335**	**1,793,418**	**1,876,357**	**1,962,735**	**1,900,891**

2.4 Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2005

TERMINATIONS DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,044,656	1,790,635	1,873,465	1,959,727	1,897,762

Funding Type – Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and Income Contingent Loan

Brief Description

From 1 January 2005, the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) was introduced, replacing several previous loans schemes, including the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS). It comprised the following three schemes:

- HECS-HELP – for eligible students enrolled in Commonwealth supported places. A HECS-HELP loan covers all or part of their student contribution.
- FEE-HELP – for eligible fee-paying students enrolled at an approved higher education provider or Open Universities Australia. FEE-HELP provides students with a loan to cover up to the full amount of their tuition fees to a maximum of $156,847 (in 2022, indexed annually) for students undertaking medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and specified aviation courses (as defined in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*), and $109,206 (in 2022, indexed annually) for all other students.
- OS-HELP – for eligible Commonwealth supported students who wish to study part of their course of study overseas. OS-HELP provides students with a cash loan to cover expenses such as accommodation and travel. From 1 January 2014, students undertaking study in Asia may also be eligible for an increased loan. In 2022, the maximum a student can borrow is $8,519 for study in Asia, which is $1,419 more than for other destinations, and a supplementary loan of up to $1,133 to assist with the cost of language study undertaken in preparation for study in Asia.

From 1 January 2009 VET FEE-HELP was introduced for eligible students enrolled in higher-level vocational education and training (VET) courses at approved VET providers to pay their tuition fees. VET Student Loans (VSL) replaced VET FEE-HELP on 1 January 2017 and from 1 July 2019 became a separate scheme outside HELP arrangements, although is subject to the HELP loan limits.

On 1 January 2012 SA-HELP was introduced for eligible students to pay for all or part of their student services and amenities fees.

Commencing on 1 January 2020, the Government introduced a new, combined loan limit and a renewable balance on how much students can borrow under HELP to cover their tuition fees. From 1 January 2020, the HELP loan limits replaced the FEE-HELP loan limits, including new HECS-HELP borrowing for the first time, and an individual's HELP balance replaced their FEE-HELP balance. The HELP loan limits on 1 January 2020 were the 2019 FEE-HELP loan limits indexed by CPI. The loan limit is no longer a lifetime limit, but balances can be renewed, meaning an individual's HELP balance will be credited with repayments against their HELP and VSL debt made through the taxation system in the 2019–20 financial year commencing from 1 July 2020.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Higher Education Loan Program is to remove the up-front cost barriers to tertiary education and training. This is achieved through the provision of income contingent loans for students undertaking higher education courses and in certain higher-level vocational education and training courses.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligibility for the program is outlined in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA). To provide HELP loans, a provider must be approved under HESA under application to the Department.

Student eligibility is also outlined in HESA but depends on the HELP scheme in question. Broadly, to be eligible for a HELP loan, a student must:

- be an Australian citizen, a former or current permanent humanitarian visa holder, or a New Zealand Special Category Visa holder who arrived in Australia as a minor, has been a long-term resident of Australia, and meets strict eligibility criteria
- be undertaking an accredited course of study
- provide a Tax File Number
- have a Unique Student Identifier for commencing students from 1 January 2021, and all students from 1 January 2023
- have available HELP balance
- sign and submit the relevant form requesting the loan.

Under the Job-ready Graduates Package of reforms to higher education, additional eligibility requirements were introduced to take effect in 2022. To remain eligible for a HELP loan these measures require students to:

- be a genuine student
- be assessed as academically suited to their course by their provider
- limit their enrolment to 2.0 EFTSL (i.e. two years or less) worth of study per year unless their provider has assessed them as academically suited to undertake more study
- maintain a reasonable completion rate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Each scheme under the HELP has different loan limits per student.

Until 1 January 2020, there were no limits on HECS-HELP borrowings, although the Government currently sets a maximum that a provider can charge a student for the equivalent of one year of full-time study. This maximum depends on the discipline being studied, but the highest maximum (for law, accounting, administration, economics, commerce, communications, society and culture) is $14,630 in 2022.

Commencing on 1 January 2020, the government introduced a combined HELP loan limit and made the HELP balance renewable enabling students who make repayments on their HELP or VSL debts to continue accessing HELP or VSL for further and continued study throughout their lifetime.

In 2022, students undertaking part of their course of study in non-Asian countries are eligible for up to $7,100. Students undertaking part of their course in Asia are eligible for an OS-HELP loan of up to $8,519, plus an additional $1,133 to undertake intensive Asian language training in preparation for their overseas study. Students are limited to two OS-HELP loans over their lifetime.

There is no limit on SA-HELP, although the Government does set the maximum student services and amenities fee that an institution may charge. In 2022, this is $315.

Recipients

Eligible higher education students.

Evaluation

There is currently no formal evaluation planned for this program.

History of program

HECS commenced in 1989 and was administered through the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988* (HEFA). HEFA also allowed for debts under the Postgraduate Education Loan Scheme (PELS), Bridging for Overseas Trained Professionals Loan Scheme (BOTPLS) and Open Learning Deferred Payment Scheme (OLDPS).

With the introduction of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) in 2005, HECS became HECS-HELP, part of a broader suite of income-contingent loans under the HELP. All previous HECS, PELS, BOTPLS and OLDPS debts became HELP debts on 1 June 2006. HELP debts incurred since 1 January 2005 include HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP and OS-HELP debts, and from 2009 VET FEE-HELP, then from 2012 SA-HELP. VET Student Loans replaced VET FEE-HELP on 1 January 2017.

All of the HELP schemes maintain the same principles as HECS. If a student receives a loan, the Commonwealth government pays the loan amount directly to the higher education provider (apart from the case of OS-HELP) on behalf of the student, with the student repaying this loan once they are earning above the minimum repayment threshold ($48,360 in 2022–23).

As part of the 2015–16 Budget, the Government introduced arrangements for the repayment of HELP debts by Australians who are residing overseas and earning above the minimum repayment threshold from 1 July 2017.

Passage of the *Higher Education Support Education Legislation Amendment (Student Loan Sustainability) Act 2018* introduced a new set of HELP repayment thresholds. The thresholds commenced on 1 July 2019 with the new minimum repayment threshold of $45,881 with one per cent repayment rate. The Student Loan Sustainability Act also introduced additional repayment threshold increments up to $134,573 with a 10 per cent repayment rate.

2.4 Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Account – *s167-1 Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2020

TERMINATIONS DATE: N/A

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,679	2,783	2,892	3,008	3,129

Funding Type – Repayable levy – tax

Brief Description

The tuition protection arrangements that were extended to include the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HELP) and VET Student Loans (VSL) schemes in 2020 were further extended to include domestic up-front fee-paying students at registered higher education providers from 1 January 2021. This ensures that all higher education students are covered by the same level of protection regardless of their choice of provider or payment method. The HELP Tuition Protection Fund was renamed to the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund to reflect the increased scope of coverage and will be maintained through collection of an annual Tuition Protection Service (TPS) levy payable by non-university higher education providers registered by TEQSA.

Policy Objective

Tuition protection aims to ensure students are protected and supported if their course provider defaults, i.e, where the student has not withdrawn from the course and either:

- the provider fails to start to provide a course or a part of a course to the student on the day on which the course or part was scheduled to start, or
- the provider ceases to provide a course or a part of a course to the student on a day after the course or part starts but before it is completed.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Universal scheme for private higher education providers.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A Special Account from which funds are drawn is used in the case of provider closure to assist students and to enable the effective administration of the scheme. Providers do not receive funding.

Recipients

Up-front fee-paying students affected by private higher education provider closures.

Evaluation

A review of the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) scheme was legislated to commence by 1 July 2021. The Tuition Protection Review Final Report was tabled in Parliament on 7 April 2022. It considered current tuition protection arrangements, exploring the suitability and feasibility of expanding the TPS to the up-front payments VET sector.

History of program

The program was introduced on 1 January 2020, and expanded on 1 January 2021.

2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Estimate	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Research Support Program	930,659	951,188	978,674	1,002,668	1,028,230
Research Training Program	1,069,182	1,092,766	1,124,344	1,151,909	1,181,153
Total 2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research	**1,999,841**	**2,043,954**	**2,103,018**	**2,154,577**	**2,209,383**

2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research – Research Support Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
930,659	951,188	978,674	1,002,668	1,028,230

Funding Type – Administered

Brief Description

The Research Support Program (RSP) provides block grants on a calendar year basis to higher education providers (HEPs) to support the systemic costs of research not supported directly through competitive and other grants, such as libraries, laboratories, consumables, computing centres and the salaries of support and technical staff.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the RSP are to:

- provide a flexible funding stream to support the systemic costs of research by Australian HEPs, including the indirect costs of Australian competitive grant research
- support the delivery of world class research
- support collaboration between HEPs and industry and other research end-users.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Universities listed under Table A and Table B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* are automatically included in RSP funding distributions.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The RSP has a fixed funding pool with allocations to each eligible university determined using a performance-based formula that rewards the performance of each university in attracting R&D income from Australian competitive grants as well as the end-users of university research.

Recipients

The details of RSP funding allocated to HEPs can be found on the Department's website.

Evaluation

The policy of providing research block grant funding to universities was last assessed in the *Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements* led by Dr Ian Watt AC (Watt Review), which reported to the Government in 2015. More information is available on the Department's website.

History of program

The Government announced the creation of the RSP in the National Innovation and Science Agenda in December 2015 in response to the recommendations of the Watt Review. The RSP replaced the Joint Research Engagement, Research Infrastructure Block Grants and Sustainable Research Excellence programs and was boosted by additional funding of $50 million per annum (indexed). These arrangements are intended to drive research-industry collaboration by increasing incentives for success in industry and other end-user engagement and reduce regulatory burden on universities by providing a more flexible, simple and streamlined program.

2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research – Research Training Program

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,069,182	1,092,766	1,124,344	1,151,909	1,181,153

Funding Type – Administered

Brief Description

The Research Training Program (RTP) provides block grants on a calendar year basis to higher education providers (HEPs) to support both domestic and overseas students undertaking Research Doctorate and Research Master's degrees, known as higher degrees by research (HDRs).

Students can be offered RTP scholarships for one or more of the following:

- tuition fees offset
- stipend for general living costs
- allowances to assist with the ancillary cost of research degrees.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the RTP are to:

- provide flexible funding arrangements to support the training of domestic students and overseas students undertaking HDRs at Australian HEPs
- deliver graduates with the skills required to build careers in academia and other sectors of the labour market
- support collaboration between HEPs and industry and other research end-users
- support overseas students undertaking HDR studies at Australian HEPs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Universities listed under Table A and Table B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* are automatically included in RTP funding distributions.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The RTP has a fixed funding pool with allocations to each eligible university determined using a performance-based formula that rewards the performance of each university in attracting R&D income from Australian competitive grants as well as the end-users of university research, and the successful completion of postgraduate research degrees by students.

Recipients

The details of RTP funding allocated to HEPs can be found at the Department's website.

Evaluation

The policy of providing research training block grant funding to universities was last assessed in the *Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements* led by Dr Ian Watt AC (Watt Review), which reported to the Government in 2015. More information is available on the Department's website.

History of program

In December 2015, the Government announced the creation of the RTP in the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) in response to the recommendations of the Watt Review. The RTP replaced the Australian Postgraduate Awards, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships, and the Research Training Scheme programs. These arrangements are intended to better support the training of the next generation of researchers and innovators by encouraging more opportunities for research students to engage with industry and other end-users of research, by increasing incentives for success in industry and other end-user engagement and reducing the regulatory burden on universities by providing a more flexible, simpler and streamlined program.

As part of its response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Government extended transitional arrangements, which were due to expire in December 2020, to December 2021. HEP's were also permitted to approve a six-month extension for HDR students impacted by COVID-19 until December 2022.

From 2022, the RTP incentivises research internships with research end-users. HEPs will receive an additional weighting for each research PhD student completing their HDR, having also undertaken a three-month/60 FTE day industry internship. This new weighting will increase the amount of RTP funding a university receives for each research PhD student who graduates with an internship that meets these thresholds.

2.6 Research Capacity

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy	273,567	286,043	396,826	496,739	454,441
Centre for Augmented Reasoning	5,000	5,000	5,000	-	-
Enhance Research Capacity of Regional Universities	13,255	15,254	18,429	20,527	20,577
Higher Education Research Promotion – Grants in Aid – ANZAAS	25	26	27	27	28
Higher Education Research Promotion – Learned Academies	5,170	5,351	5,474	5,616	5,756
Higher Education Research Promotion – Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences	505	521	531	544	557
Strategic University Reform Fund	20,090	10,381	10,483	-	-
Trailblazer Universities Program	-	81,760	53,044	54,371	55,729
Increase Workforce Mobility	-	5,660	9,647	15,183	20,964
Launch Australia's Economic Accelerator	12	49,160	99,444	149,498	154,601
Total 2.6 Research Capacity	**317,624**	**459,156**	**598,905**	**742,505**	**712,653**

2.6 Research Capacity – National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2013

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
273,567	286,043	396,826	496,739	454,441

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) funds the operation of critical national research infrastructure. The funding allows the most critical research infrastructure projects to continue to deliver maximum benefits to the research community.

As Australia's leading-edge research infrastructure network, NCRIS provides the equipment and expertise to keep Australian research competitive, enabling Australian researchers to collaborate with the world's best, and Australian industries to increase their productivity through new products and processes.

The projects being funded by NCRIS were determined by the Government in its consideration of the 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap (Roadmap), and the 2018 and 2020 Research Infrastructure Investment Plans (Investment Plans). The Government has committed to new Roadmaps being developed every five years and Investment Plans every two years, to reaffirm and refresh investment activities. The 2021 Roadmap has been completed and supports continued funding in the current suite of NCRIS projects. The Government's response to the 2021 Roadmap will be through the 2022 Investment Plan.

Policy Objective

To create and support national research infrastructure to underpin the national research and innovation system leading to improved collaboration between researchers and the end users of research such as industry.

Eligibility for program and process for application

NCRIS is a restricted, non-competitive program.

Projects that are being supported were identified as priorities in the 2016 Roadmap, and 2018 and 2020 Investment Plans.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funds for each project are set by the Minister for Education and Training through the approval of NCRIS Guidelines.

Recipients

Operators of NCRIS infrastructure include universities, publicly funded research agencies and not-for-profit research organisations.

Evaluation

All NCRIS projects supported in 2014–15 were evaluated to determine financial, management and governance performance.

Projects have most recently been evaluated for alignment with Government priorities as part of the development of the 2021 Roadmap released on 7 April 2022.

History of program

NCRIS was established in 2004 with $542 million over seven years to provide researchers with major research facilities, supporting infrastructure and networks necessary for world-class research.

This initial investment was supported by the following separately announced funding programs:

- In 2009 the Australian Government provided $989.4 million through the Super Science Initiative to extend and expand NCRIS projects by providing funding for only new research infrastructure. A small number of new projects were funded.
- In 2013, $60 million was sourced from Research Block Grants provided through the Collaborative Research Infrastructure Scheme as an interim funding solution for priority research infrastructure projects funded under NCRIS and the Super Science Initiative to continue to operate over the 2013 and 2014 calendar years.
- In the 2013–14 Budget, $185.9 million was allocated to provide operational funding from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015 for 27 critical research infrastructure projects previously funded under NCRIS.
- In both the 2014–15 Budget and the 2015–16 Budget, $150 million per annum was allocated to provide operational funding to 30 June 2017 for the 27 projects previously funded under NCRIS.
- Under the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) announced in December 2015, the Government is providing operational funding of $150 million per annum (indexed, ongoing from 1 July 2017) for NCRIS projects.
- In 2016, the Government commissioned the development of the 2016 Roadmap. The Government's response to the Roadmap was through the Investment Plan. The Investment Plan provides $2.2 billion over twelve years to 2028–29 for the capital refresh of NCRIS projects and necessary additional operating funding.

- Guidelines for NCRIS operational funding (under NISA) from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2019 were released on 25 May 2017.
- Guidelines to implement the 2018 Investment Plan, including operational funding (under NISA) for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2023, and Investment Plan funding to 30 June 2022 were released on 31 May 2018.
- Guidelines to implement the 2020 Investment Plan, including Investment Plan funding of $157 million from 2020–21 to 2022–23, were released on 21 June 2021.

2.6 Research Capacity – Centre for Augmented Reasoning

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 15 April 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 31 December 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
5,000	5,000	5,000	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Government is providing $20 million over four years to establish the Centre for Augmented Reasoning (the CAR), headquartered within the Australian Institute for Machine Learning (AIML) in Adelaide. The CAR's research will be focused on the development of machine-learning technologies capable of using Australia's large volume of data to allow people and machines to collaborate more effectively, actively and naturally.

Policy Objective

The CAR will develop machine-learning technologies for use across a wide range of industries, such as agriculture and mining. Machine-learning also has the potential to optimise business processes in customer service as well as in factories and warehouses. The CAR will directly create 22 new and additional post-doctoral fellows and 8 PhD students, with at least 25 per cent of these PhD students to be women.

This initiative also includes a $3.5 million Innovation Fund for investments in collaboration opportunities, strategic development of programs, commercialisation and leveraging of strategic opportunities to extend impact and reach.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A total of $20 million was announced in the 2020–2021 Budget and was granted to the University of Adelaide.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The total amount of the Grant is $20 million.

Recipients

The University of Adelaide will receive the total appropriation for this program.

Evaluation

An evaluation is scheduled for 2024–25.

History of program

This program was announced as part of the 2020–21 Budget Research Package as part of the 2020–21 Budget.

Conditions of Grant between the Commonwealth and the University of Adelaide were signed on 15 April 2021

2.6 Research Capacity – Enhance Research Capacity of Regional Universities

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 22 August 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
13,255	15,254	18,429	20,527	20,577

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

This measure will be delivered as the Regional Research Collaboration (RRC) Program and was announced as part of the Jobs-ready Graduate package on 19 June 2020.

Policy Objective

The objective of the RRC is to enhance the research capacity of regional universities by funding research collaboration between regional universities, industry and other higher education providers to help regional universities to develop their research strengths.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Guidelines for the program (first released in April 2021) outline that 11 institutions are eligible for the RRC based on:

- higher than average proportion of students enrolled at their regional campuses, or
- the location of their main campus in a regional or remote area.

To date there have been two funding rounds completed for the RRC program. On 22 August 2021 the Minister for Education and Youth approved six projects for first-round funding through the RRC Program. A total of $19.94 million was committed during this round.

The application process for the second round of funding for the RRC program ran between February and March 2022. Outcomes of this round will be announced by the Government.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding for individual recipients is to be determined.

Recipients

The following institutions received funding following the first round of the RRC Program in August 2021:

- Research Centre for New Energy Transition, Federation University Australia – $2,436,351
- Development of Hydrogen Applications for Regional Industries, Central Queensland University – $2,127,000
- Boosting research capability to develop value-added products for the food and wood industries in regional areas, University of Tasmania – $4,005,643
- Research Institute for Northern Agriculture and Drought Resilience, Charles Darwin University – $4,095,752
- The Regional Australia Mental Health Research and Training Institute, University of New England – $3,666,764
- Next Generation Water Engineering and River Management Hub, Charles Sturt University – $3,604,305.
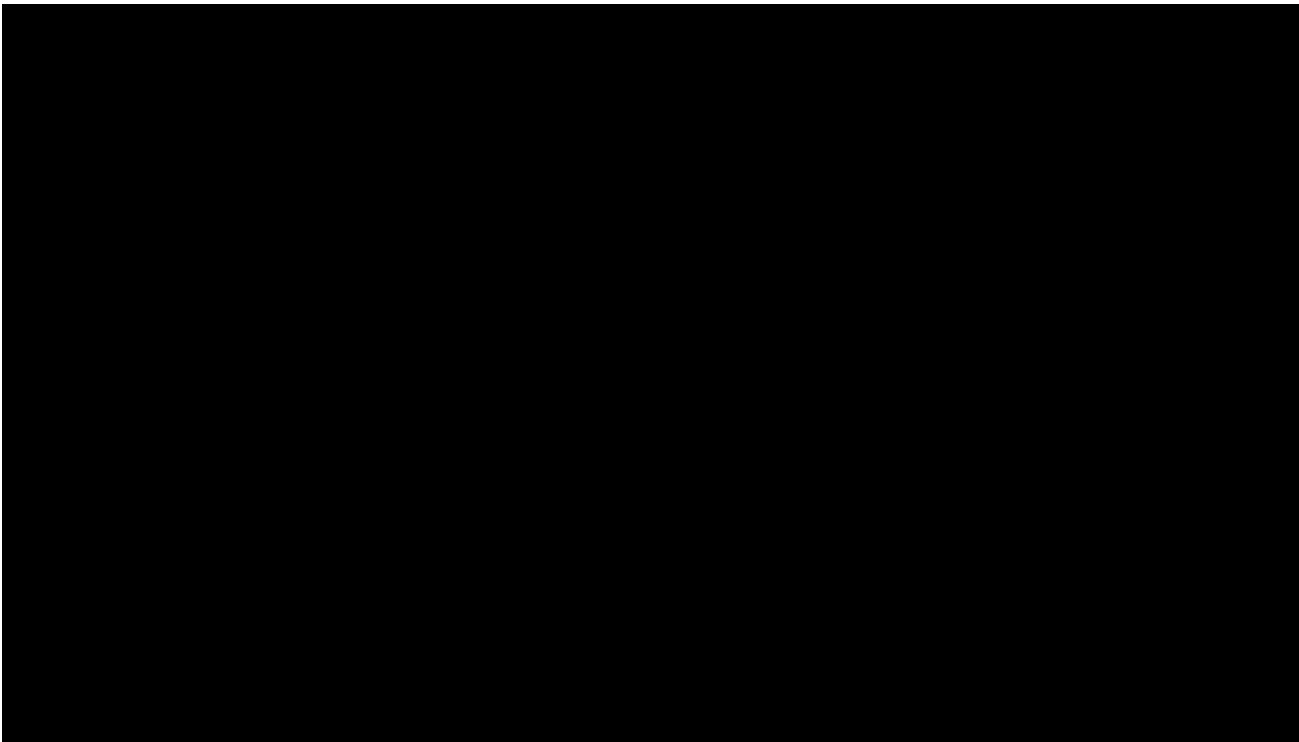
Evaluation

An evaluation is scheduled for 2023.

2.6 Higher Education Research Promotion — Grants in Aid – Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS)

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2005

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
25	26	27	27	28

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

The Australian & New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) receives Higher Education Research Promotion (HERP) Grant funding for travel and accommodation support for Australian students in Years 10 to 12 to attend the Youth ANZAAS annual residential forum.

Policy Objective

HERP Grant funding is for activities that foster an understanding of the importance of, or promote research and scholarship in, science, social science or the humanities in Australia.

Eligibility for program and process for application

- HERP funding is ongoing and administered on a calendar year basis. The calculation of HERP funding allocations between the academies is based on a historical funding model.
- Each year the Minister (or delegate) approves a funding Determination (paid in January), subject to recipient submission of an acceptable annual report.

Funding available to recipients under the program

For allocation purposes, the HERP scheme is divided into three components: Learned Academies, Grants in Aid, and Medical Academy. The Learned Academies component comprises most of the funding and includes five of the Learned Academies. The Grants in Aid component only includes the separate allocation for ANZAAS, and the Medical Academy component only includes the allocation for Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS).

ANZAAS has a separate arrangement for the purpose of their funding and needs to be kept separate from the Learned Academies funding pool.

The funding in these components all increase by indexation each year.

The 2022 HERP annual payment was not paid to ANZAAS due to unspent 2020 and 2021 funding caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The department will finalise the 2023 payment in late 2022.

Recipients

The HERP scheme provides annual funding on an ongoing basis to support seven not-for-profit research promotion organisations: Australian Academy of Science (AAS), Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE), Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH), Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA), AAHMS, Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) and the ANZAAS.

History of program

The HERP scheme commenced on 1 January 2005 and is established under Section 40–10(1) item 11(b) of Higher Education Support Act (HESA) for the purpose of supporting activities that foster an understanding of the importance of, or promote research and scholarship in science, social science or the humanities in Australia. The HERP scheme is administered under Chapter 2 of the Other Grants Guidelines (Research) 2017.

 The HERP funding model is based on a historical calculation and is subject to HESA indexation.

In 2022, A total of $5,673,801 (GST exclusive) in HERP funding was allocated under HESA section 41–10(1) item 11(b).

2.6 Higher Education Research Promotion — Learned Academies

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2005

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
5,170	5,351	5,474	5,616	5,756

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

Higher Education Research Promotion (HERP) funding to the Learned Academies and the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) supports annual administration and operational expenses.

Policy Objective

The Government provides funding each year under the HERP scheme to fund activities that promote research and scholarship in science, social science or the humanities in Australia.

Funding to the learned academies and ACOLA supports operating costs to:

- provide administrative support to enable the learned academies and their Fellows to contribute advice on issues of national importance
- conduct workshops, fora, and symposia so the learned academies and their Fellows can engage on issues of national importance
- manage development of policy, education and other programs
- support relationships with international communities including exchange programs and joint research programs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

HERP funding is ongoing and administered on a calendar year basis. The calculation of HERP funding allocations between the academies is based on a historical funding model. Each year the Minister (or delegate) approves a funding Determination (paid in January), subject to recipient submission of an acceptable annual report.

Funding available to recipients under the program

For allocation purposes, the HERP scheme is divided into three components: Learned Academies, Grants in Aid, and Medical Academy. The Learned Academies component comprises most of the funding and includes five of the Learned Academies. The Grants in Aid component only includes the separate allocation for ANZAAS, and the Medical Academy component only includes the allocation for AAHMS.

- The funding in these components all increase by indexation each year.
- The 2022 HERP annual payment was paid on 13 January 2022 to the Learned Academies and the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA). The department will finalise the 2023 payment in late 2022.
- The Learned Academies and ACOLA received $5,169,301 in HERP funding in 2022.

The funding allocation for the Learned Academies component has been consistent since 2013, where a percentage of the total funding is allocated to each of the five Learned Academies, as follows:

Eligible body	Percentage allocation
Australian Academy of Science (AAS)	37 per cent
Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE)	23 per cent
Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH)	18 per cent
Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA)	18 per cent
Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA)	4 per cent
Total for component: Learned Academies	**100** per cent
Component: Medical Academy – AAHMS	**100** per cent
Component: Grants in Aid – ANZAAS	**100** per cent

Recipients

The HERP scheme provides annual funding on an ongoing basis to support seven not-for-profit research promotion organisations:

- Australian Academy of Science (AAS)
- Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE)
- Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH)
- Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA)
- Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS)
- Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) and the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS).

History of program

The HERP scheme commenced on 1 January 2005 and is established under Section 40−10(1) item 11(b) of HESA for the purpose of supporting activities that foster an understanding of the importance of, or promote research and scholarship in science, social science or the humanities in Australia. The HERP scheme is administered under Chapter 2 of the Other Grants Guidelines (Research) 2017.

The HERP funding model is based on a historical calculation and is subject to HESA indexation. The department has provided annual funding to the Learned Academies since at least the 1980s, and ACOLA since 1995.

In 2022, A total of $5,673,801 (GST exclusive) in HERP funding was allocated under HESA section 41−10(1) item 11(b).

2.6 Higher Education Research Promotion – Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS)

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 January 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
505	521	531	544	557

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

AAHMS received their first HERP grant in 2021 which enabled them to fund promotional research to increase their communications and media activities.

Policy Objective

The Government provides funding each year under the HERP scheme to fund activities that promote research and scholarship in science, social science or the humanities in Australia.

Eligibility for program and process for application

- HERP funding is ongoing and administered on a calendar year basis. The calculation of HERP funding allocations between the academies is based on a historical funding model.
- Each year the Minister (or delegate) approves a funding Determination (paid in January), subject to recipient submission of an acceptable annual report.

Funding available to recipients under the program

For allocation purposes, the HERP scheme is divided into three components: Learned Academies, Grants in Aid, and Medical Academy. The Learned Academy component is majority of the funding and includes five of the Learned Academies. The Grants in Aid component only includes the separate allocation for ANZAAS, and the Medical Academy component only includes the allocation for AAHMS.

The inclusion of AAHMS into the HERP scheme from January 2021, following the transfer of existing and ongoing funds from the Department of Health, also requires it to be kept separate from the allocations of the Learned Academy component.

The funding in these components all increase by indexation each year.

The 2022 HERP annual payment of was paid on 13 January 2022. The department will finalise the 2023 payment in late 2022.

AAHMS received $504,500 in HERP funding in 2022.

Recipients

HERP provides annual funding on an ongoing basis to support seven not-for-profit research promotion organisations: Australian Academy of Science (AAS), Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE), Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH), Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA), the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA), the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) and AAHMS.

History of program

The HERP scheme commenced on 1 January 2005 (AAHMS included from January 2021) and is established under Section 40–10(1) item 11(b) of HESA for the purpose of supporting activities that foster an understanding of the importance of, or promote research and scholarship in science, social science or the humanities in Australia. The HERP scheme is administered under Chapter 2 of the Other Grants Guidelines (Research) 2017.

The HERP funding model is based on a historical calculation and is subject to HESA indexation.

In 2022, a total of $5,673,801 (GST exclusive) in HERP funding was allocated under HESA section 41–10(1) item 11(b).

2.6 Research Capacity – Strategic University Reform Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 10 June 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
20,090	10,381	10,483	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Government is investing $40 million over four years to create the Strategic University Reform Fund (SURF). SURF builds on industry linkage pilot projects funded in the 2019–20 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook to incentivise greater university and business collaboration in research innovation and workforce preparation.

Policy Objective

The SURF program is being implemented to support universities to remove engagement barriers in local communities and to improve collaboration with businesses through undertaking innovative activities. This initiative will encourage universities to undertake novel projects in areas of Government priority.

The projects to be supported will create strong links between higher education institutions and business and industries in key regional communities – enhancing collaboration between universities and local employers and improving commercialisation of applied research. SURF will enable the Government to work with the sector to continue to respond to localised priorities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

As outlined in the Guidelines on the Department's website, institutions listed in Table A and Table B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) are eligible to apply for funding through the SURF.

Following a competitive application process, on 10 June 2021 the Minister for Education and Youth approved funding for nine first-tranche projects and one second-tranche project. A total of $22.52 million has been committed in the first SURF application round. A second round of funding for the SURF program is expected to run in 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program

$10 million will be provided each year over 2020–21 to 2023–24.

Recipients

The following institutions were successful in obtaining funding from the first round of SURF in June 2021:

- The Telstra-UOW Hub for AIOT Solutions, University of Wollongong – $1,702,265
- New Options for Waste and Saving the Environment (NO WASTE) Precinct, University of Southern Queensland – $2,000,002
- UQ Agrifood Innovation Centre, University of Queensland – $2,457,150
- Northern Australia Food Technology Innovation, Charles Darwin University – $734,736
- SME@UTS, University of Technology Sydney – $577,182
- Renewable Energy Microgrid Hub for Applied Research and Training, Charles Darwin University – $2,048,000
- Regional Advanced Manufacturing 4.0 Hub, La Trobe University – $2,000,000
- Northern Australian Regional Digital Health Platform, James Cook University – $1,999,906
- ReCirculator, Southern Cross University – $2,000,000
- Hycel Technology Hub, Deakin University – $7,000,000

Evaluation

Evaluation arrangements are to be determined.

History of program

This program was announced as part of the 2020–21 Budget Research Package.

2.6 Research Capacity — Trailblazer Universities Program

APPROPRIATION: Annual Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	81,760	53,044	54,371	55,729

Funding Type – Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

Brief Description

The Trailblazer Universities Program will provide funding to six universities, including at least one regional university and a further two with significant regional impact, to undertake reforms to supercharge their commercialisation capability and become leaders in university-industry collaboration.

Selected Trailblazer Universities will demonstrate:

- commitment to supercharging world-leading capability behind a nominated National Manufacturing Priority (defence, space, food and beverage, medical products, recycling and clean energy, and resources technology and critical minerals technology)
- use of open, collaborative IP agreements that are attractive for industry
- use of incentives and rewards for research staff who engage with industry and commercialise research
- co-funding commitments from industry partners, and proactive engagement with businesses
- opportunities and pathways that promote strong industry engagement and job-ready skills, including development of educational qualifications and pathways with the Vocational and Education Training (VET) sector.

The Australia Government initially committed $242.7 million to establish four Trailblazer Universities over four years. Under the Regional Accelerator Program an additional two Trailblazer universities with a significant regional impact will be supported with $118.9 million of extra funding announced in the 2022–23 Budget (this additional funding has been allocated to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications and is not reflected in the Budget table above).

Policy Objective

The Trailblazer Universities Program will create leaders in research commercialisation, setting the scene for a new culture of commercialisation and university-industry collaboration in Australia. The Trailblazer Universities Program forms part of the ecosystem of innovation and commercialisation initiatives announced by the Australia Government in the University Research Commercialisation Action Plan.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Trailblazer Universities Program is open to universities listed in Table A and Table B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).*

Applications for the Trailblazer Universities Program involved a two-stage application process. Following an initial Expression of Interest (Stage 1), eight shortlisted applicants were invited to provide a comprehensive business case (Stage 2) for final assessment. Applications were due on 15 March 2022 and were assessed by a panel of university, industry, science, and research leaders chaired by Mr Tony Cook PSM, Deputy Secretary of the Higher Education, Research and International Group. There is not currently funding for a further round of the program.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Each selected university will be provided with up to $50 million of Australian Government funding over four years to support costs associated with research and development projects, staff and equipment. Funding will be matched by both the university and its industry partners. Participating universities will also partner with CSIRO to access specialist equipment and expertise to supercharge their research translation and commercialisation capabilities with approximately $7.5 million available per university for this function.
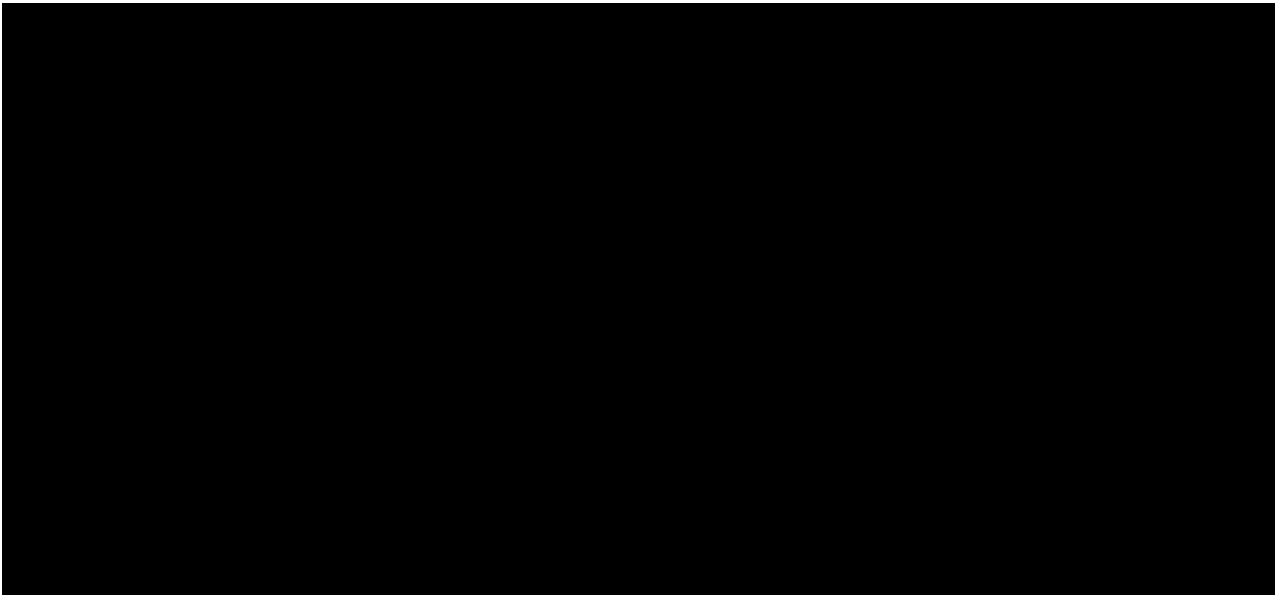
History of program

On 24 November 2021, the Prime Minister announced the $242.7 million Trailblazer Universities Program to support four select universities to boost prioritised research and development and drive commercialisation outcomes with industry partners from 2021–22 until 2025–26.

The 2022–23 Budget included an additional $118.9 million to the Trailblazer Universities Program under the umbrella of the Regional Accelerator Program. This funding will support an additional two universities to become Trailblazers Universities with significant regional impact.

2.6 Research Capacity — Increase Workforce Mobility

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 July 2022(expected)

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2026, then ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
-	5,660	9,647	15,183	20,964

Funding Type – Special Appropriation

Brief Description

The Government is investing $52 million over four years to establish the National Industry PhD Program under the Increase Workforce Mobility initiatives. The National Industry PhD Program will support PhD candidates to undertake industry-focused research projects and be equipped with the knowledge and skills to better translate university research into commercialisation outcomes, with the strong potential to work at the interface of research and industry, and across the sectors in the future. The funding for each PhD place is for up to four years.

The National Industry PhD Program consists of two streams:

- Industry Connections PhDs: Outstanding PhD candidates undertake research projects co-designed by university and industry
- Industry-driven Researcher PhDs: Highly capable industry professionals who are supported by their employers to undertake PhD projects in partnership with a university.

Policy Objective

The objective of the National Industry PhD Program is to provide a strong pipeline of next generation researchers who have a deep understanding of industry engagement and can work effectively with industry and deliver practical real-world solutions.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The National Industry PhD Program Guidelines are expected to be made available by July 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program:

Industry Connections PhDs (the following amounts are provided annually, for up to four years):

- PhD Candidates: Stipend Top-up up to $16,000
- Universities: Administrative Fee up to $10,000 per PhD Candidate
- Up to $5,000 per PhD Candidate for industry relevant training courses
- Industry Partners will provide cash contribution to universities as part of the collaboration arrangements (amount to be agreed between industry partners and universities).

Industry Researcher PhDs (the followings amounts are provided annually, for up to four years):

- Industry Partners will receive up to $40,000, per PhD Candidate
- Universities will receive $10,000 per, PhD Candidate

Recipients

PhD Candidates, Table A and B Providers, Industry Partners.

History of program

The National Industry PhD Program was announced as part of the 2022–23 Investing in Australia's University Research Commercialisation package as part of the 2022–23 Budget.

2.6 Research Capacity — Launch Australia's Economic Accelerator

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

START DATE: 1 July 2022 (subject to the passage of legislation)

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
12	49,160	99,444	149,498	154,601

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA) is a stage-gated grant program designed to attract projects at a proof-of-concept or proof-of-scale level of commercial readiness and support them to move through the development pipeline. The AEA will accelerate reform in the higher education sector by supporting the translation and commercialisation of university research aligned with the national priorities.

The AEA program consists of two stages:

- Stage 1 grants are available to proof-of-concept projects (Technological Readiness Level 3–5)
- Stage 2 grants are available to proof-of-scale projects (Technological Readiness Level 5–7)
  - Where projects funded under a Stage 2 grant opportunity successfully progress beyond Technological Readiness Level 7, applicants may consider applying for grant opportunities under the CSIRO's Innovation Fund 'Main Sequence Ventures' or other funding avenues to further accelerate projects, as 'Stage 3'.

The AEA will be governed by an expert commercialisation board (AEA Board), supported by expert Priority Managers. The AEA Board will consist of up to eight members, who possess experience and knowledge in research and its commercialisation, and represent the government, industry, and research sectors.

Priority Managers will be highly qualified, experienced, and motivated business and technology specialists who represent each of the National Manufacturing Priority areas. Priority Managers will work with successful applicants to help foster connections and secure formal collaboration arrangements with industry partners.

The AEA Board will oversee the Priority Managers and advise the Minister for Education on the commercialisation of research through a Research Commercialisation Strategy, which is to be developed every five years from 2022–23.

Policy Objective

The AEA is a fast-fail model designed to attract projects with high commercialisation potential while incentivising industry engagement with university research, ultimately fostering a culture of university-industry collaboration in Australia.

Over the long term, this initiative is expected to cause an uplift in commercial outputs from university research, thereby stimulating economic growth in National Manufacturing Priority areas and bridging the 'valley of death' between Australia's world-leading research and its commercialisation.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Researchers engaged by Table A and Table B institutions listed in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, as well as other constitutional corporations, are eligible to apply for Stage 1 grants. For Stage 2 grants, eligibility is extended to corporate entities run by researchers that have spun-out of a Table A or Table B provider, or by individuals working in direct partnership with researchers at a Table A or Table B provider.

All projects must be aligned with at least one of the six National Manufacturing Priorities identified in the Modern Manufacturing Strategy. Projects in Stage 1 must demonstrate industry engagement (including matched funding or in-kind support). Projects in Stage 2 must demonstrate a formal partnership and committed co-investment from an industry partner. Applicants do not have to apply for funding at the Stage 1 level ahead of applying for funding through Stage 2. Similarly, applications that receive funding at Stage 1 are not automatically entitled to move through to Stage 2, but must reapply and be approved for funding at that stage.

Successful Stage 2 applicants may seek additional funding through the CSIRO Innovation Fund "Main Sequence Ventures" or alternative investment vehicles ('Stage 3'). Priority Managers may provide advice to these applicants on further funding avenues, from either government or non-government sources.

Further details regarding the application process and specific eligibility criteria are expected to be made available ahead of the program's commencement.

Funding available to recipients under the program

- Stage 1 grants:

    o The maximum grant amount is $500,000 per project
    o It is expected that around 96 projects will be funded each year
- Stage 2 grants:
    o The maximum grant amount is expected to be around $5 million per project over two years
    o It is expected that around 18 new projects will be funded in any one year

Recipients

Table A and Table B higher education providers

History of program

The AEA program was announced on 1 February 2022 as part of the Government's University Research Commercialisation Action Plan, which seeks to prioritise investment across sectors and boost research collaboration between universities and industry, thus driving commercial returns. The current start date of the program is subject to the passage of legislation.

2.7 International Education Support

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
International Education Support	47,505	23,519	23,179	23,201	22,260
Overseas Students Tuition Fund – s21 FMA Act [s52A *Education Services for Overseas Students Legislation Amendment Act 2012*]	9,153	4,350	4,556	4,772	4,999
SOETM – Cheung Kong	1,538	982	980	979	977
Total 2.7 International Education Support	**58,196**	**28,851**	**28,715**	**28,952**	**28,236**

2.7 International Education Support – International Education Support

APPROPRIATION: Annual Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2004

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
47,505	23,519	23,179	23,201	22,260

Funding Type – Grant & Procurement

Brief description

International education is increasingly important to Australia's prosperity and our engagement with the world. The International Education Support Program aims to support the sustainable growth of Australia's high quality international education, training and research through strong government-to-government engagement, student mobility, and driving innovation and diversification in the sector.

Destination Australia Program

The Destination Australia Program funds eligible tertiary education providers to offer scholarships of up to $15,000 per year to domestic and international students to study and live in regional Australia.

Endeavour Leadership Program (ELP)

Funding for the ELP ceased from 2019–20. Current ELP recipients will continue to be supported until the end of their awards, which concludes by 2023.

Fulbright

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission operates under the agreement between Australia and the United States of America for the Financing of Certain Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs (known as the Fulbright Treaty), established in 1949. Under this treaty, the commission is equally funded by the Australian and American governments. The Australian-American Fulbright Commission provides scholarships to postgraduate students, academics, and professionals to teach, study, or conduct research in each other's countries.

International Education Innovation Fund (IEIF)

The IEIF supports projects that assist Australia's international education sector to position for the future. IEIF projects are informed by the Council for International Education and commissioned by the Australian Government through tender processes.

Policy Objective

Destination Australia Program

The Destination Australia Program aims to grow tertiary education in regional Australian education institutions, build capacity in the regions and enhance regional Australia's share of the benefits of Australia's international education sector.

Fulbright

The policy objective of the Australian-American Fulbright Commission is "to further mutual understanding between the people of Australia and the United States through educational and cultural exchange". The Fulbright Scholarship program is aimed at increasing bi-national research collaboration, cultural understanding, and the exchange of ideas between Australia and the USA.

IEIF

The policy objective of the IEIF is to support the international education sector to grow sustainably, through initiatives that reach new markets, pilot innovative new products, and align educational opportunities with Australia's identified skills shortages.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Destination Australia Program
- The Destination Australia Program provides grants to eligible institutions to allocate, administer and promote scholarships for students studying in regional Australia.
- The program awards grants to tertiary education institutions up to $15,000 in scholarship funding per student, per year, and $1,500 in promotional and administration assistance per scholarship awarded.
- Scholarships are available for both domestic and international students studying full-time who are enrolled at a registered tertiary provider at a regional campus and studying one the following qualification levels: Certificate IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Bachelors Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma, Masters or Doctoral degrees.
- Tertiary education providers (both higher education and VET) apply annually for grants for school partnerships through a competitive process.
- Applications are assessed against selection criteria relating to the institution's ability to build sustainability and growth within the institution and region, their capacity to support and attract scholarship students to achieve academic success and become part of the regional community, and their administration and promotion of the program.

- Assessment of applications takes place through the Community Grants Hub, with the Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education as the approving authority for all grants.
- An eligible tertiary education provider is an education provider which is a:
  - Registered Training Organisation (RTO) with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), or the Western Australian Training Accreditation Council (WA TAC),
  - Higher education provider registered with the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), or
  - For international students a tertiary provider registered under the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).
- In addition, institutions must:
  - have a campus location either fully or partially in a regional area as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard Remoteness Structure from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – that is an area that is:
    - inner regional
    - outer regional
    - remote or
    - very remote.
  - ensure students who are on scholarships adhere to the residential and enrolment requirements during their study period.

Fulbright

Applications for scholarships under the Fulbright program are managed by the Australian-American Fulbright Commission in annual cycles. Postgraduate students, academics, and professionals are eligible to apply.

IEIF

On 14 February 2022, the Acting Minister for Education and Youth approved six initiatives to be funded under the IEIF. Five of the six initiatives have now been contracted and have moved into the implementation phase.

Legislative authority for the IEIF is linked to 'Australian International Education—Enabling Growth and Innovation' (EGI) (item 165) in Schedule 1AB of the Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997.

Recipients

Destination Australia Program

Successful tertiary education providers of the Destination Australia Program provide scholarships to both international and domestic students undertaking their studies outside of Australia's major cities. Scholarships are available to students undertaking study from the Certificate IV to PhD levels.

Fulbright

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission receives the entirety of the Department's funding contribution as outlined in the Fulbright Treaty. This figure was $835,565 in 2021–22, which included $102,000 from the Students Support Package announced in the 2020–21 Budget. The Department's funding contribution to the Commission is indexed by CPI annually. In addition, the Australian Government funds the Anne Wexler Scholarship in Public Policy through endowment, valued at $156,300, and the Fulbright Professional Scholarship in Vocational Education and Training category valued at $35,000 per year.

IEIF

A range of initiatives have been funded across the international education sector, drawing on specialist knowledge through competitive tender processes. Initiatives include piloting transnational education products in the tertiary sector, delivering critical skills courses in partner countries, identifying opportunities for sector diversification, piloting a set of VET micro-credentials targeted at international students, supporting post-doctoral placements in Australia for international students and developing a best-practice guide for international student engagement.

Evaluation

Destination Australia Program

The Department works with the Community Grants Hub to implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Fulbright

The Australia-American Fulbright Commission reviews the efficiency and impact of the Fulbright program and reports to the Board of Directors. The Department is represented on the Board of Directors.

International Education Innovation Fund

Regular monitoring and evaluation of funded initiatives forms part of each contract and contract management plan. An overarching evaluation of all initiatives under the fund will be undertaken each year. This will include feedback from the industry advisory panels set up to inform delivery of each initiative.

History of program

Destination Australia Program

The Destination Australia Program was announced by the Prime Minister on 20 March 2019 as part of the Australian Government's *Plan for Australia's Future Population*. A total of $19.5 million per year is allocated to the program.

Fulbright

The Fulbright program was established under a bi-national treaty between the Australian and United States governments in 1949.

International Education Innovation Fund

The IEIF was announced by the Acting Minister for Education and Youth on 23 February 2022. A total of $10 million is allocated to the program over three financial years.

2.7 International Education Support – Overseas Students Tuition Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Account – *Overseas Students Tuition Fund – s21 FMA Act*
[s52A Education Services for Overseas Students Legislation Amendment Act 2012]

START DATE: 1 July 2012

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
9,153	4,350	4,556	4,772	4,999

Funding Type – Special Account

Brief Description

The Overseas Students Tuition Fund (fund) is a special account designed to meet the costs of placing international students in alternative courses, or as a last resort to pay refunds of unspent tuition fees to international students on student visas affected by provider defaults. The fund is maintained through collection of the annual Tuition Protection Service (TPS) levy payable by all CRICOS registered international education providers.

Policy Objective

The fund contributes to the long-term reputation of the Australian international education sector by providing the financial basis for the Tuition Protection Service to assist international students affected by provider closures.

Eligibility for program and process for application

International students on student visas affected by provider and course closures and international education providers placing affected students as defined in the *Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000*, are eligible for assistance from the TPS.

Assessments of eligibility and applications for assistance from the Tuition Protection Service are conducted by the TPS Administrator, contracted by the TPS Director to case manage claims.

Funding available to recipients under the program

There is no cap on the amount of funding assistance available to eligible recipients under the service; however, the amount is determined by the calculation specified in the legislative instrument (*Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014*).

Recipients

The recipients of the monies from the fund are international students on student visas affected by provider and course closures, and international education providers placing affected students, as defined in the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*.

Evaluation

In May 2021, a review of Australia's tuition protection arrangements was initiated by Government. The review considered the suitability and design of the TPS, how it is operated, how well it responded to the pandemic and whether it should be further expanded. The review found there was overall support for the TPS and the program continues to be delivered effectively and efficiently. The review was tabled in Parliament on 7 April 2022.

The TPS Director is required to report on the operations of the fund and TPS as a part of Annual Report requirements.

History of program

The TPS (including the fund) commenced on 1 July 2012 as a government initiative to establish a single point of assistance for international students affected by provider defaults.

On 1 January 2020, the TPS was expanded to include protections for domestic students in receipt of VET student loans, FEE HELP and HECS HELP. Two new tuition protection funds for VET student loans and for higher education were established and are funded by a levy system similar to the Overseas Students Tuition Fund. Public universities (HESA Table A providers), TAFEs and Government-owned education providers are exempted from the levy requirements.

On 1 January 2021, the TPS was again expanded to include protections for domestic higher education students paying up-front fees for their tuition.

2.7 International Education Support – SOETM Cheung Kong

APPROPRIATION: Special Account

START DATE:	Not yet determined
TERMINATION DATE:	30 June 2031
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
1,538	982	980	979	977

Funding Type – Grant

The program will be delivered by the Community Grants Hub. Arrangements and timing are currently being finalised.

Brief description

The Destination Australia Cheung Kong Exchange Program is a joint funding initiative of the Commonwealth and the Cheung Kong Group (CK Infrastructure Holdings Ltd, represented in Australia by Powercor Australia Ltd). The program will provide $12.7 million of grant funding over ten years to Australian universities to subsidise short-term mobility opportunities for students, including outgoing Australian students and incoming Asian students, between Australia and Asia. A deed has been established between the Commonwealth and the Cheung Kong Group for the provision of funding.

Policy objective

The program provides grant funding to Australian universities to support international education engagement between Australia and specified Asian countries by delivering short-term mobility opportunities for outgoing Australian students and incoming Asian students.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Each annual round, all Table A and Table B universities are invited to apply for grant funding. The available grant funding will be distributed equally between the successful universities.

Successful universities must use their grant funding to support at least four students each annual grant round, two outgoing and two incoming. If more students are supported, numbers of outgoing and incoming students participating in the mobility opportunities must be equal.

Successful universities are expected to expend an average of $5,000 per student. Successful universities will determine which students participate in mobility opportunities.

The program supports short-term mobility opportunities in, and students from, the following countries: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China (including Hong Kong), India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Grant recipients have been given more than 12 months to deliver the first round of mobility experiences to students, taking into account travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUTCOME 3: SKILLS AND TRAINING
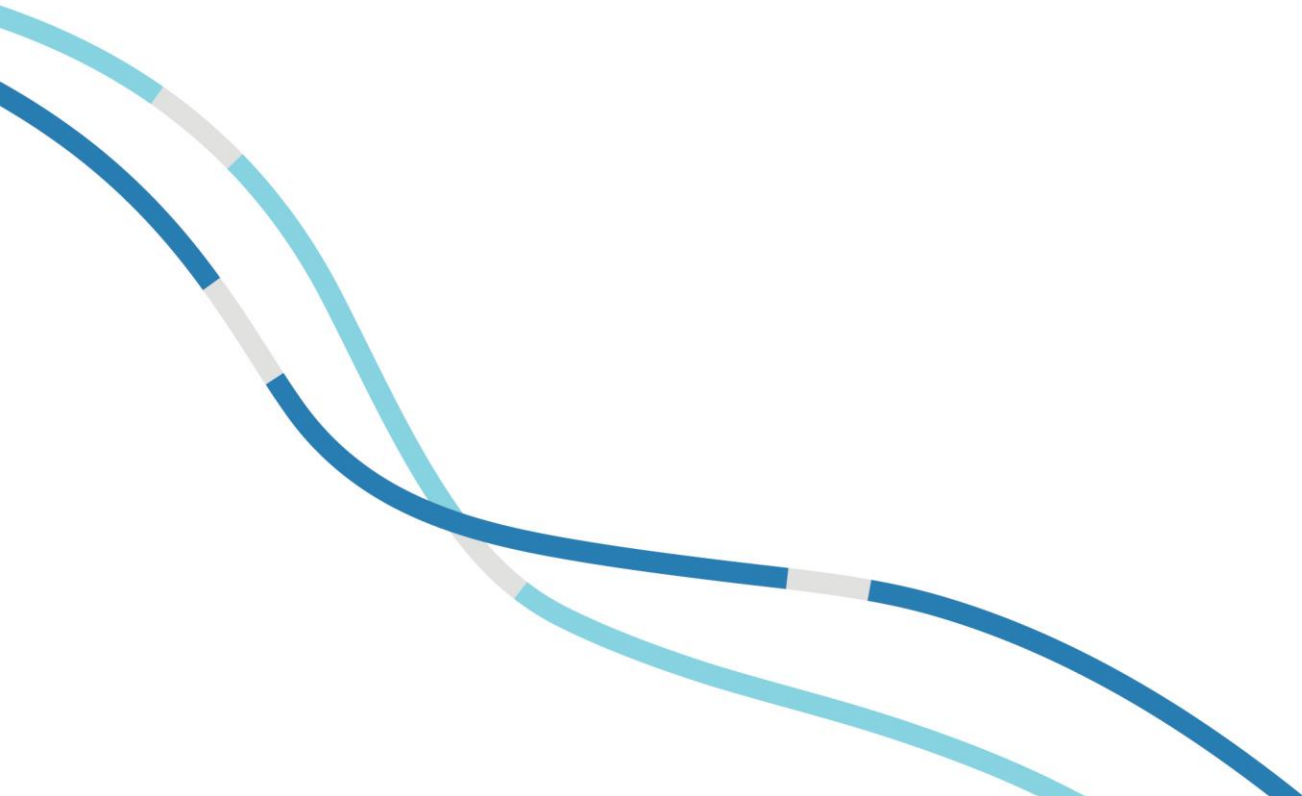
Outcome 3 – Skills and Training

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

Contents

3.1.1 Skills Development

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Skills Development					
Australian Apprenticeship Support Network	329,563	263,869	235,797	214,387	205,807
Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program	3,946,458	2,600,511	1,169,201	1,050,560	803,572
Accelerating Australian Apprenticeships Pilot	2,955	6,895	-	-	-
Commonwealth Scholarships Program for South Australia	100	-	-	-	-
Commonwealth Scholarships Program for Young Australians	5,582	-	-	-	-
Mid-Career Checkpoint	12,150	24,747	36,473	-	-
Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program	5,687	7,428	7,489	4,222	4,287
Trade Recognition Australia - Job Ready Program	13,774	10,442	11,793	13,168	13,168
Trade Recognition Australia - Outsourced services administration fee	30,717	30,717	30,717	30,717	30,717
Migrant Skills Incentive	11,476	6,681	100	-	-
Trade Support Loans*	61,106	63,543	70,415	75,050	75,602
Total 3.1.1 Skills Development	**4,419,568**	**3,014,833**	**1,561,985**	**1,388,104**	**1,133,153**

*Subject to the passing of legislation, the Trade Support Loans Scheme will transition to the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Scheme from 1 January 2023.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Australian Apprenticeship Support Network

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 May 1998

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: █████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
329,563	263,869	235,797	214,387	205,807

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

A national network of Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) providers administer incentives, loans and support apprentices and their employers through to completion of their Australian Apprenticeship.

AASN services comprise marketing, administrative, some payment processing and stakeholder engagement functions required to underpin the Australian Apprenticeship. The service delivered by AASN providers is ensures that Australian Apprenticeship arrangements meet state and territory government requirements. Every Australian Apprenticeship Training Contract is signed up and processed by an AASN provider. AASN providers administer all aspects of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program with the exception of the Boosting Apprenticeships Commencements and Completing Apprenticeships Commencement measures which, since April 2022, are administered through Services Australia.

AASN providers also deliver Gateway and In-Training support services, targeted services designed to stream individuals into an appropriate apprenticeship pathway and then help support apprentices and their employers through the apprenticeship journey.

As part of the 2022–23 Budget, additional funding was made available to expand In-Training support to women taking up an apprenticeship in a non-traditional trade, youth commencing an apprenticeship in a priority occupation and additional support for regional and remote Australian Apprentices.

Policy Objective

The key goal of the AASN program is to make it easier for employers to recruit, train and retain Australian Apprentices and to support Australian Apprentices through to completion by:

- simplifying and improving user access and engagement with the Australian Apprenticeships system by establishing Network Providers as hubs for the delivery of quality end-to-end advice and support services for Australian Apprentices and their employers
- improving Australian Apprenticeship retention, completion rates and satisfaction through the provision of targeted support to Australian Apprentices and employers prior to commencement and while in-training
- providing services to assist individuals to find Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathway or employment pathways
- minimising the administrative burden on employers and Australian Apprentices.

Evaluation

An evaluation of AASN services was undertaken in 2017–2018. It found the policy intent, broad construct and key components of the model were comprehensive and widely supported by stakeholders. However, the evaluation identified a number of components which could be expanded or modified to further strengthen the model. The evaluation findings, in conjunction with stakeholder feedback, were incorporated into the new AASN contracts, which commenced from 1 February 2020.

History of program

Apprenticeship support services have been purchased in some form since 1998. The AASN contract, which is the seventh contract round for the provision of such services, commenced on 1 February 2020. The contract was varied in December 2021, and it will now terminate on 30 June 2023.

Initially largely administrative in nature, from 2015 AASN providers also provided enhanced targeted support arrangements in the form of Gateway Services and In-Training Support Services to employers and apprentices. The goal of this enhanced service provision was to provide greater assistance to stakeholders most at need of support, increasing likelihood of successful completion of the apprenticeship.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 May 1998

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
3,946,458	2,600,511	1,169,201	1,050,560	803,572

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

A range of support is provided through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program (AAIP) to encourage the continued training and development of a highly skilled Australian workforce. This program was reformed in the 2022–23 Budget – the revised program, the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives System (AAIS), is due to be introduced on 1 July 2022. The AAIP will continue to operate until this time and all employers and apprentices currently in receipt of incentives under the AAIP will be grandfathered to ensure continuity of support.

The AAIP, and the new AAIS, link into the industries and occupations traditionally associated with the apprenticeship system. In addition, under the AAIS, support in the form of incentives is targeted to those occupations (with a significant apprenticeship pathway) assessed as having current or future demand on the Australian Apprenticeship Priority List (AAPL). The AAPL will be updated on an annual basis.

Policy Objective

The objective of the program is to contribute to the development of a highly skilled and relevant Australian workforce that supports economic sustainability and competitiveness.

This is achieved by encouraging:

- genuine opportunities for skills-based training and development of employees
- people to enter into skills-based training through an Australian Apprenticeship.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for payments under the program, an Australian Apprentice must be:

- employed in an Australian Apprenticeship arrangement in a state or territory of Australia, including Norfolk Island
- employed under the terms and conditions of a Training Contract. The Training Contract must be signed by the Australian Apprentice and the employer, and be formally approved by the State Training Authority
- undertaking an accredited training program with a Registered Training Organisation, which leads to a nationally recognised qualification and includes both paid work and structured training and is responsive to user choice
- employed in an Australian Apprenticeship at the Certificate III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma level or Certificate II and have commenced under the AAIP prior to the rollout of the AAIS.

In addition to these primary eligibility criteria, there are additional, incentive specific eligibility criteria that must be met including time limits and terms of employment.

All current recipients of incentives under the AAIP, and all entrants to the program prior to 1 July 2022, will be grandfathered under the current program. All entrants to the program from 1 July 2022 will receive incentives under the revised AAIS.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Please see the Australian Apprenticeships website for a schedule of payments available under the AAIP.

Recipients

Australian Apprentices and their employers.

Evaluation

Performance against the following performance criterion target will be reported on an annual basis in the Department's Annual Report, based on performance measures outlined in the 2020–21 Corporate Plan:

> "Maintain the number of apprenticeship commencements in the current financial year compared to the number of commencements from the previous financial year (2019–20)"

History of program

The Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program (AAIP) was introduced in 1998, bringing together apprenticeships and traineeships under an agreed national framework for training. The program was and remains the key lever for encouraging participation in apprenticeships and drives outcomes through the provision of financial incentives to employers, and personal benefits to eligible apprentices. Incentives are important for boosting apprenticeship commencements and retention, and complement support services that aim to achieve improved apprenticeship completions.

In 2020, two wage subsidy measures were introduced to complement support available under the AAIP:

Supporting Apprenticeships and Traineeships wage subsidy

The Supporting Apprentices and Trainees (SAT) wage subsidy was a retention measure designed to shield apprentices and trainees from the economic fallout of the pandemic. The measure supported over 74,900 businesses employing around 152,900 apprentices and trainees through to 31 March 2021. SAT ceased accepting claims from 30 June 2021 and the measure ended in December 2021.

Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements and Completing Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidies

Funding of $5.8 billion has been allocated to in the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) and Completing Apprenticeship Commencements (CAC) wage subsidy measures, to support businesses and Group Training Organisations to take on new or recommencing apprentices and trainees.

BAC provides a wage subsidy to employers of any size who hire a new apprentice or trainee from 5 October 2020 to 30 June 2022. Employers of eligible apprentices or trainees can claim up to 50 per cent of wages paid, up to $7,000 per quarter, for a 12-month period from the date of commencement. After 12 months of BAC support employers are eligible to transition to the CAC wage subsidy for a further 24 months. Employers of eligible apprentices or trainees can claim up to 10 per cent of wages paid, up to $1,500 per quarter for a 12-month period, and 5 per cent of wages paid up to $750 per quarter, for the second 12-month period. Together, the BAC and CAC wage subsidies provide up to 36 months of support.

Australian Apprenticeship Incentives System

The new Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System (AAIS) was introduced as part of the 2022–23 Budget and replaces the BAC/CAC for any new apprentices hired from 1 July 2022.

The AAIS has two phases.

In the first phase, from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024:

- Employers of apprentices in priority occupations will be able to access a wage subsidy, set at 10 per cent for first- and second-year apprentices (up to $1,500 per quarter), and 5 per cent for third year apprentices (up to $750 per quarter).
- Apprentices in priority occupations will receive a direct payment of $1,250 every six months for their first two years, up to a total amount of $5,000.
- Employers of apprentices in non-priority occupations will receive payments totalling $3,500, paid in two instalments of $1,750 paid at 6 and 12 months from commencement.

In the second phase, from 1 July 2024, following a checkpoint review, investment in the AAIS stabilises at around 2019 (pre-COVID) levels. Support will be available for priority occupations only, targeting the skills in demand across the economy. Support includes:

- A hiring incentive of $4,000 for employers with apprentices training in priority occupations.
- A payment of up to $3,000 paid to apprentices training in priority occupations.

A history of budget measures leading up to the current AAIS is outlined below.

Budget cycle	Measure
2018–19 MYEFO/Additional Estimates	Extend Eligibility for the Support for Adult Australian Apprentices (SAAA) incentive
2019–20 Budget	Simplified and streamlined incentives (Incentives for Australian Apprentices (IAA))
2019–20 MYEFO/Additional Estimates	Australian Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy Trial – Expansion
2020–21 July Economic and Fiscal Outlook	COVID-19 – Supporting Apprentices and Trainees (Apprentice Wage Subsidy)
	COVID-19 – Supporting Apprentices and Trainees (Apprentice Wage Subsidy) – Extension from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021
	Deferral of commencement date for IAA from 1 July 2020 to 1 January 2021
	Additional Identified Skills Shortages Payment
2020–21 Budget	Deferral of commencement date for IAA from 1 January 2021 to 1 July 2021
	Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) (Arresting the Apprenticeships Decline)
2021–22 Budget	Expanding BAC (Arresting the Apprenticeships Decline)
	Building Skills for the Future – BAC wage subsidy – expansion
	Building Skills for the Future – Deferral of IAA to 1 October

Budget cycle	Measure
2021–22 MYEFO	Transitioning off the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements measure (CAC)
	Extend AAIP and defer IAA
2022–23 Budget	BAC Extension
	Savings from the Australian Apprenticeships system – cease AAIP, IAA and AISS
	Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System

3.1.1 Skills Development – Accelerating Australian Apprenticeships Pilot

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2021–22

START DATE: 01 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
2,955	6,895	-	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Accelerating Australian Apprenticeships Pilot (the Pilot) aims to accelerate apprenticeships by addressing a range of historical barriers to the early completion of apprenticeship training. The Pilot is being co-designed with the New South Wales (NSW) and South Australian (SA) Governments to help resolve current and persistent skill shortages.

The Pilot will use existing mechanisms to upskill and move people more rapidly into the skilled workforce, by focusing on changes to the use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), customised training plans and financial incentives to employers for a number of qualifications in shortage. These actions will be coordinated to achieve faster and more flexible qualification completion for people with existing industry skills.

Policy Objective

The Pilot will support RPL and accelerated training to pilot ways for apprentices and trainees to complete their training sooner and enter the skilled workforce.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Pilot is being co-designed by the Department, the SA Department for Innovation and Skills, and the NSW Department of Education. Final details are still being settled, and the Pilot is scheduled to commence in the second half of 2022.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Under the Pilot, funding is available for industry facilitators, RTOs, and incentives for employers and participating apprentices. The funding amounts available to individual recipients are still being finalised as part of the co-design process.

Funding under the Pilot will be provided on top of existing funding from other apprenticeship incentives.

Recipients

Australian apprentices in NSW and SA who meet the eligibility criteria, to be agreed with the states, will participate in the Pilot.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be conducted throughout the Pilot, with a final report after the conclusion of the Pilot. Lessons learned from successful initiatives in NSW and SA to accelerate apprenticeships and increase the uptake of RPL could be shared with other states and territories to support the modernisation of the Australian apprenticeship system.

History of program

The Pilot is a 2021–22 MYEFO measure to accelerate apprenticeships, grow the skilled workforce and boost the economic recovery, with $10.5 million allocated to the Pilot (in addition to the administered funds in the financial table, the program also received $0.65 million in departmental funds between 2021 and 2024).

3.1.1 Skills Development – Commonwealth Scholarships Program for South Australia

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APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: September 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
100	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement/Grant

Brief description

The Commonwealth Scholarships Program for South Australia (the program) provided opportunities for up to 1,200 Australian postgraduate, undergraduate and vocational education and training students to undertake study and training in South Australia and participate in an internship in South Australia.

The program targeted industries of growth and skills needs. Scholarships were provided to students participating in an Approved Program of Study in one of the following priority industries in South Australia:

- Stream 1 – defence industry (including naval shipbuilding)
- Stream 2 – advanced manufacturing, health services and medical research, wine and food, resources and energy, tourism and hospitality. Applications will also be accepted from students who intend to study in a field that is relevant to, and are currently employed by, a business with innovative practices that result in economic growth
- Stream 3 – state-based skill needs*

Scholarships were available for a period of six months to three years, reflecting the variation in the duration of study at each level and are available for programs of study from Certificate III to PhD levels.

Program services were delivered by a third-party provider, Scope Global Pty Ltd.

The program is largely finalised. As at 21 April 2022 only four scholars remain in the program, of which two scholars complete study to the end of Semester one 2022 and two scholars will complete their mandatory work placements by the end of August 2022.

* State-based skills in demand as identified in the Australian Government, '2015–16 Skills Shortage List'

Policy Objective

The program aimed to improve skills and employment opportunities linked to priority industries in South Australia, by providing financial support for students to gain qualifications in state-based skills needs and receive industry-based workplace learning, connecting study and training to jobs.

The program targeted students to stay in, or relocate to, South Australia to study or undertake training. The program also created opportunities for workers in industries experiencing structural adjustment and retrenchment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible to apply, applicants had to meet the following criteria:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- be eligible^ to undertake an approved program of study
- be aged 15–64 years at commencement of study
- be living in, or relocate to, South Australia for the duration of the scholarship
- be willing and able to participate in an internship (where applicable), and
- intend to enter the workforce or accept employment in South Australia at the end of the course of study or training.

Note: While the scholarships were aimed at new students commencing an approved program of study, consideration was given to applicants currently undertaking their first year of study or training.

^ The term 'eligible' means a scholar would be able to gain entry into the qualification they were intending to undertake, having met any academic prerequisites set by the education and training provider.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Scholars could receive total scholarship funding of up to $17,500, varying based on scholarship length and type of study or training.

For example, for a three-year (or more) program of study, scholarship funding included:

- up to $14,500 in study assistance with education and training expenses
- up to $3,000 for a 20-day paid internship or a one-off payment in lieu of the internship requirement.

If a program of study already included a mandatory work placement (e.g. apprenticeships or clinical work placements), the scholar was not required to participate in an internship. When this was the case, the scholar was eligible to receive a one-off payment of an additional $3,000 (gross) in lieu of participating in an internship.

Recipients

Applications for Round One closed in November 2017 and applications for Round Two closed in January 2018. A total of 806 scholarships were offered to successful applicants.

Evaluation

A review of the program will be undertaken in 2022.

History of program

The program was part of the 2016 Plan for Jobs and Growth in South Australia.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Commonwealth Scholarships Program for Young Australians

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: February 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
5,582	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement/Grant

Brief Description

In the 2019–20 Budget $8.2 million was provided over three years to support the Commonwealth Scholarships Program for Young Australians (the program). The program initially provided up to 400 scholarships to support young Australians in selected regions experiencing high youth unemployment, low rates of economic growth and with low adaptive capacity, to participate in VET with strong pathways to jobs in areas of skills needs.

In the 2021–22 Budget, a further $2.9 million in funding was allocated for an additional scholarship round providing 240 scholarships, bringing total program funding to $11.1 million.

Scholarships in the program include a paid internship of 20 business days. Internships provide scholars an opportunity to gain on-the-job experience in an industry relevant to their study or training, develop skills, learn about the business in which they are placed and contribute to the host employer. Internships prepare scholars for long-term employment following the completion of their study or training.

The third-party provider BUSY At Work was contracted to deliver the program services in the ten selected regions. The regions where scholarships are available are Gosford, Grafton (NSW), Port Pirie (SA), Shepparton (Vic), Wanneroo, Armadale (WA), Townsville, Maryborough (Qld) and Alice Springs (NT).

The contract with BUSY At Work expires 30 June 2023, all money will be paid to the Provider in the 2021–22 financial year.

Policy Objective

The program aims to support young Australians to enter the VET sector where there are pathways to jobs in areas of skills need, and ensure they have access to the skills they need to in the economy.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Up to 640 scholarships are available for successful applicants who:

- are aged 15–24 years (the Australian Bureau of Statistics definition of 'Youth')
- who are not in full-time work at the time of applying
- reside in one of the ten nominated regions, and
- are intending to commence an eligible VET Approved Program of Study at the Certificate III – Advanced Diploma level, which leads to an eligible occupation.

Priority is given under the program guidelines to eligible applicants in the following cohorts:

- individuals who have exited from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in the previous two years (the age criteria will not be applicable for ADF applicants)
- Indigenous young Australians
- young Australians with disability, and
- young Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Scholars may receive total scholarship funding of up to $13,500, varying based on scholarship length and type of study or training.

For example, for a two-year program of study, scholarship funding includes:

- up to $10,500 in study assistance with education and training expenses
- up to $3,000 for a 20-day paid internship or a one-off payment in lieu of the internship requirement.

If a program of study already includes a mandatory work placement (e.g. clinical work placements), the scholar will not be required to participate in an internship. When this is the case, the scholar will be eligible to receive a one-off payment of an additional $3,000 (gross) in lieu of participating in an internship.

Program guidelines were developed and informed by a consultation process.

Recipients

556 scholarships have been awarded over the first three scholarship rounds. The fourth scholarship round closed on 11 March 2022. 351 applications were received with 260 eligible applicants being offered scholarships.

Evaluation

A review of the program will be undertaken in 2022.

History of program

The program expands the Commonwealth Scholarships Program for South Australia and was provisioned for under the 2019–20 Budget.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Mid-Career Checkpoint

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
12,150	24,747	36,473	-	-

Funding type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Mid-Career Checkpoint (Program) supports the Women's Economic Security Statement reforms and initiatives. Program enhancements have been included as part of the 2021–22 Women's Budget Statement and the 2022–23 Women's Budget Statement.

The program provides free professional skills and career advice to working aged Australians returning to employment after a caring related break. From 1 January 2022, the program was expanded to provide more support to a larger cohort of working aged Australians. The expanded support includes access to a $3,000 (GST exclusive) Training Incentive to undertake recommended accredited training to increase employability and support career advancement. Eligibility for the program was also expanded to include existing workers in female-dominated COVID-affected industries.

A pilot of the program was launched on 1 July 2020, supporting up to 1,000 participants in New South Wales and Queensland. Program enhancements announced in the 2021–22 Women's Budget Statement include an extension of the Pilot to 31 December 2022, supporting up to 4,500 participants in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Program implementation is expected to be rolled out in all states and territories in 2023.

Announced as part of the 2022–23 Budget, the Supporting Women's Mid-Career Transition into the Tech Workforce measure includes a new Coaching and Mentoring initiative which will leverage the existing Mid-Career Checkpoint. This initiative will provide individual support and advice to women who are considering – or who have decided to make – a career transition to the tech workforce.

Policy Objective

The program is an initiative to assist people who have spent time out of the workforce undertaking caring responsibilities and are now looking to return to paid employment. The program also supports carers who have recently returned to paid employment and would like to advance or change their career. From 1 January 2022, existing workers in female-dominated, COVID-affected industries are also eligible. A key objective of the program is to increase workforce participation and improve the earning potential of Australian women.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligible Participants

Currently, participants in the program can access assistance at three entry points:

- **Stepping Back In**: Support for carers to re-enter the workforce;
- **Stepping Up:** Support to advance the careers of carers recently returned to the workforce; and
- **General Entry:** Support for existing workers in designated industries.

To be eligible to access assistance at both the Stepping Back In and Stepping Up entry points, participants must:

- be an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident; and
- have left paid employment for the last six or more months to undertake caring responsibilities.

In addition to the general eligibility provisions, to access support through the Stepping Up stream, participants must have returned to paid employment within 18 months at the time of their application to access the program.

To be eligible to access assistance through the General Entry point (COVID-19 support measure), participants must be an existing worker in a female-dominated industry most affected by the pandemic, as identified by the Department.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is paid to third party providers who deliver the program on behalf of the Department.

From 1 January 2022, participants in the program had access to up to $3,000 to support recommended accredited training. Providers are required to pay training organisations upfront and on behalf of participants and then seek reimbursement from the Department.

Recipients

Up to 30,000 working age Australians.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the program pilot was undertaken in 2021. The evaluation was broadly positive. Feedback from participants and providers suggests that the program has provided carers with appropriate assistance and resources to help them to return to the paid workforce or advance their careers.

History of program

The $75 million program was announced in 2019. Program enhancements were made in the 2021–22 Women's Budget Statement and the 2022–23 Women's Budget Statement.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 4 December 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
5,687	7,428	7,489	4,222	4,287

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program (the program) will provide up to 10,000 participants per year with advice and guidance on transitioning into new roles within their current industry or pathways to new careers, including referral to relevant education and training options.

Policy Objective

The program aims to fill a gap in the services currently available to older Australians by providing them with targeted career advice and guidance, as well as referral to additional support as required.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligible individuals are those aged 40 years and over, who are an Australian citizen or a permanent resident, employed and at risk of becoming unemployed, or recently unemployed (within 12 months), and not registered for assistance through Commonwealth employment services program.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Participants do not receive any direct funding. Funding is paid to third party providers who deliver the program on behalf of the Department.

The Skills Checkpoint Program is directly linked to the Skills and Training Incentive (the Incentive). The Incentive is available for up to 7,500 participants per year to 30 June 2024.

To be eligible for the Incentive, individuals must have completed a Skills Checkpoint assessment that identifies training linked to their current industry (e.g. upgrading skills), a future job opportunity, or an industry or occupation in demand, as necessary for that individual.

The Incentive provides a contribution towards suitable training (accredited or non-accredited) up to 75 per cent of course costs for training related to occupations in national shortage on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List. This contribution can be up to a total of $2,200 (GST inclusive). The participant or their employer must also make a co-contribution.

A government contribution of up to 50 per cent of course costs, up to $2,200 (GST inclusive) is available, for training not related to these occupations until 30 June 2022.

Recipients

Eligible Australians aged 40 years and over.

Evaluation

The program is subject to ongoing review and evaluation throughout its delivery.

History of program

The program is based on the Skills Checkpoint Pilot (the Pilot) which ran for six months between December 2015 and May 2016. The Pilot provided a free career advisory service to employed individuals aged 45 to 54 years.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Trades Recognition Australia – Job Ready Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2010

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
13,774	10,442	11,793	13,168	13,168

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Trades Recognition Australia is the skills assessment authority for 131 technical and trade occupations specified by the Department of Home Affairs. The Job Ready Program (JRP) is a four-step employment-based skills assessment program for 127 of these occupations, and it provides applicants with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and job readiness in an Australian workplace, relevant to their nominated occupation before they apply for migration in Australia.

The JRP is for international student graduates who hold a trade qualification issued by a Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) Registered Training Organisation (RTO) based on studies in Australia.

Policy Objective

The JRP aims to ensure that applicants who have achieved an Australian trade qualification have the appropriate skills and workplace experience relevant to their nominated occupation in Australia.

Eligibility for program and process for application

STEP 1 – Provisional Skills Assessment

The Provisional Skills Assessment (PSA) verifies the authenticity of an applicant's Australian trade qualification and any employment or vocational placement undertaken in an Australian workplace.

To be eligible for a PSA, an applicant must provide evidence that they have:

- held an international student visa to study in Australia
- achieved an Australian qualification awarded by a CRICOS RTO
- a minimum of 360 hours of genuine employment or vocational placement relevant to the qualification and nominated occupation that occurred in an Australian workplace.

STEP 2 – Job Ready Employment

The Job Ready Employment (JRE) step monitors the applicant's experience in an Australian workplace to ensure development of skills relevant to their nominated occupation.

To be eligible for JRE an applicant must have:

- a successful PSA outcome
- a visa with sufficient time to complete the program (at least 12 months) and with full (unrestricted) work rights
- less than four months remaining on their student visa if applicable
- secured eligible employment in their nominated occupation. For employment to be considered, it must provide sufficient opportunity for the applicant to be involved in a range of tasks and duties that demonstrate their skills using industry-accepted practices and tools/ equipment relevant to their nomination occupation.

STEP 3 – Job Ready Workplace Assessment

A Job Ready Workplace Assessment (JRWA), is completed once an applicant has worked in their nominated occupation for a least 863 hours over a period of no less than six months from their JRE start date.

The JRWA conducted by TRA-approved RTOs, is an independent assessment to determine if the applicant is operating at the required skill level for their nominated occupation in an Australian workplace.

STEP 4 – Job Ready Final Assessment

Job Ready Final Assessment (JRFA) is the final step of the JRP. The applicant must have successfully completed JRWA assessment and worked in their nominated occupation for at least 1725 hours over a minimum of 12 months from their JRE start date.

A successful JRFA outcome will satisfy the skills assessment requirement for a permanent independent skilled migration visa application with the Department of Home Affairs.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Not applicable, as the JRP is a fee for service program.

Recipients

Not applicable.

Evaluation

In 2016, a comprehensive review of Trades Recognition Australia and its programs in operation at the time was conducted, with 11 recommendations being made which were implemented or partially implemented. Subsequent efficiencies and improvements to processes and technology were made following a 2019 internal review.

History of program

The program was established in 2010 to replace the Skilled Worker Program.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Trades Recognition Australia – Outsourced services administration fee

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 March 2019

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
30,717	30,717	30,717	30,717	30,717

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Trades Recognition Australia is the skills assessment authority for 131 technical and trade occupations specified by the Department of Home Affairs. The Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Assessment Services (Outsourced programs) consists of two separate assessment programs:

1. **Temporary Skills Shortage (TSS) Skills Assessment Program** assesses applicants to determine whether they are able to work in Australia at the required skill level for their nominated occupation, and can contribute immediately to Australia's skilled workforce. The program assesses the skills of applicants from specified countries and in specified occupations.
2. **Offshore Skills Assessment Program (OSAP)** is for applicants applying for a skilled migration visa (excluding 485 or TSS visas). This assessment is compulsory for applicants from the nominated countries, Special Administrative Regions and certain occupations. It is also compulsory for applicants in the following licensed occupations regardless of their country of origin:

   - Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic,
   - Electrician (General),
   - Electrician (Special Class), and
   - Plumber (General).

Applicants for the OSAP are required to travel to an assessment centre in Australia or in a nominated country. The OSAP is also available for applicants choosing to undertake a skills assessment in a non-licensed nominated occupation who can travel to Australia or a nominated country for a skills assessment.

Trades Recognition Services (TRS) closed on 1 December 2020 to new applicants. This service was for applicants living in Australia who gained their skills outside a formal apprenticeship pathway, including those who undertook their trade training overseas. It provided formal skills recognition for employment purposes and/or to access occupational licensing.

Policy Objective

The RTO Assessment Services provides potential migrants, and other applicants seeking recognition of their skills, with a skills assessment to recognise qualifications and on-the-job-skills gained outside Australia, in a nominated occupation. A positive assessment outcome from TRA can be used to support a visa application, to support employment outcomes or to access occupational licensing.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligibility for each program is described below. Applicants choose a TRA-approved RTO to conduct a skills assessment, based on their nominated occupation and location.

TSS Skills Assessment Program

The TSS Skills Assessment Program is for applicants who work in a nominated occupation and hold a passport from a nominated country or Special Administrative Region, and who are required by the Department of Home Affairs to have a skills assessment for temporary migration.

Offshore Skills Assessment Program

The OSAP is for applicants applying for a skilled migration visa (excluding 485 or TSS visas), who work in a nominated occupation and hold a passport from a nominated country. It is also available for applicants choosing to undertake a skills assessment in a nominated occupation who can travel to Australia or a nominated country for a skills assessment.

The OSAP is also compulsory for applicants applying for permanent migration in the following licensed trades: Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic, Electrician (General), Electrician (Special Class) and Plumber (General).

Funding available to recipients under the program

Not applicable. The Trades Recognition Australia RTO Assessment Services are fee for service programs.

Recipients

Not applicable.

Evaluation

In 2016, a comprehensive review of Trades Recognition Australia and its programs in operation at the time was conducted, with 11 recommendations being made which were implemented or partially implemented.

History of program

TSS Skills Assessment Program

The 457 Skills Assessment Program was announced in April 2009 as one of a number of measures in response to the review of the integrity of the 457 visa program. The review conducted by Ms. Barbara Deegan, was undertaken in response to rapid growth in the 457 visa program and emerging integrity concerns predominantly relating to the employment of 457 holders in trade occupations.

In March 2018, 457 Skills Assessment Program was changed to the TSS Skills Assessment Program when the Department of Home Affairs introduced a new Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visa (subclass 482) to replace the subclass 457 visa.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Migrant Skills Incentives

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 28 February 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
11,476	6,681	100	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Migrant Skills Incentives (MSI) measure was introduced in 2021–22 MYEFO to fill skills shortages and assist in Australia's economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

There are three Migrant Skills Incentives:

1. Incentive 1 – *Faster Migrant Skills Assessments*, commenced on 28 February 2022 and offers fast-tracked skills assessments to onshore migrants who have already applied for an assessment and are awaiting an outcome in a priority occupation.
2. Incentive 2 – *Skills Assessment Opportunities for Migrants*, commenced on 28 February 2022 and offers free and fast-tracked skills assessments to onshore migrants on a permanent family, partner, humanitarian or refugee visa, who have not undergone a skills assessment before.
3. Incentive 3 – *Employability Assessments*, commences in mid-2022 and will offer onshore migrants who have previously received a suitable skills assessment in a priority occupation a free employability assessment and access to subsidised training to strengthen their employment in the Australian job market.

Policy Objective

MSI will support around 9,500 onshore migrants by offering access to faster, cheaper skills assessments, free employability assessments and advice, and access to subsidised training to improve their employment prospects.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Incentive 1 – applicants must be onshore migrants who have submitted a skills assessment application for an eligible occupation prior to 28 February 2022 and have not yet received an outcome. Applicants do not need to submit an application for this incentive, as they are automatically identified as eligible for fast-tracking by their skilled migration assessing authority.

Incentive 2 – applicants must be onshore migrants on a permanent family, partner, refugee or humanitarian visa received on or after 1 January 2019. They must submit a skills assessment application for an eligible occupation for Incentive 2 to their relevant assessing authority. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for their skills assessment as specified by their assessing authority.

Incentive 3 – applicants must be onshore migrants on a permanent visa who received a suitable skills assessment in a priority occupation from their relevant assessing authority on or after 1 January 2019 and have held it for a minimum of 12 months. They must be employed below their skill level at the time of submitting their application. Applicants must complete the Expression of Interest application form provided to them by their relevant assessing authority.

Funding available to recipients under the program:

For all three incentives, applicants do not receive any direct funding. Funding is paid to third party providers who deliver the incentives on behalf of the Department.

For Incentive 1, applicants have already paid for their skills assessment and fast-tracking will be a free service fully subsidised by the department.

For Incentive 2, applicants will receive a free, fast-tracked skills assessment fully subsidised by the department.

For Incentive 3, applicants will receive a free employability assessment fully subsidised by the department and can access up to $3,000 to support recommended training. Applicants must pay a co-contribution of 10 per cent of the cost of training. Providers are required to pay training organisations up-front and on behalf of applicants and then seek reimbursement from the Department.

Recipients

Onshore skilled migrants who meet the eligibility criteria of the incentives.

History of program

MSI is a new program which commenced on 28 February 2022 to fill skills shortages and assist in Australia's economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

3.1.1 Skills Development – Trade Support Loans

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – *Trade Support Loans Act 2014*

START DATE: 21 July 2014

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
61,106	63,543	70,415	75,050	75,602

Funding type – Loans

Brief Description

The Trade Support Loans (TSL) program is an income-contingent, concessional loan program that assists eligible Australian Apprentices by providing financial support of up to $21,779 (2021–22) to assist with the costs of living, learning and undertaking a trade apprenticeship. Payments are made in monthly instalments in arrears and Australian Apprentices are able to opt-in every six months. The loan amounts provided are higher in the early years of training to compensate for lower wages.

An Australian Apprentice who receives a Trade Support Loan must repay it through the tax system after their income has reached the minimum repayment income under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* ($47,014 for the 2021–22 income year). As an incentive to encourage completion of training, apprentices who successfully complete their apprenticeships are eligible for a 20 per cent discount on their loan.

Subject to the passing of legislation, the TSL Scheme will transition to the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Scheme from 1 January 2023. This new loan would align with the Australian Apprenticeship Priority List, and enable backdating of payments to provide immediate support to recipients.

Policy Objective

The scheme aims to increase completion rates among apprentices in priority occupations in skill shortage areas, by providing financial support to eligible Australian Apprentices to assist them with the cost of living and learning while undertaking an apprenticeship. While providing support to apprentices, the program aims to minimise the risk of apprentices unintentionally accumulating large debts.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for TSL payments, Australian Apprentices must:

- be an Australian citizen, or the holder of a permanent visa; and
- reside in Australia; and
- have provided a valid Tax File Number; and
- be undertaking a:
    1. Certificate III or IV qualification that leads to an occupation listed on the TSL Priority List 2014, or
    2. Certificate II, III or IV agricultural qualification specified on the TSL Priority List; or
    3. Certificate II, III or IV horticulture qualification specified on the TSL Priority List; while working in rural or regional Australia; and
- have made an application for TSL on or before the final day of an instalment period; and
- meet any other eligibility conditions prescribed in the TSL Program Guidelines; and
- a person wishing to access a TSL applies through an Australian Apprenticeship Support Network provider. The applicant is then required to re-confirm their intention to continue receiving future instalments by opting in every six months.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A lifetime limit of $21,779 (for 2021–22) is available, with TSL payments made monthly:

- $725.97 per month in year one of the apprenticeship
- $544.48 per month in year two of the apprenticeship
- $362.99 per month in year three of the apprenticeship
- $181.49 per month in year four of the apprenticeship

Recipients

All eligible Australian Apprentices who are approved to receive TSL payments.

Evaluation

A short-term implementation evaluation of the TSL program was conducted in November 2015 to ensure that program deliverables were on track and aligned with the program's objectives. The evaluation found that overall, the TSL program was implemented effectively, is being efficiently administered and the required deliverables and objectives are being achieved. A small number of suggested improvements to minimise administrative burdens and increase data functionality were identified and subsequently actioned.

History of program

The 2014–15 Budget outlined $439 million over five years to establish the TSL program to provide better support for Australian Apprentices with the ultimate aim of improving apprenticeship completion rates.

The *Trade Support Loans Bill 2014* received Royal Assent on 17 July 2014 and the TSL program commenced on 21 July 2014.

The TSL program is delivered on behalf of the Australian Government by a national network of Australian Apprenticeship Support Network providers who deliver support services to employers and apprentices.

The lifetime limit is indexed annually on 1 July using the Consumer Price Index to maintain its real value.

3.1.2 Access to Training

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Skills for Education and Employment	99,461	125,418	132,094	140,118	142,221
Foundation Skills for Your Future Program	14,283	14,283	12,139	-	-
Foundation Skills for Your Future – Remote Community Pilots	3,284	3,326	-	-	-
Total 3.1.2 Access to Training	**117,028**	**143,027**	**144,233**	**140,118**	**142,221**

3.1.2 Access to Training – Skills for Education and Employment

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	January 2002. The current contract period commenced on 1 July 2017 and will continue until 30 June 2023.
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
99,461	125,418	132,094	140,118	142,221

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program provides language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) assessment and training to eligible job seekers, with the aim of improving their ability to participate in further training or the work force.

Policy Objective

SEE is the primary program for helping job seekers improve their LLND skills with the expectation that such improvements will enable them to participate more effectively in training or the workforce.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be eligible for the program, a potential client must:

- be of working age (15 years up to age pension age) and looking for work
- be registered as a job seeker with Services Australia and eligible for Jobactive, New Employment Services Trial, Transition to Work, ParentsNext, Disability Employment Services or the Community Development Program
- be deemed suitable for training without any barriers that would prevent successful participation
- be either an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or have working rights in Australia
- the two-year newly arrived residents waiting period for income support.

There have been a number of changes made to the program to allow greater flexibility and access to SEE, including:

- uncapping funded places and expand eligibility to job seekers not on income support from 1 July 2021
- remove the maximum 650-hours training entitlement from 1 January 2022
- provide innovative project funding from January 2022 to:
  - o integrate digital literacy skills training
  - o trial innovative practices.

Note: Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) clients may also be eligible for referral to the SEE program. AMEP focuses on delivering English language training to eligible migrants and humanitarian refugees to assist with their settlement in Australia while SEE offers LLND training to persons from an English-speaking background and those that want to have a greater work focus for their training, including undertaking a VET course with embedded LLND support.

Before being referred to the program, job seekers' eligibility must be checked by the referring agency.

Referring Agencies are Services Australia (Centrelink) and providers of *Jobactive,* ParentsNext, Transition to Work, the Community Development Program and the Disability Employment Services.

Funding available to recipients under the program

SEE program participants may be eligible for the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Supplement of $20.80 per fortnight paid through Services Australia.

SEE funding is paid to third party providers, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), to deliver training to eligible individuals. No funds are paid directly to individuals.

Recipients

20 RTOs deliver the SEE program to eligible job seekers and the program is supported by one Quality Assurance provider.

Training can be undertaken either full-time (20–25 hours per week) or part-time (10–19 hours per week). Training can be delivered face-to-face, via distance or a mixture of the two.

Work experience is also available through some providers to help contextualise training and improve the job seeker's employability skills and knowledge.

In 2020–21 the program assisted 25,378 job seekers. Participation is expected to increase to up to 34,000 participants by 2024–25.

Evaluation

In September 2014, the then Department of Industry engaged an external consultant, ACIL Allen Consulting, to conduct an evaluation of SEE. The evaluation considered the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the program, and examined opportunities for establishing better linkages with the AMEP.

The evaluation was completed in 2015. The evaluation findings indicated that, overall, the SEE program is valued and providing assistance to improve eligible job seekers' LLND skills, with the expectation that such improvements will enable them to participate more effectively in training or in the labour force.

History of program

The Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) commenced in 2002 when the Literacy and Numeracy Training Program and the Advanced English for Migrants program amalgamated to provide a more integrated management approach to addressing LLND needs among job seekers at the national level.

A review of the LLNP in 2013 identified opportunities to make the program more flexible and efficient. This included a name change to remove perceived social stigma associated with the program's name.

In early 2022 the Department conducted consultations with stakeholders on possible changes to the SEE program for the next contract from 1 July 2023. The consultations focussed on six elements of the program including: job seeker access and engagement, training and delivery, payment model, performance, quality assurance and procurement. The consultations found continued broad support for the program and recommended some operational policy changes to improve the referral rate of job seekers to the program and streamline administration. The Department is examining the feedback and developing a strategy for feeding outcomes back to stakeholders.

3.1.2 Access to Training – Foundation Skills for Your Future Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: May 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,283	14,283	12,139	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Foundation Skills for Your Future program (the program) provides language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) training in workplace and other settings to employed or recently unemployed Australian with foundational skills needs.

Policy Objective

This program addresses issues of low LLND skills among employed and recently unemployed Australians. This program provides training opportunities to eligible Australians enabling them to develop their LLND skills to engage with further training and employment opportunities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Australian citizens and permanent residents who:

- are aged 15 years and over
- have left secondary school education
- are employed or recently unemployed (less than nine months) and not registered for an employment services program.

Funding available to recipients under the program

No funds are paid to individuals under the program. Funding is paid to third party providers, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), to deliver training to eligible individuals.

Recipients

RTOs deliver the program to eligible recipients.

Participants can access the program in two ways:

- individuals can self-refer to the program; or
- employers can identify individuals or a cohort of employees who could benefit from additional training in LLND skills.

It is expected that around 11,000 individuals will benefit over the life of the program.

Evaluation

In April 2021, the Department engaged an external consultant to review the implementation and business processes of the program. The review made several recommendations to improve the uptake and administration of the program, a number of which have been implemented, while others remain under review.

History of program

This program was announced in the 2019–20 Budget.

3.1.2 Access to Training – Foundation Skills for Your Future – Remote Community Pilots

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: September 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
3,284	3,326	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Remote Communities pilot program (the pilot) is trialling new approaches to address gaps in the assessment and delivery of language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) to Indigenous Australians. Four pilots are delivering training in remote communities in Northern Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia.

Policy Objective

This program benefits individuals in remote communities with foundation LLND skills needs by providing tailored, flexible and locally-developed training. The pilots fill a gap in current foundation skills training arrangements in remote communities and empower individuals to participate more fully in the labour market and the community.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Each remote community pilot has been co-designed with local Indigenous leaders, community members, facilitated with the involvement of the local Community Development Program provider. Suitable Indigenous small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were selected to deliver the pilots following a tender process.

People eligible for the program include:

- Individuals aged 15 and over in remote communities who have left secondary school education.
- Are living in a Remote Community.

Funding available to recipients under the program

No funds are paid to individuals under the program. Funding is paid to third party Indigenous SME service providers to deliver training to eligible individuals.

Recipients

Indigenous SMEs will deliver the Remote Communities Pilots to eligible recipients.

Evaluation

The pilots will be evaluated across the duration of the delivery and provide a final report in June 2023.

History of program

The Remote Communities Pilot was announced in the 2019–20 Budget.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
Australian Industry and Skills Committee	1,550	787	-	-	-
Skills Organisation Pilots	15,195	9,839	-	-	-
Industry Clusters	7,044	74,127	105,265	107,479	109,091
Industry Training Hubs	14,722	16,735	-	-	-
Industry Workforce Training	40,025	29,094	9,145	8,794	8,925
Integrated Information Service	1,820	847	876	903	916
Licensing of International Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses	1,193	1,193	1,193	1,193	1,193
My Skills Website	585	594	604	612	-
National Career Institute and Ambassador	14,009	16,601	1,067	-	-
National Centre for Vocational Education Research	715	726	737	748	759
National Skills Commission	7,200	4,365	2,400	1,900	1,900
National Training System COPE – USI	5,523	5,618	5,702	5,793	5,880
National Training System COPE – Other*	41,457	48,249	32,090	32,365	32,851
Skills Communication Campaign	19,433	-	-	-	-
VET Information Strategy	787	1,024	574	589	603
VET Data Streamlining	16,111	13,032	9,001	6,678	6,778
Nationally Consistent and Accessible Subsidy and Apprenticeship Information	2,100	5,645	1,547	1,547	1,547
Digital Skills Cadetship Trial Program**	-	-	-	-	-
Total 3.1.3 Support for the National Training System	**189,469**	**228,476**	**170,201**	**168,601**	**170,443**

*Funding for the NTS COPE – Other includes funding for TGA Rebuild.

**Note: Digital Skills Cadetship Trial Program operates with departmental funding of $10.745m between 2021–22 to 2023–24.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Australian Industry and Skills Committee

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	8 May 2015
TERMINATION DATE:	30 June 2023
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2021–22 Estimated Actual
1,550	787	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) was established by the former Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry and Skills Council (CISC). One of the main functions of the AISC is to approve new or amended training products prior to their endorsement by Skills Ministers.

In providing this advice, the AISC considers information provided by a national network of Industry Reference Committees (IRCs), on the needs of specific industry sectors, connections between sectors, economy-wide issues, and emerging skill needs.

Policy Objective

At the time of its establishment and according to its Terms of Reference, the intent was that the AISC provide advice to ensure the directions taken by Skills Ministers were informed by an industry-based perspective, particularly with respect to new or amended national training products.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Department manages AISC funding to cover the operational and meeting expenses of the AISC and research projects commissioned by the AISC. The management of funds and tendering process for research projects commissioned by the AISC is in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* as well as the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the Training Product Development Program was completed in September 2019. It assessed the program's effectiveness in supporting industry-led arrangements for training product development. The independent evaluation identified three broad areas for improvement of the current arrangements, including a strengthening the focus on reducing complexity of the system, increasing the prioritisation of effort to areas of critical skill needs, and improving measurement and accountability.

History of program

The AISC was established on 8 May 2015.

In September 2014, CISC agreed that the AISC would have an industry-based nominee from each state and territory, a member from an industry peak body and a Commonwealth appointed Chair and two Commonwealth appointed members. Industry peak bodies, Australian Industry Group, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Business Council of Australia participate on an annually rotating basis.

The Training Product Development Programme, along with the AISC's function ceases 31 December 2022. This follows a ███████████████████ ██ ████████ Both Industry Clusters and ASQA's Assurance function will be established and fully operational by 1 January 2023.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Skills Organisation Pilots

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2019
TERMINATION DATE:	30 June 2023
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
15,195	9,839	-	-	-

Funding type – Procurement

Brief Description

A total of $48.7 million over four years between 2019–20 and 2022–23 has been allocated to establish three Skills Organisations (SOs) pilots in key priority industries of human services, digital technology and mining.

The pilots are trialing new ways of working to shape the national training system to be more responsive to the needs of those industries – from the identification of skills needs, to qualifications development, through to improving the quality of training delivery and assessment. The Department is overseeing the implementation of the SO pilots, including evaluating their effectiveness and impact.

Lessons learnt through the pilots are informing policy and implementation of the Industry Clusters Program announced in Budget 2021–22.

Policy Objective

To pilot the capacity and capability of increasing industry ownership and accountability within the national training system to better respond to industry needs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Three Skills Organisations have been funded in the digital technologies, human services care and mining industries. The governance models and organisational structure were developed with input from industry.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A total of $48.7 million is available over four years to fund the establishment and operations of SO pilots in the mining, human services care and digital technology industries to deliver pilot projects.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the SO pilot program is currently underway.

The final report from the evaluation is scheduled to be published in May 2022.

History of program

SO pilots for the Human Services Care and Digital Technology Skills sectors were established in the 2019–20 Budget. The Human Services Care SO was established in December 2019 and the Digital Technology SO was established in January 2020. As part of the 2019–20 MYEFO the pilot program was expanded to include a Mining SO which was established in May 2020.

In the 2021–22 Budget funding was provisioned for the establishment of the Industry Clusters program which will replace the three SO pilots and the existing 67 Industry Reference Committees. The new Industry Clusters are expected to be operational from 1 January 2023.

History of program

The expert review of Australia's vocational education and training system recommended the establishment of SOs to embed industry in the development of training products and ensure training meets industry needs.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Industry Clusters

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2021
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 budget:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
7,044	74,127	105,265	107,479	109,091

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

New industry engagement arrangements, which include the establishment of Industry Clusters, provide industry with a broader role in Australia's VET system and delivering employer and learner needs. The Industry Clusters will be groups of aligned industries with a strategic leadership role to identify, forecast and respond to the current and emerging skills needs and workforce challenges of their industries.

Existing industry engagement arrangements, including the Australian Industry Skills Committee (AISC), the Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) and Skills Services Organisations (SSOs), will be wound down in 2022, and replaced by Industry Clusters, which are expected to be fully operational by 1 January 2023.

Policy Objective

The establishment of Industry Clusters will broaden the role of industry to provide strategic leadership on skills and workforce challenges, and provide an increased level of autonomy to industry to identify skills needs through to the development and delivery of training products.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Industry Clusters will be established through a two-stage grant opportunity. Stage 1 of the grant process opened on 3 December 2021 and closed on 31 March 2022. It involves an open competitive process seeking applications from eligible individuals or entities who are recognised as leaders within their industry to establish and operate an Industry Cluster. Stage 2 involves a closed non-competitive process with successful applicants from Stage 1 invited to participate as newly established clusters.

Funding available to recipients under the program

A total of $292.5 million over four years (2021–22 to 2024–25) is available to establish Industry Clusters.

Recipients

The final number and grouping of industries in each cluster will be settled through the grant process. Industry Clusters are expected to be not-for-profit companies, limited by guarantee, and incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001.*

Evaluation

The grant opportunity and the overall Industry Clusters program will be evaluated to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. An evaluation plan will be developed once the Performance Framework is finalised.

Lessons learnt through the implementation and evaluation of the existing Skills Organisations (SO) Pilot program are informing broader improvements to the national VET system, including implementation of the new Industry Clusters program. The final report from the evaluation of the SO pilot program is expected to be published in May 2022.

History of program

The 2021–22 Budget provided an additional $149.2 million funding over four years (2021–22 to 2024–25), bringing the total investment over this period to $292.5 million, to support the new industry engagement arrangements.

On 28 October 2021, Skills Ministers agreed to the new industry engagement arrangements, including the establishment of the Industry Cluster model.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Industry Training Hubs

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: July 2019 (the first Industry Training Hub was launched on 16 March 2020)

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,722	16,735	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The 2019–20 Budget provided $50.6 million over four years to trial Industry Training Hubs (Training Hubs) in 10 regions with high youth unemployment. The Training Hubs aim to improve opportunities for young people in these regions and will target Year 11 and 12 students.

Each Training Hub is managed by a full-time Career Facilitator, providing an on-the-ground presence while delivering Training Hub services.

Career Facilitators work with and encourage young people to build skills and choose occupations in demand in their region, creating better linkages between schools and local industry, repositioning vocational education and training as a first-choice option.

A key function of the Career Facilitators is to work with a local Steering Group to develop and activate Projects and other initiatives to address skills shortages and meet local circumstances and requirements.

Locations

State	Region	Launch / start date
New South Wales	Grafton	1 July 2021
	Gosford	1 July 2021
Queensland	Maryborough	1 March 2021
	Townsville	2 September 2020
South Australia	Port Pirie	1 March 2021
Northern Territory	Alice Springs	1 October 2021
Tasmania	Burnie	16 March 2020
Victoria	Shepparton	15 March 2021
Western Australia	Wanneroo	16 August 2021
	Armadale	6 April 2021

Policy Objectives

- Encourage young people to build skills and choose occupations in demand in their region.
- Create better linkages between schools and local industry.
- Reposition vocational education and training as a first-choice option.
- Help eliminate persistent high youth unemployment in regional areas.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Industry Training Hubs will assist Year 11 and 12 students in the selected locations.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The program does not provide direct funding to participants. Funding is paid to the third-party Career Facilitators and to organisations delivering project activities.

Recipients

Year 11 and 12 students in Australia in the selected Training Hub locations will benefit from the program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Training Hubs is scheduled to be undertaken in 2022–23.

History of program

The initiative was introduced in the 2019–20 Budget, as part of the *Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow* package.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Industry Workforce Training

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2013

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
40,025	29,094	9,145	8,794	8,925

Funding Type – Procurement/Grant.

Brief Description

The Industry Workforce Training (IWT) program provides a mechanism to support the national training system to deliver the skills required for Australian industry and the economy. The majority of IWT funds are allocated to the Skills Service Organisations.

Skills Service Organisations support the Training Product Development Program. Funding for Skills Service Organisations terminates 2022–23, following which the function will be fully funded under the new Industry Cluster Program.

Policy Objective

The objective of IWT is to support the national training system to deliver skills required by individuals, industries and the economy.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The IWT program funds ongoing projects approved through the budget process. Currently these are Skills Service Organisations, WorldSkills Australia, Adult Learner's Week and the Australian Government categories of the Australian Training Awards.

Recipients

The program provides funding to a wide range of organisations including industry bodies, research organisations and service providers who may undertake grant activities or provide contracted services. These activities and services include training product development and promotion and communication.

Evaluation

Evaluations and reviews for projects funded under the program are conducted as part of normal contract and program management practice.

The AISC commissioned an independent evaluation of the Training Product Development Program, which was completed in September 2019. It assessed the program's effectiveness in supporting industry-led arrangements for training product development. The evaluation identified three broad areas for improvement of the current arrangements, including strengthening the focus on reducing complexity of the system, increasing the prioritisation of effort to areas of critical skill needs, and improving measurement and accountability.

A review of the Australian Training Awards was undertaken in 2020. The review reflected opportunities for improvement, rather than significant transformation of the Australian Training Awards. Thirteen recommendations were made to streamline award categories, revise eligibility criteria, improve application and judging processes and increase the promotion of the Awards. Implementation of the recommendations is occurring across 2021 and 2022.

History of program

This program was announced as part of the 2013–14 Budget and combined three programs which directed funding towards support for the national training system. The three programs were National Programs, Strengthened Role of Industry Skills Councils, and Industry Training Strategies.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System –Integrated Information Service

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: N/A

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2022–23 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,820	847	876	903	916

Funding type – Procurement

Brief Description

The Integrated Information Service (IIS) is a primary source of information on apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia and offers information for apprentices and employers from a multitude of sources in one central information service.

The services include a website, an enquiry service, a mobile app, information sessions, and various social media channels.

Policy Objective

The objective of the IIS is to deliver a service that provides essential support to all stakeholders in the Australia Apprenticeships system.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A – the IIS is a free information service available to all Australians.

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Recipients

The IIS is available to all Australians however, it is specifically targeted to stakeholders in the Australian Apprenticeships system.

Evaluation

IIS will be evaluated as part of ordinary program management practice.

History of program

The Department has funded Industry Training Australia Pty Ltd to manage and deliver an integrated information service since 1998. This version of the service is known as the Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service (AATIS). The current contract for delivery of IIS commenced on 1 July 2019 and will end on 31 December 2022.

In the 2021–22 Budget, the forward estimates for the program were revised to $847,000 in 2022–23, $876,000 in 2023–24 and $903,000 in 2024–25. The budget for the program is ongoing.

The Department will deliver the program directly through the National Careers Institute from 1 January 2023.

Efficiencies will be realised through the maturing of the Your Career digital platform which was launched from 1 October 2020. Commonwealth careers-related information is progressively being consolidated onto Your Career, to reduce the confusion for users unsure of where to find up-to-date and accurate careers information. This includes information on apprenticeships and traineeships

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Licensing of International Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2015–16 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO)

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,193	1,193	1,193	1,193	1,193

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Funding supports the development and licensing of international VET courses for delivery by Australian registered training organisations (RTOs) offshore. The initiative was approved as a cost recovery activity, with revenue estimated to partially cover program costs over the life of the program.

Policy Objective

The licensing of international VET courses, known as the International Skills Training (IST) courses, facilitates offshore business opportunities for Australian registered training organisations (RTOs).

The courses are non-accredited courses tailored to offer flexible training and designed for international delivery. They were designed as additional and alternative products to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and non-accredited courses already being delivered offshore.

The IST courses were developed by Australian industry, facilitated by the Australian Government, to help support the global demand for quality training and assessment skills.

The program currently comprises three courses in training and assessment that have been designed for flexible delivery offshore to an international audience. The Technical VET (TVET) Trainer Course and TVET Assessor Course provide participants with vocational skills to train or assess learners in their industry of expertise. The TVET Advanced Trainer and Assessor Course provide participants skills to take a leadership role within an organisation, enterprise or industry.

These non-AQF courses aim to address critical competency gaps, support global skills needs in the global workforce, and provide RTOs the opportunity to offer additional products to support overseas stakeholders to meet their diverse skills needs.

Twelve RTOs are currently licenced to deliver the courses. Of these, only seven were active in 2021, due in large part to COVID-19. In 2021, 715 courses were completed, with Pacific Island nations representing over 60 per cent of course completions. This compares to 2020, where 941 courses were completed, with China and India accounting for approximately 60 per cent of course completions.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Australian RTOs are eligible to apply for a licence to deliver IST courses. The process for application includes the submission of an application form and supporting evidence to the Department. Interested RTOs must satisfy the eligibility requirements set out in the program guidelines. Conditions and requirements are also outlined in the product ('licence') agreement which approved RTOs must adhere to at all times. This includes payment of an annual licence fee of $4,000 (GST Included).

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Evaluation

An evaluation of the first phase of implementation was conducted in late 2017. A second program evaluation was conducted in 2019–20.

History of program

In 2014, the Department, in partnership with industry, developed the first set of internationally relevant courses to help meet the global demand for skilled trainers and assessors.

The program was announced in the 2015–16 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

The international training and assessment courses were piloted in ten countries across the Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Latin America from October 2015 to March 2017. Approximately 800 learners undertook training under the pilot program. The courses were then launched in April 2017 and were implemented through a phased approach. Phase I (2017) allowed for commercial delivery of the courses in India. Phase II (2018) saw commercial delivery expanded to China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Latin American countries. On 31 May 2021, the Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business approved the commencement of Phase III of implementation, which includes the development of new courses and delivery to more countries.

The Department recently commenced a procurement process for the development of a new IST course in cybersecurity. Guidelines have also been developed to encourage licensees to apply to the Department to have courses they develop recognised as IST courses.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – My Skills Website

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2010

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
585	594	604	612	-

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The My Skills website provides information to help students make choices about VET. The website allows people to compare VET courses and training providers to support training decisions.

Policy Objective

The My Skills website supports market operations in the VET sector by enabling consumers and businesses to compare VET courses and RTOs, so they can select training services that meet their needs.

The My Skills website supports small business RTOs in the VET sector, by allowing them the same level of exposure to consumers as the larger providers. It allows RTOs to indicate where courses are offered, including identifying campus locations; delivery types, including the availability of online delivery; availability of part-time study or block training; course prices; and additional services that they want to promote.

My Skills also presents a range of other consumer information including: JobTrainer courses, VET Student Loan and subsidy availability; apprenticeship availability; outcomes information for courses (consolidated for all RTOs); and career information promoting 'real skills for real careers'.

The next phase of development will see further consumer and RTO led improvements to help compare courses and providers, including the introduction of an RTO information dashboard which is planned for release in early 2023.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All RTOs and their scope of delivery are automatically included on the My Skills website when they become registered. RTOs are able to log-on to the My Skills system and provide information about their services and facilities, as well as course-specific information.

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Evaluation

Wallis Consulting was engaged in 2015 to conduct an evaluation of My Skills 3.0, including the progress of the project since inception and identification of strategies to further deliver expectations of RTOs and consumers. The report found that the website is well-received and made recommendations that were incorporated into the My Skills 4.0 release in 2017.

In 2018–19, Mentally Friendly were engaged to undertake discovery work and user research focused on consumers, including students and their influencers, careers advisers and employers. This work is informing the development of the RTO information dashboard.

The Department is also undertaking an update to My Skills, including designing, developing, testing, and releasing a new version of the My Skills website and a secure portal for RTOs.

Ongoing feedback is also received through the contact form on the site.

History of program

My Skills was announced as part of the 2010–11 Budget and launched in October 2012. My Skills is supported by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments under the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform (2012).

In May 2014, My Skills was relaunched with a new design and new features, and in June 2015 My Skills 3.0 was released. This included an interface for RTOs to provide price and duration information for their courses.

My Skills 4.0 was released in November 2017 and included enhancements to support the VET Information Strategy promoting the outcomes of VET. It also provided new career and industry landing pages to better assist VET consumers.

The Productivity Commission's National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development Review recommended (p. 43) My Skills publish better information on student fees, RTO quality, labour market outcomes and credit pathways.

The rebuild of My Skills is addressing these findings by collecting and publishing more granular information about course costs including tuition, materials, administration and applicable subsidies, to get to a total course fee for a student. The updated My Skills website will also allow students and other consumers to compare RTO course offerings side-by-side and enable easier uploading of data by RTOs.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Career Institute and Ambassador

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
14,009	16,601	1,067	-	-

Funding type – Procurement

Brief Description

The National Careers Institute (NCI) was established on 1 July 2019 to ensure people have access to accurate and authoritative careers information and support irrespective of their age or career stage.

The NCI's mission is to *drive up the quality and coverage of career guidance, including improved accessibility of information about education pathways and employment outcomes; to ensure that people are maximising their workforce potential, including directing people towards jobs in demand.*

The NCI's strategic objectives are:

- *Inform* —Strengthen careers data information and support to enable individuals to more effectively manage and develop their career.
- *Connect* – Foster partnerships between individuals, industry, employers, schools, careers advisors and career influencers to encourage information sharing, collaboration and best practice across the careers sector.
- *Promote* – Promote careers and skills development by driving awareness of career information and services, learning and working pathways so that individuals are informed to better navigate their career options.

This program incorporates funding for the following sub-programs/measures delivered by the NCI (noting correlating departmental funding is not captured in the profiles above):

- Partnership Grants program
- School Leavers Information Service (and kit)
- AgAttract — Attracting Australian workers to modern agriculture
- National Careers Survey
- Career Advice Access for Digital Job Seekers
- Supporting Women's Mid-Career transition into Tech
- Your Career platform

Policy Objective

To provide Australians with accurate career information and support, irrespective of age or career stage, so that they can make informed decisions about their education, training and career pathways.

Recipients

- Partnership Grants recipients.
- School Leavers and digital job seekers are also target recipients of the services.

Evaluation

The NCI Ministerial Charter 2020–2022 governs the work and role of the NCI. The work of the NCI is supported by an Advisory Board which provides independent, expert advice about its strategic direction. The Ministerial Charter requires that the NCI provides an update on its activities and achievements at least once a year to Government as an 'Annual Update'.

History of program

The NCI was established in the 2019–20 Budget as part of the 'Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow' package to ensure working Australians have access to high-quality, evidence-based career advice to support and inform their career choices.

The measure included the establishment of a National Careers Ambassador (NCA). The role of the NCA was to champion the work of the NCI and its efforts to improve and connect Australians with career pathway information. The appointment ceased, as planned, on 31 December 2020. A new National Careers Ambassador has not been appointed.

In the 2021–22 Budget, $29.6 million was provided over four years to 2023–24 to continue the operation of the role, functions and governance of the NCI.

The 2021–22 Budget included the following measures for the NCI:

- $7.618 million to provide support to young Australians and women, through extending Enhanced Support for School Leaver measure to end June 2023 ($4.244 million) and a dedicated grant round targeting the specific needs of young people as part of the NCI's Partnership Grants Program ($3.374 million);
- $12.2 million for a female-targeted NCI Partnership Grants Program; and
- $2.7 million through the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environments sponsored AgAttract measure, to uplift outdated perceptions of agricultural occupations and attract citizens to opportunities in modern agriculture.

In the 2021–22 MYEFO, the NCI received an additional $1.438 million to deliver a 6-month trial of Career Advice Access for Digital Job Seekers. A further $1.5 million was allocated in the 2022–23 Budget, to extend the trial until 31 December 2022.

In the 2022–23 Budget $3.9 million was allocated to support Women's Mid-Career Transition into the Tech Workforce. Of this, $3.5 million will be delivered through the NCI and $0.4 million through leveraging the Mid-Career Checkpoint program.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Centre for Vocational Education Research

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1981–82

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
715	726	737	748	759

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics about VET nationally.

The NCVER is a not-for-profit company established by the Commonwealth and state and territory ministers responsible for VET in 1981. It operates under a Memorandum and Articles of Association through which the members of the company are the nine VET ministers. There is a board of directors with an independent Chair.

Since establishing the NCVER, the company members have made an annual contribution to NCVER's operating expenses. The Commonwealth pays around half the total contribution, and states and territories split the remaining half between them proportionally, in accordance with their populations. The Commonwealth's 2021–22 contribution is $715,000.

Additional grant funding is also provided for NCVER's key research and statistical programs. This is sourced from National Training System Commonwealth Own Purpose Expenses (COPE) under Sub-program 3.1.4 Support for the National Training System.

Policy Objective

The membership contribution supports the operations of NCVER, which collects information on the national VET system to inform decisions by governments, industry, employers, trainers and students. The national data collections undertaken by the NCVER are essential for participants in, and funders of, the training sector to make informed decisions. It is also necessary for monitoring skills outcomes nationally and in each state and territory. The research program enables targeted examination of issues impacting on the VET sector and the delivery of nationally recognised training.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

The funding is only available to the NCVER. In addition to the Commonwealth's contribution, the NCVER is funded to 30 June 2022 through grant arrangements for statistical and research services. From 1 July 2022, these services will be procured from NCVER through a contract.

Recipients

NCVER.

Evaluation

The NCVER is established under the *Corporations Act 2001,* is audited annually and publishes Annual Reports.

History of program

The NCVER was established in 1981 and since this time has operated on behalf of Commonwealth and state and territory governments to provide quality independent data, information and research on the national VET system.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Skills Commission

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
7,200	4,365	2,400	1,900	1,900

Funding type – Procurement

Brief Description

The National Skills Commission (NSC) was established in the 2019–20 Budget as part of the 'Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow Skills' Package, and then built on in the 2020 July Economic and Fiscal Update in the 'Skills Reform' Package.

The NSC provides advice on skill demand forecasting, the performance of the VET sector and the effectiveness of government investment in VET. Its specific functions are:

- to provide advice to the Minister or to the Secretary in relation to the following:
  o Australia's current, emerging and future workforce skills needs
  o the development of efficient prices for VET courses
  o the public and private return on government investment in VET qualifications
  o the performance of Australia's system for providing VET
  o issues affecting the state of the Australian and international labour markets
  o opportunities to improve access, skills development and choice for regional, rural and remote Australia in relation to VET
  o opportunities to improve access, skills development and choice for regional, rural and remote Australia in relation to VET.
- to inform the public about the matters mentioned above
- to collect, analyse, share and publish data and other information about the matters mentioned above to inform policy development and program delivery.

The NSC was launched on 1 July 2020 and the *National Skills Commissioner Act 2020* received Royal Assent on 2 September 2020. Mr Adam Boyton, formerly the interim National Skills Commissioner, was appointed as Commissioner for a five year term on 13 October 2020.

Policy Objective

The NSC's long-term outcomes are:

- to make an enduring and relevant contribution to labour market information
- to improve the quality, accessibility and relevance of VET
- to contribute to a labour market that effectively aligns skills needs with education and training.

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Evaluation

A post implementation evaluation of the establishment of the NSC is scheduled for 2022

History of program

The Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System recommended the establishment of an NSC to improve consistency of funding arrangements and stronger industry engagement in the national training system.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Training System COPE – USI

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
5,523	5,618	5,702	5,793	5,880

Funding Type – NTS COPE funds – transferred to the USI Special Account.

Brief Description

The Unique Student Identifier (USI) initiative commenced on 1 January 2015. A USI is required for students undertaking in full VET studies in order for them to receive a qualification or statement of attainment. A USI gives students access to an online record of their nationally recognised training in the form of a USI transcript.

The USI initiative also enables the collection of information about students' training activity and their movements within the VET system. This information provides an important foundation for understanding and improving VET performance and better meeting the needs of students, training organisations and employers.

Policy Objective

Individuals with a USI are able to access their training records online in a password protected secure environment. Individuals can also give access to their authenticated VET transcript to third parties such as employers and licensing bodies, to verify VET qualifications.

As well as helping students keep track of their training qualifications, the USI initiative provides more precise data through longitudinal studies to help ensure the VET sector provide the skills businesses need.

Eligibility for program and process for application

New and continuing students undertaking VET nationally recognised training require a USI in order to receive a qualification or statement of attainment. This includes Australian students studying onshore and offshore and international students studying in Australia.

Students can create a USI via the USI student portal. Training organisations can also apply for a USI on behalf of a student with the student's permission.

The USI was expanded to Higher Education students with the *Student Identifiers Amendment (Higher Education) Act 2020* . The amendments to the *Student Identifiers Act 2014 (Cth)* enable the extension of the USI from VET to higher education students, which commenced from 1 January 2021.

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Recipients

N/A

Evaluation

A post implementation review of the USI initiative was completed on 14 September 2018. Overall, the review found that, despite early concerns about the potential administrative burden of the USI system, introduction of the USI has been more straightforward than anticipated and represents a significant achievement in implementing the agreement made between the state, territory and Australian Governments.

History of program

The USI for VET, an initiative of the former Council of Australian Governments (COAG), commenced on 1 January 2015. The USI provides individuals with free, online access to an authenticated VET transcript based on information held in the National VET data collections to assist with job applications and streamlining enrolment processes.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Training System COPE – Other

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2008

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
41,457	48,249	32,090	32,365	32,851

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

NTS COPE funds the national infrastructure which underpins the operation of the national training system. This includes the national VET data collection and research program undertaken by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), the Australian Training Awards, the Reading Writing Hotline, Performance Information for VET (PIVET), the Unique Student Identifier office and the National Register of VET (training.gov.au).

Policy Objective

The objective of NTS COPE is to provide governance and infrastructure for the operation of the national training system.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Funding is allocated by a decision of Government.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Individuals do not receive funding under this program.

Recipients

The Department provides funding to a range of organisations including research organisations, Australian government departments and service providers who undertake grant activities or provide contracted services.

Evaluation

Evaluations and reviews for projects funded under the program are conducted by the relevant project manager.

History of program

This program was established in 2008. NTS COPE funding is quarantined from the National Specific Purpose Payment under the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – National Training System COPE – Training.gov.au (TGA) Rebuild

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2011 (TGA rebuild started in July 2021)

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
8,600	18,112	2,668	1,349	1,367

Funding Type – Procurement

Note: The TGA Rebuild and existing funding for the hosting and platform maintenance of TGA is included in the total funding outlined in the NTS COPE – Other Program factsheet.

Brief Description

Training.gov.au (TGA) is the national register for vocational education and training (VET) as required by section 216 of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*.

The TGA provides details on registered training organisations (RTOs) and nationally recognised training, including VET accredited courses, qualifications, skill sets, and units of competency.

An investment of $30.7 million with $1.4 million per year ongoing from 2025–26, is provided to deliver a new National Training Register, which will redesign and rebuild the TGA platform to better meet the needs of industry and employers into the future.

Policy Objective

The new National Training Register will support future qualifications reforms and revised training package delivery. The current TGA platform is more than 10 years old and does not have the capacity to support the scale of changes required.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The VET sector, including employers, students, and RTOs will benefit from this measure. The enhanced National Training Register will also be relied upon by VET Regulators, training providers, industry licensing bodies, industry professionals and representatives, the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and other VET professionals.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The total funding of this program is available to deliver the TGA rebuild and provide ongoing support of the TGA platform.

Recipients

The VET sector, including employers, students, and RTOs will benefit from this measure.

Evaluation

N/A

History of program

TGA was launched in 2011 and replaced the previous national register, the National Training Information Service.

The TGA platform consists of four components:

- The TGA – used as a reference site by VET regulators, governments, industry licencing bodies, industry professionals and representatives, NCVER, RTOs and other VET professionals
- The Training Package Content Management System – used by training package developers (currently Skills Service Organisations) to author and publish training packages, their content and associated metadata to TGA
- Web service system for exchanging information with other systems (Web Service API); and
- VET document repository (VETNet).

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – VET Information Strategy

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 23 November 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
787	1,024	574	589	603

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

The VET Information Strategy builds awareness and improves perceptions about the broader VET system and the opportunities it presents.

The Strategy's implementation includes initiatives centred around the tagline, *real skills for real careers* and promotes a collaborative approach by stakeholders and corporate and community partners in assisting to elevate the status of this career pathway. The tagline is being utilised by Australian and state and territory departments, and by industry bodies, Registered Training Organisations, Australian Apprenticeship Support Network providers and VET graduates. The Department is encouraging all stakeholders to be involved in real skills for real careers by adopting the tagline.

In 2021, more than 70 Australian VET Alumni participated in events, activities and online engagements, estimated to have reached millions of Australians. Some of these activities included:

- featured in the Careers with STEM magazine
- participated in National Skills Week activities
- case study videos showcasing their VET career pathways.

The Australian VET Alumni is a national community of VET graduates, registered training organisations, schools, VET practitioners, VET leaders and businesses dedicated to sharing their VET journey. Alumni are central to the delivery of the VET Information Strategy, illustrating the many ways a person can succeed through VET and highlighting careers where workers are needed most.

Managed by the National Careers Institute, the Australian VET Alumni is a national community of VET graduates, registered training organisations, schools, VET practitioners, VET leaders and businesses dedicated to sharing their VET journey. Alumni are central to the delivery of the VET Information Strategy, illustrating the many ways a person can succeed through VET and highlighting careers where workers are needed most.

Policy Objective

To raise the profile of VET, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Goods and services are procured as required.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Nil.

Recipients

N/A

Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation will be undertaken in 2022–23.

History of program

The VET Information Strategy was launched on 23 November 2017.

The *real skills for real careers* tagline has been widely adopted throughout the sector including by federal, state and territory government programs, Australian Apprenticeships Support Network Providers, VET service providers, not-for-profits, Skills Service Organisations and Registered Training Organisations.

Current activities focus on face-to-face engagement and resources that support VET stakeholders and career decision makers and their influencers better understand VET pathways and connect with training.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – VET Data Streamlining

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 February 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 budget:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
16,111	13,032	9,001	6,678	6,778

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Funding of $47 million over five years has been provided to implement the VET Data Streamlining program, which aims to transform current VET data collection processes and enable system-to-system data exchange, to collect near real-time data once and make it available for multiple purposes.

Policy Objective

Improving the way data is collected and used will support users of the VET system, including students, organisations, regulators and governments, to have access to more timely and reliable information. It will also help VET data submitters, including Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and their Student Management System providers, with more efficient event-based collection and reporting arrangements.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Recipients

N/A

Evaluation

The program is now moving from design to delivery stage and will be subject to ongoing assurance review and evaluation throughout implementation.

History of Program

The Department has been working with skills departments in New South Wales, South Australia, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) to design and build a secure, centralised and cloud-based VET activity data collection system. Training providers and student management system providers are also contributing to this project.

In parallel, the NCVER has been developing a new VET Information Standard to better meet a range of users' current and future needs and replace the current Australian VET Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS).

These two projects inform the VET Data Streamlining program of work, which in collaboration with states and territories, regulators and the NCVER, will implement new arrangements for the near real-time collection and use of VET activity data.

3.1.3 Support for the National Training System – Nationally Consistent and Accessible Subsidy and Apprenticeship Information

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation (Bill No. 1) 2021–22

START DATE: July 2021

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
2,100	5,645	1,547	1,547	1,547

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

In the 2021–22 Budget, $9.3 million was provisioned to consolidate information on apprenticeship wage subsidies and incentives into an easy-to-use single source of information, and to progress reforms that facilitate greater national consistency across the Australian Apprenticeship System.

This measure has two components:

- delivery of greater national consistency across the Australian Apprenticeship system through more consistent definitions and training contract durations across jurisdiction, and
- consolidation of apprenticeships and other skills wage subsidy and incentive information into a single "Incentives Estimator".

Policy Objective

To increase engagement with apprenticeships, skills and training, education and employment by consolidating subsidy and incentive information into a single connected system and modernising the Australian Apprenticeship system to reduce administrative burden.

Nationally consistent definitions of what an apprenticeship and traineeship means, and how long a qualification should take to complete, will enable skilled workers to move interstate to follow work opportunities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

N/A

Funding available to recipients under the program

N/A

Recipients

Any prospective apprentice or employer who is considering eligibility for an incentive or a subsidy.

Evaluation

N/A

History of program

The 2021–22 Budget provisioned $12.1 million to increase engagement with apprenticeships, skills and training, education and employment. This includes $9.3 million to consolidate subsidy and incentive information into a single connected system, which when ready, will be hosted on the My Skills website.

3.1.3 Digital Skills Cadetship Trial Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2021

TERMINATION DATE:	30 December 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	-	-	-	-

Note: Program operates with departmental funding of $10.745m between 2021–22 to 2023–24. Departmental funding is subject to corporate account and reserve reductions resulting in a funding reduction over the life of the project.

Funding Type – Procurement

Brief Description

Departmental funding of $10.745 million is provided over two and a half years from 2021–22 to support four industry-led trials to develop innovative pathways to increase the number of Australians with high level digital skills through cadetships. The cadetships cover emerging and high technology digital fields, comprising formal and on-the-job training, and will be targeted at cohorts seeking to upskill or cross-skill to adapt to new digitally advanced employment opportunities.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Digital Skills Cadetship Trial is to increase the number of Australians with high level digital skills by delivering digital skills training in a more flexible and timely manner than currently available.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Four organisations, selected through an open, competitive 2-stage procurement process, have been contracted to deliver the cadetship projects.

Recipients

Four cadetship projects are funded under the Trial:

- MEGT (Australia) Ltd – a project providing digital skills training in data analytics, cloud computing and cybersecurity (using Microsoft certifications and specialist micro credentials), specifically targeting women returning to the workforce or entering an IT career. The project is funded to provide 200 cadetships.
- Goanna Solutions (Education) Pty Ltd – a project providing accredited vocational education and training and industry recognised vendor training across various digital career pathways, specifically targeting diverse groups and regionally based participants. The project is funded to provide up to 260 cadetships.
- The Creative Co-operation Pty Ltd – a project providing structured, industry recognised digital skills training to meet the real-life work requirements of small businesses and start-up organisations, with a particular focus on culturally and linguistically diverse women and youth. The project is funded to provide 75 cadetships.
- Community Corporate Pty Ltd – a project providing digital skills training in cloud computing using ServiceNow qualifications, specifically targeting refugees. The project is funded to provide 75 cadetships.

History of program

Funding for the Digital Skills Cadetship Trial was provided in the 2021–22 Budget, under the Digital Economy Strategy.

3.2 VET Student Loans

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000's				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
VET Student Loans	134,563	133,580	144,575	152,213	156,774
VSL Tuition Protection Fund Special Account	917	2,478	2,580	2,687	2,791
Total 3.2 VET Student Loans	**135,480**	**136,058**	**147,155**	**154,900**	**159,565**

3.2 VET Student Loans

3.2 VET Student Loans

APPROPRIATION: Special appropriation – *VET Student Loans Act 2016*

START DATE: 1 January 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
134,563	133,580	144,575	152,213	156,774

Funding type – Loans

Brief Description

The VET Student Loans (VSL) program assists eligible students, enrolled in approved higher level (diploma and above) VET courses at approved course providers, to pay their tuition fees. The program is designed to provide financial support to students undertaking higher level training in courses that address workplace and industry needs, creating better opportunities for employment.

The available maximum loan amounts vary depending on the course. Some diploma or advanced diploma courses approved for VSL may also be eligible for state or territory government funding, which may reduce the loan amount needed.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) delivering approved VET courses may apply to become approved VSL providers. Where an eligible student is accessing a VSL, the Government pays the student's loan amount directly to the approved provider, and the student accumulates a debt to the Government, which is managed by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). VET Student Loans have income contingent repayment arrangements – in 2021–22, students are repaying their debts when their income reaches the minimum repayment threshold of $47,014 with a one per cent repayment rate, with a further 17 thresholds and repayment rates, up to a top threshold of $137,898 at which 10 per cent of income is repayable.

The key features of the VSL program are:

- Course eligibility that aligns with industry needs and employment outcomes
- Loan caps based on the cost of delivery on all eligible courses – 2022 maximum amounts: $5,406; $10,813; $16,221; and $81,111 for limited specified courses with high delivery cost (that is, aviation) – caps are indexed annually on 1 January
- A student engagement and progression requirement, where students must demonstrate continued engagement in their course to continue accessing their loan
- An outcomes-focused application process for providers to access the scheme, including time limited approvals
- A strong legislative, compliance and payment framework, including monthly payment in arrears and the ability for Government to impose loan caps on providers on a case-by-case basis
- A VSL Ombudsman investigates complaints about the VSL and the former VET FEE-HELP (VFH) Scheme
- Banning brokers and restriction of third-party training to VSL or Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency approved providers or bodies specifically approved by the department on application
- Tuition protections to allow students affected by a provider default to continue studying a replacement course with another provider or, if a suitable replacement course is not available, receive a re-credit of their Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) balance.

Policy Objective

The VSL program supports students to access VET courses that meet workplace needs in areas of national skills priority and improve their employment outcomes.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Student eligibility

There are specific criteria students must meet to be eligible for a loan through VSL.

Students must:

- Be studying an approved course (diploma and above) delivered by an approved VSL provider
- meet eligibility requirements
- Be academically suited
- Have a HELP balance that is more than $0.

Furthermore, a student must be:

- An Australian citizen; or
- Hold a permanent humanitarian visa and usually reside in Australia; or
- Be a qualifying New Zealand citizen.

Loan caps

- Eligible students will be able to access loans up to a capped amount for specified courses
- Providers may charge above the cap for a course, and if so, students will be expected to pay the difference
- Loan amounts and any gap fees are required to be spread across the course over at least three fee periods.

Eligible courses

- Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas that are linked to industry needs and employment outcomes are eligible for VSL
- If students wish to access a loan to study a higher-level VET course, they will need to select one of these eligible courses
- A list of eligible courses can be found in the VET Student Loans (Courses and Loan Caps) Determination 2016 available at www.legislation.gov.au
- Approved courses, and the approved VSL course providers deliver them, are also available on myskills.gov.au – Australia's directory of training – identified by the active 'VSL' logo.

Providers

- Providers must be RTOs approved by the Department to deliver courses under VSL
- Approved VSL course providers are required to publish their fees on all VSL courses on My Skills This means students will be able to use My Skills to:
  - find VSL approved courses
  - find the VSL approved course providers
  - use price information and loan availability to compare providers and courses when making training choices.

Evaluation

In November 2018, the ANAO reviewed the design and implementation of the VSL program and found that:

- The design and implementation were largely effective
- The design process considered the impacts of the new program on key stakeholders and was informed by lessons learnt from the former VFH Scheme and consultations with stakeholders
- Arrangements to support implementation and management of the program were largely sound and established oversight, performance management and risk management.

A full evaluation of the VSL program was completed by KPMG in December 2019. The evaluation took into account perspectives from multiple stakeholders inside and outside of the government including staff, VET providers and students.

Overall, the evaluation found the VSL program is achieving its objectives, is fiscally viable and fit for expansion if required. It also found that VSL creates better employment prospects and higher wage earning for students while enhancing the productive capacity of Australian industries. The VSL program has also improved outcomes for students, by increasing satisfaction and completion rates.

The report noted that while VSL is aligned to industry demand, it does not cover all the skills needs identified by industry. It highlighted areas to watch, including the rise in average student out–of–pocket expenses, the low take up rates of loans by students, and access rates for disadvantaged job seekers. Some providers were also found to be withdrawing from VSL due to the perceived compliance and administration burden.

History of Program

A VSL program commenced from 1 January 2017, replacing the VFH Scheme, which closed to new students on 31 December 2016 (existing students having the option to complete their course by 31 December 2018 through specific grandfathering provisions).

3.2 VET Student Loans – VSL Tuition Protection Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Account

START DATE: 1 January 2020

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
917	2,478	2,580	2,687	2,791

Funding type – Grants

Brief Description

The *Education Legislation Amendment (Tuition Protection and Other Measures) Act 2019* expanded the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) for international students to include domestic students who are accessing Government loans from 1 January 2020. The *VET Student Loans (VSL Tuition Protection Levy) Act 2020* and the *Higher Education Support (HELP Tuition Protection Levy) Act 2020* underpin these new arrangements.

The VSL Tuition Protection Fund is a special account designed to meet the costs of placing VSL students in alternative courses, or re-crediting loans for parts of their study they were unable to complete. The fund is maintained through collection of the VSL TPS levy payable by all non-exempt approved VSL providers. Table A Universities, TAFEs and other Government-owned providers are excluded from the levy requirements of the new tuition protection arrangements reflecting their capacity to place affected students in suitable replacement courses without the assistance of the TPS, in the event of a tuition protection activation.

All non-exempt approved providers are expected to contribute annual levies commensurate with their size and risk to cover the long-term costs of tuition assurance. However, the levy was waived in 2020 and 2021 to provide financial relief given the prevailing Covid-19 circumstances.

Policy Objective

The fund provides the financial basis for the operation of the VSL TPS to protect domestic students accessing a VSL in the event an approved VSL provider fails to deliver a course or part of a course when it was scheduled to start or ceases to deliver a course or parts of a course (provider default).

Eligibility for program and process for application

To be assisted students must be an eligible student as defined under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016* or approved for a VSL, and not have withdrawn before the date of the provider default.

The TPS identifies affected students and with the assistance of a contracted, third party entity case manages students including the facilitation of students transferring into similar courses with a replacement provider. Funding available to recipients under the program

There is no cap on the amount of funding assistance available to eligible recipients under the service. Students are not charged for any replacement components of their course, or their VSL debt is removed for parts of study not completed. Incentive payments to replacement providers or others facilitating a student's placement are at the discretion of the TPS Director.

Recipients

The recipients of the monies from the fund are affected VSL students, approved VSL providers acting as replacement providers, or another person to facilitate a student's placement in a replacement course.

Evaluation

A review report was tabled in Parliament on 7 April 2022 of Australia's tuition protection arrangements. The review considered the suitability and design of the TPS, how it is operated, how well it responded to the pandemic and whether it should be further expanded. The review found there was overall support for the TPS and the program continues to be delivered effectively and efficiently.

History of program

The TPS (including the Overseas Students Tuition Fund) commenced on 1 July 2012 to establish a single point of assistance for international students affected by provider defaults.

From 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2017, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (now called Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia) and TAFE Directors Australia managed tuition protection for providers accessing the VFH and FEE-HELP schemes and VSL program.

From 1 January 2018, the Australian Government assumed responsibility for tuition assurance for domestic students accessing certain Commonwealth supported loans on an interim basis until new tuition protection arrangements expanding the TPS for international students commenced on 1 January 2020.

On 1 January 2020, the TPS was expanded to include protections for domestic students in receipt of VET student loans, FEE HELP and HECS HELP. Two new tuition protection funds for VET student loans and for higher education were established and are funded by a levy system similar to the Overseas Students Tuition Fund. Public universities (HESA Table A providers), TAFEs and Government-owned education providers are exempted from the levy requirements.

On 1 January 2021, the TPS was again expanded to include protections for domestic higher education students paying up-front fees for their tuition.

3.3 National Partnerships

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000's				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
National Skills and Workforce Development SPP	1,577,500	1,605,737	1,630,546	1,657,858	1,683,969
Skilling Australians Fund	127,100	-	-	-	-
Energising Tasmania	4,629	4,698	-	-	-
TAFE Infrastructure Revitalisation Initiative	27,270	1,780	-	-	-
JobTrainer Fund	413,598	226,461	22,051	-	-
Total National Partnerships	**2,150,097**	**1,838,676**	**1,652,597**	**1,657,858**	**1,683,969**

Funding sources

- Appropriations held by the Department of the Treasury.

3.3 National Partnerships – National Skills and Workforce Development Specific Purpose Payment (SPP)

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – Treasury

START DATE: 2008/09

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,577,500	1,605,737	1,630,546	1,657,858	1,683,969

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

The National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (NASWD) identifies the long-term objectives of the Commonwealth and state and territory governments in the areas of skills and workforce development and recognises the interest of all Australian governments in ensuring the skills of the Australian people are developed and utilised in the economy.

The former Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed a new Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA) in November 2008. The NASWD was implemented from January 2009. In April 2012, COAG agreed to a revised NASWD.

The NASWD Specific Purpose Payment (NASWD SPP) is the funding associated with the NASWD.

Policy Objective

The overall objective of the NASWD is "to achieve a VET system that delivers a more productive and highly skilled workforce, enabling working age Australians to participate effectively in the labour market and contribute to Australia's economic future". COAG committed to a number of reform directions, including: improving training accessibility and affordability; improving training, participation and qualification completions; encouraging responsiveness in training arrangements through a more open and competitive training market; enabling public providers to operate effectively in an environment of greater competition; assuring the quality of training delivery and outcomes; and better consumer information.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The NASWD is an agreement between the Australian Government and state and territory governments.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In 2021–22, $1.6 billion was provided to states and territories through the Specific Purpose Payments associated with the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development.

Recipients

State and territory governments.

Evaluation

The Performance Dashboard, produced by the Productivity Commission, is updated annually and includes three benchmarks/indicators based on performance indicators in the NASWD.

The Productivity Commission Annual Report into its review of the NASWD was released on 21 January 2021, finding that the NASWD is overdue for replacement.

History of program

The NASWD was implemented from 1 January 2009. In April 2012, COAG agreed to a revised NASWD. In July and August 2020, First Ministers signed a Heads of Agreement for Skills Reform, committing to negotiate a new National Skills Agreement by August 2021 to replace the NASWD.

3.3 National Partnerships – Skilling Australians Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – Treasury

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
127,100	-	-	-	-

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

The Skilling Australians Fund is funding collected via a levy on employers, paid when they nominate skilled workers from overseas under certain visa classes. Under legislation the levy is required to be allocated to fund payments to states and territories under the National Partnership on the Skilling Australians Fund (NPSAF) until 30 June 2022. Annual Commonwealth payments to the states and territories under the NPSAF comprise the full levy collected under the fund in the previous year (distributed on a per capita basis) and direct Commonwealth Budget Funding.

Policy Objective

Support strengthening apprenticeships and traineeships by focusing on skills needed by industry.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The funding under NPSAF is paid to participating states and territories under bilateral agreements that set out state-specific projects, budget benchmarks, matched funding arrangements, baselines of existing training activity and milestones.

Recipients

Participating state and territory governments (Queensland and Victoria did not agree to participating in NPSAF).

Evaluation

N/A. The revenue from the Skilling Australians Fund levy is to be incorporated into a new National Skills Agreement following the expiry of the National Partnership in June 2022.

History of program

The Skilling Australians Fund was announced on 9 May 2017 as part of the 2017–18 Budget.

In 2017–18, around $187 million was provided to support additional apprentices, trainees, pre-apprentices, pre-trainees and employment-related training commencements. These projects were funded ahead of the commencement of the NPSAF.

The National Partnership was instigated in May 2018. The NPSAF was designed as a high-level governance framework for funding to be allocated to states and territories, based on bilateral schedules, joint funding arrangements, and the inclusion of agreed performance benchmarks such as additional apprenticeship commencements.

Since its commencement, and as at April 2022, over $727 million has been provided to the states. Full year data for 2020–21 shows that the funding has supported over 200,000 apprentices, trainees and employment-related commencements. Full year reporting for 2021–22 will be available in September 2022. The National Partnership – Skilling Australians Fund ceases on 31 June 2022.

3.3 National Partnerships – Energising Tasmania

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – Treasury

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
4,629	4,698	-	-	-

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

The National Partnership Project Agreement for Energising Tasmania is providing funding to ensure Tasmania can train a skilled workforce in current and future priority areas, including fee-free vocational education and training, a workforce development plan, an industry advisory group and funding for activities to support capacity building in training providers.

Tasmania needs a skilled workforce equipped with the expertise to build and maintain pumped hydroelectricity, and electrical and engineering skills to build the interconnection infrastructure with the National Electricity Market (NEM). Priorities for training include skills areas such as project management, civil construction, electro-technology, resource management, building and construction, water industry operations and engineering.

Funding provided to Tasmania through the national partnership agreement funds the gap between the state subsidy and the total course cost for training in priority skills.

The Training Grants Fund allows eligible individuals to apply for up to $1,000 per person to cover the costs of non-tuition costs and charges, such as books and materials, and student amenity fees, required by the course. Eligible Training is determined by industry need and may include full qualifications or appropriate units, including skill sets, to upskill new and existing workers.

Policy Objective

To equip Tasmania with a workforce better equipped with skills necessary to build Tasmania's capability in areas of priority skills needed to support renewable energy and related sectors through fee-free training, training market development and workforce development activities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligibility for the various grants is determined by the Tasmanian Government.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Under the Training Grants Fund, the gap between state subsidy and total course cost in training identified as a priority for Tasmania and up to $1,000 per person to cover the costs on non-tuition costs.

Recipients

The Tasmanian Government.

Evaluation

N/A.

History of program

The National Partnership on Skills for Tasmania was announced in the 2019–20 Budget.

3.3 National Partnerships – Revitalising TAFE Campuses Across Australia

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – Treasury

START DATE: 1 July 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023, or on completion of nominated projects

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
27,270	1,780	-	-	-

Funding type – Grant

Brief Description

$50 million from 2020–21 has been provided to support the revitalisation of TAFE campuses across Australia.

Funding is matched by participating state and territory governments, resulting in a total shared funding commitment of $100 million for this initiative.

The funding aims to support small infrastructure projects such as building and construction works to expand, upgrade or refurbish campus facilities and buildings, purchasing or upgrading specialist-training equipment and investing in technological infrastructure.

Policy Objective

This measure aims to equip TAFEs to deliver training to the standards expected by students and industry.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The Revitalising TAFE Campuses Across Australia initiative is paid to states and territories under a Project Agreement that sets out state projects, matched funding arrangements and milestones.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding is allocated based on the merit of state and territory project plans and paid based on meeting annual performance milestones.

Recipients

State and territory governments.

REVITALISING TAFE CAMPUSES ACROSS AUSTRALIA

$million	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
2021–22	5.0	5.7	7.0	2.0	1.2	5.0	0.6	0.8	27.3
2022–23	-	-	0.5	-	1.3	-	-	-	1.8
2023–24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2024–25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2025–26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**5.0**	**5.7**	**7.5**	**2.0**	**2.5**	**5.0**	**0.6**	**0.8**	**29.1**

Source: *bp3_2022–23 .pdf (budget.gov.au)*

Evaluation

N/A.

History of program

Funding for Revitalising TAFE Campuses Across Australia was committed in the 2019−20 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

3.3 National Partnerships – JobTrainer Fund

APPROPRIATION: Special Appropriation – Treasury

START DATE: 1 July 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
413,598	226,461	22,051	-	-

Funding Type – Grant

Brief Description

The Australian Government has partnered with state and territory governments to implement the $2.1 billion JobTrainer Fund to provide low or no fee training places in areas of identified skills needs.

The Australian Government initially committed $500 million in 2020–21 to the JobTrainer Fund, which was matched by contributions from state and territory governments to fund around 300,000 additional training places.

As part of the 2021–22 Budget an additional $500 million was provisioned, matched by contributions from the state and territory governments, to extend the program until 31 December 2022. The extension of the Fund supported an additional 163,000 training places, including 33,800 aged care training places and 10,000 places for Australians to gain valuable digital skills.

The JobTrainer Fund was further extended as part of the 2022–23 Budget, with an additional investment of $48.5 million over two years, contingent on matched funding from states, to support a further 15,000 free or low fee aged care training places. Subject to agreement from the states and territories this brings the total investment under JobTrainer to $2.1 billion and will fund a total of 478,000 training places until 31 December 2023.

Policy Objective

This measure provides free or low fee training for job seekers and young people, including school leavers, to upskill or reskill in areas of skills need as the economy recovers from COVID-19. The extension and expansion of JobTrainer and JobTrainer Aged Care Boost provides an uplift in training for any Australian who wants to work in the aged care sector, or who already works in the aged care sector. The extension and expansion of JobTrainer also provides additional places for digital skills, to help grow Australia's digital workforce.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Payments under the JobTrainer Fund are made to states and territories through a National Partnership Agreement, that sets out eligibility, matched funding arrangements, required reporting and payment milestones.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding has allocated to states and territories on a per-capita basis:

$million	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
2021–22	143.3	117.3	60.3	31.1	41.4	9.5	5.0	5.8	413.6
2022–23	72.1	59.0	45.5	23.5	15.6	4.8	3.8	2.2	226.5
2023–24	7.0	5.8	4.4	2.3	1.5	0.5	0.4	0.2	22.1
2024–25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2025–26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**222.4**	**182.1**	**110.2**	**56.8**	**58.5**	**14.7**	**9.2**	**8.2**	**662.1**

Source: bp3_ 2022–23 .pdf (budget.gov.au)

Recipients

State and territory governments.

Evaluation

N/A.

History of program

Funding for the JobTrainer Fund was committed in the 2020–21 July Economic and Fiscal Update, and the extension was funded through the 2021–22 Budget. JobTrainer Aged Care Boost was announced in the 2022–23 Budget, and is funded until 31 December 2023.

OUTCOME 4: EMPLOYMENT

Outcome 4 – Employment

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work and meet employer needs.

Contents

4.1 Employment Services

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
					Employment Services
Workforce Australia					
Workforce Australia Employment Services	124	886,415	1,163,453	1,108,955	1,134,933
Self Employment Services	6,332	160,118	174,413	176,937	184,213
Work for the Dole	-	33,080	42,302	39,341	40,056
Career Transition Assistance	-	5,189	5,093	4,755	4,955
Youth Jobs PaTH	-	30,150	36,674	33,447	31,257
National Work Experience Program	-	4,414	5,545	5,192	5,258
Labour Market Support Stream	-	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500
Evaluation	-	2,164	1,676	2,092	1,828
Harvest Trail Services	-	10,676	10,676	10,676	10,676
Flexible Funding Yarrabah	-	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300
Workforce Specialists	-	12,480	12,480	12,480	12,480
Capacity Building Fund	2,000	2,000	500	500	500
Employability Skills Training	-	127,069	85,810	85,163	93,453
Communications	-	2,040	2,000	-	-
Launch into Work	-	19,755	19,755	19,755	19,755
Total Workforce Australia*	**8,456**	**1,310,350**	**1,575,177**	**1,514,093**	**1,554,165**
Transition to Work (TtW)*	236,173	290,148	301,989	277,868	291,096
ParentsNext	103,185	110,998	115,231	113,069	111,542
Skills and Training Incentive	10,864	17,424	17,382	-	-
Time to Work (TWES)	3,422	2,681	-	-	-
Entrepreneurship Facilitators	4,927	-	-	-	-
Seasonal Worker Program**	500	-	-		
Career Revive Initiative	937	1,073	1,073	-	-
Local Jobs	58,361	49,072	49,072	48,975	-
ReBoot	-	5,260	12,598	12,423	7,488

	$'000				
	2021–22 **Estimated** **Actual**	**2022–23** **Budget**	**2023–24** **Estimate**	**2024–25** **Estimate**	**2025–26** **Estimate**
jobactive					
jobactive – employment services*	1,272,010	122,121	-	-	-
New Employment Services – Trial	39,828	-	-	-	-
Youth Jobs PaTH	154,110	-	-	-	-
Capped Wage Subsidy Pool	18,300	-	-	-	-
Career Transition Assistance	28,861	-	-	-	-
Work for the Dole	66,339	-	-	-	-
New Business Assistance with NEIS	141,286	-	-	-	-
Labour Market Support Stream	13,595	-	-	-	-
Jobs Fairs	9,353	-	-	-	-
Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) and AgMove	16,608^	2,511	-	-	-
Harvest Trail Services	10,676	-	-	-	-
Launch into Work	6,820	-	-	-	-
National Work Experience Program	3,131	-	-	-	-
Evaluation	1,823	-	-	-	-
Communication	8,563	-	-	-	-
Flexible Funding Yarrabah	1,300	-	-	-	-
Targeted Compliance Framework	-	-	-	-	-
Volunteer Online Employment Services Trial	-	-	-	-	-
Online Employment Services	-	-	-	-	-
Total jobactive	**1,792,603**	**124,632**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Total 4.1 Employment Services	**2,219,428**	**1,911,638**	**2,072,522**	**1,966,428**	**1,964,291**

^AgMove funding is managed within the Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) budget allocation

*NOTE: This table includes funding announced at the 2022–23 Budget. Since that time, the 2022 PEFO update has provided DESE savings of $162.6 million in administered funding over 5 years from 2021–22 by not proceeding with contingency measure to support the implementation of Workforce Australia (including jobactive and Transition to Work programs). The measure is no longer required as the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlines Participation requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2022* received Royal Assent on 1 April 2022.

** Due to a Machinery of Government change completed on 28 January 2022, the Seasonal Worker Program has been transferred to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Workforce Australia					
Workforce Australia – employment services	124	886,415	1,163,453	1,108,955	1,134,933
Self Employment Services	6,332	160,118	174,413	176,937	184,213
Work for the Dole	-	33,080	42,302	39,341	40,056
Career Transition Assistance	-	5,189	5,093	4,755	4,955
Youth Jobs PaTH	-	30,150	36,674	33,447	31,257
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Labour Market Support Stream	-	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500
Evaluation	-	2,164	1,676	2,092	1,828
Harvest Trail Services	-	10,676	10,676	10,676	10,676
Flexible Funding Yarrabah	-	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300
Workforce Specialists	-	12,480	12,480	12,480	12,480
Capacity Building Fund	2,000	2,000	500	500	500
Employability Skills Training	-	127,069	85,810	85,163	93,453
Communications	-	2,040	2,000	-	-
Launch into Work	-	19,755	19,755	19,755	19,755
Total Workforce Australia*	**8,456**	**1,310,350**	**1,575,177**	**1,514,093**	**1,554,165**

*NOTE: This table includes funding announced at the 2022–23 Budget. Since that time, the 2022 PEFO update has provided DESE savings of $162.6 million in administered funding over 5 years from 2021–22 by not proceeding with contingency measure to support the implementation of Workforce Australia (including jobactive and Transition to Work programs). The measure is no longer required as the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlines Participation requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2022* received Royal Assent on 1 April 2022.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Employment Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
124	886,415	1,163,453	1,108,955	1,134,933

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand Driven)

Brief Description

Workforce Australia will provide employment services for individuals, employers and providers. It will replace the jobactive program from July 2022. Under the new model, job-ready individuals will self-manage through Workforce Australia Online while individuals who need extra support will receive intensive case management through Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers.

Workforce Australia Online will be delivered through a high-quality personalised digital platform with access to a range of tools, online learning and job matching, and a Digital Services Contact Centre. Eligible individuals in Workforce Australia Online will also have access to additional support, including individual career coaching, a Digital Services Employment Fund, Employability Skills Training and person-to-person support from the Digital Services Contact Centre if needed.

High-performing providers will deliver Workforce Australia Services to individuals who need extra support. Workforce Australia Services will include career guidance, mentoring, vocational training, a flexible Employment Fund, work experience, job placements and post-placement support and a modified Work for the Dole program, to recognise skills and micro-credentials alongside gaining work-like experiences. Individuals receiving Workforce Australia Services will also be able to access the Workforce Australia online platform.

All job seekers will use the Points Based Activation System (PBAS). PBAS is a new and flexible approach to job seeker activation that provides individuals with choice and flexibility around the way they manage and meet their mutual obligation requirements in return for their income support. Under PBAS, job seekers are encouraged to actively engage and participate in tasks and activities on their pathway to employment and are rewarded through earning points to meet a monthly points target.

Policy Objective

Workforce Australia will deliver a digital, personal and effective employment services system that:

- supports individuals to find a sustainable job,
- assists employers to source skilled staff,
- focuses high performing providers on supporting higher needs individuals, and
- creates a more efficient and cost-effective model.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The new model will offer all Australians access through myGov to the base Online Service, which includes online learning and job matching. Individuals in receipt of an income support payment will be eligible to access the full Online Service or services from a provider depending on assessed need. Individuals in the full Online Service may choose to move to an employment services provider at any time. Some individuals not in receipt of an income support payment, such as vulnerable youth, will also be able to access Workforce Australia Services.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The new model will have a new provider payment structure with payment types that do not exist in jobactive. Under the new model, Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers will receive:

- upfront payments to support early investment in job seekers,
- payments to recognise progress towards employment,
- outcome payments when a job seeker achieves employment for 4,12 or 26 weeks, and
- a Very Long-Term Unemployment Bonus.

The Digital Services Contact Centre will have access to a Digital Services Employment Fund to help individuals in the full Online Service access commonly used items to connect to work, such as police checks. Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers will have access to a flexible Employment Fund to provide assistance to job seekers, including for wage subsidies and training.

Recipients

Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers and individuals.

Evaluation

The Department will conduct a thorough and robust evaluation of the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of the Workforce Australia Employment Services.

Evaluations of previous employment service models (including jobactive, Job Services Australia and the Online Employment Services Trial) have informed the development of the Workforce Australia Employment Services. This has included findings on the efficacy of online delivery, better targeting of the payment model and the refined application of work for the dole and wage subsidies.

History of Program

Workforce Australia will commence in July 2022, replacing jobactive (which commenced in July 2015 and terminates on 30 June 2022) and the New Employment Services Trial (which commenced in July 2019 and terminates on 30 June 2022).

The recommendations of the Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel provided the framework for the new model. Key aspects of the new model were tested in two employment regions through the New Employment Services Trial (NEST). Current jobactive contracts and complementary programs were extended to June 2022 while the new model was tested and refined through the NEST. Refer to *4.1 New Employment Services Trial.*

History of Program

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Self Employment Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
6,332	160,118	174,413	176,937	184,213

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

Self Employment Services include the Self-Employment Assistance program and the Entrepreneurship Facilitators program.

The Self-Employment Assistance program will deliver a range of flexible, tailored services to current and aspiring small business owners from 1 July 2022. Replacing the current New Business Assistance with New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) program, Self-Employment Assistance will help eligible Australians to generate and test business ideas, prepare business plans, launch new businesses and develop existing businesses.

The Entrepreneurship Facilitator Program promotes self-employment and helps people to start and run their own businesses by providing information and advice, and by linking and referring people to appropriate support services.

Policy Objective

The Self Employment Services help people to start and run small businesses to create jobs, grow the economy and improve labour market outcomes. Both Self-Employment Assistance and the Entrepreneurship Facilitator Program give participants the tools they need to create their own business and earn an income to achieve financial independence.

Eligibility for program and process for application

People may access Self-Employment Assistance if they meet the program's eligibility criteria, such as not already being in education or employment for more than 25 hours per week. A person may be eligible to access Self-Employment Assistance regardless of whether they are a job seeker in receipt of income support payments, or any other Australian.

A person can apply for Self-Employment Assistance by contacting a Self-Employment Assistance provider directly or through a referral from another Workforce Australia provider.

Entrepreneurship Facilitators can help anyone looking to start or run a business. This includes individuals who are interested in starting a new business, have recently started a new business, or who are operating a small business that is at risk of not being commercially viable.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Participants who access Self-Employment Assistance receive free accredited training, mentoring and other support.

Participants who are accepted into the Small Business Coaching element of the program may receive financial support to purchase up to $300 worth of business costs, such as business insurance. If Small Business Coaching Participants receive income support payments from Services Australia or the Department of Veterans' Affairs, they may also be eligible to receive:

- Self-Employment Allowance (substitute for JobSeeker Payment) for up to 39 weeks while operating their business—currently $642.70 per fortnight (as at April 2022).
- Self-Employment Rental Assistance for up to 26 weeks—currently up to $145.80 per fortnight (as at April 2022).

Recipients

Self-Employment Assistance will support current and aspiring small business owners who meet the program's eligibility criteria.

Entrepreneurship Facilitators will support individuals located in 23 locations across all states and territories (except the ACT).

Evaluation

Self-Employment Assistance was informed by previous evaluations of New Business Assistance with New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), Entrepreneurship Facilitators and the Exploring Being My Own Boss Workshops. These evaluations highlighted the utility of facilitators in addressing a gap by providing personalised and localised service.

History of program

The New Business Assistance with New Enterprise Incentive Scheme commenced on 1 July 1985 and has been running for 36 years.

The eligibility of the program has expanded overtime, particularly in the last decade where people not on income support, existing business owners and people with part-time study or caring responsibilities are able to participate in the program.

Entrepreneurship Facilitators commenced in three locations in 2016 to promote self-employment in Australia to young people. In 2019, the program was expanded to an additional 20 locations to support mature age people.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Work for the Dole

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	33,080	42,302	39,341	40,056

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

The Work for the Dole program helps job seekers gain recognised skills and core competencies alongside gaining work-like experiences. Job seekers will undertake either an individual placement or a participate in community project.

Policy Objective

An updated Work for the Dole program —will reduce red tape, incorporate core competencies, maximise the benefit for job seekers and ensure the program continues to be an important steppingstone towards employment. Work Health and Safety will remain a key priority of the program.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Work for the Dole will be available for eligible job seekers in Workforce Australia Services, aged 18 years and over.

Work for the Dole activities can only be hosted by not-for-profit organisations/charities; local, state, or Australian Government organisations or agencies; or a not-for-profit arm of for-profit organisations. Providers and host organisations work together to arrange suitable Work for the Dole activities.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Providers will receive a $500 placement fee for each job seeker commencement, to be split with the Host Organisation. Providers will be allocated a budget for projects to be negotiated between the provider and host organisation (noting projects will be available from 4 October 2022).

Eligible job seekers will receive a $20.80 supplement each fortnight while they are undertaking Work for the Dole activities to assist with the cost of participating in the activity. The policy owner for this supplement is the Department of Social Services.

Evaluation

Work for the Dole will be evaluated as part of the broader Workforce Australia Services evaluation.

Evaluations of previous iterations of Work for the Dole (for example in jobactive) found that benefits of the program are greatest when providers match participants to activities that suited their interests. It is also the case that benefits were not realised when there was no formal recognition of the skills gained through participation. Hosts and providers have also pointed out that participants can hold negative attitudes towards attendance and completion if they do not see the activity as providing community benefit or as meaningful work that develops new skills. These factors have been addressed in the design of Work for the Dole in the Workforce Australia Employment Services.

History of program

The updated Work for the Dole program will commence from 1 July 2022 and will replace the current Work for the Dole program under jobactive.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Career Transition Assistance

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
-	5,189	5,093	4,755	4,955

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Career Transition Assistance (CTA) supports mature-age job seekers to identify opportunities in their local labour market and provide them with practical assistance to help them increase their employability.

CTA was originally established under jobactive on 1 July 2019 following a trial in five Employment Regions. As part of the national rollout, the eligibility age for CTA was lowered to 45 years and older (originally 50 years and older).

Policy Objective

Primary principles and objectives of the CTA program are to:

- provide a Career Pathway Assessment to identify participants' existing skills and experiences, and help them understand the ways in which these existing skills and experiences may transfer to other local industries
- foster a supportive group environment that helps mature age participants establish networks
- facilitate direct engagement with local employers and explore different occupations and industries through formal inbound and outbound employer visits
- work with participants to prepare a tailored Career Pathway Plan which outlines the steps they will need to take to pursue employment opportunities based on their transferable skills, the local labour market and their goals. This includes identifying further training or education to help achieve the objectives in their Career Pathway Plan

- develop participants' ICT skills including building their confidence to apply for jobs online, along with core digital literacy capabilities required to work in a variety of workplaces
- support Workforce Australia Online participants (who are not case managed by a provider) to understand their local labour market, tailor their job applications, increase their confidence in the skills they have, and increase their motivation and resilience to continue looking for work.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All job seekers aged 45 and older in Workforce Australia Services, Disability Employment Services, and Workforce Australia Online (including Volunteers) are eligible to participate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Fees for CTA are $1,800 (GST inclusive), including 70 per cent on commencement and the remaining 30 per cent available following successful completion of the CTA course.

Evaluation

The CTA Trial was evaluated to inform the rollout of the national program which commenced on 1 July 2019. The entire evaluation of the program is expected to be published in mid-2022. The initial evaluation report found that training resulted in higher confidence in digital job search and in using digital platforms. The evaluation found that funding through the Employment Fund limited take up. These findings from initial evaluation report have informed the development and implementation of CTA in Workforce Australia, including adaption of the funding model.

History of program

CTA was launched as a trial in five employment regions in July 2018.

The program was rolled out nationally from July 2019. Following feedback received during the trial several changes were made to CTA for the national rollout, including lowering the eligibility age from 50 years and older to 45 years and older, and combining previously separate program elements into one consolidated course. The CTA Trial has continued to run concurrently with the national CTA program.

In May 2020, $41.7 million in separate capped funding was introduced to support CTA referrals through to 30 June 2022. Funding for CTA previously came from the Employment Fund (EF).

During COVID-19, to support participants and enable continuity of service, CTA providers were able to pivot from face-to-face program delivery to alternative methods such as online or hybrid, mixed mode delivery.

On 1 July 2022, the CTA program will introduce a demand driven funding model. CTA providers will be able to leverage their industry relationships to identify National Work Experience Program (NWEP) placement opportunities for eligible job seekers.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Youth Jobs PaTH

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

| START DATE: | 1 January 2017 (Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy) |
| | 1 April 2017 (Internships) |

| TERMINATION DATE: | Ongoing |

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	30,150	36,674	33,447	31,257

Note: Financial figures above exclude Employability Skills Training – see '4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Employability Skills Training

Funding Type – Procurement, Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy and Internships (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire) helps young, inexperienced job seekers who struggle to enter the labour market. It has three elements:

- **Prepare**—Employability Skills Training helps young people better understand what employers expect of them in the workplace and equips them with the skills and behaviours to be successful in finding and keeping a job.
- **Trial**—voluntary PaTH Internships of four to 12 weeks give young unemployed people a chance to show what they can do in real workplaces.
- **Hire**—a Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy of up to $10,000 (GST inclusive) has been available since 1 January 2017 to help more businesses hire young people.

The 'Prepare – Employability Skills Training' element is covered separately in this document – see '4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Employability Skills Training'.

Policy Objective

The Youth Jobs PaTH, announced in the 2016–17 Budget, is designed to help support youth employment.

It provides young people with a pathway to employment by improving their employability skills and gaining relevant work experience through work trials. It also provides an incentive for businesses to provide sustainable employment opportunities to young people.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Program	Eligibility and process for application

Prepare – Employability Skills Training:	Young people aged 15–24 years participating in:
	• Workforce Australia or Yarrabah Employment Services, and either in receipt of:
	   ○ income support payments that are subject to Mutual Obligation Requirements, or
	   ○ Disability Support Pension and have compulsory participation requirements
	• Transition to Work (TtW) Services
	• Disability Employment Services (DES) in the employment assistance phase.

Trial – PaTH Internships:	Young people aged 17–24 years in Workforce Australia, Transition to Work and Disability Employment Services that are in receipt of Income Support Payments subject to Mutual Obligation Requirements or the Disability Support Pension (DSP) with compulsory participation requirements.
Hire –Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy:	Young people aged 15–24 years in Workforce Australia, Transition to Work, and ParentsNext.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Eligible PaTH Internship participants receive $200 per fortnight as an internship incentive paid on top of income support. Eligible businesses hosting a PaTH Internship receive a $1,000 host business payment per Internship.

Employers may be eligible to receive a wage subsidy of up to $10,000.

Recipients

Eligible participants and host businesses (internships)/employers (wage subsidies).

Evaluation

The evaluation of Youth Jobs PaTH informed the legislatively required review into the operation of PaTH which was tabled in the House of Representatives on 21 October 2019. The final report of the evaluation was published on 14 February 2020.

History of program

Youth Jobs PaTH was implemented progressively with the Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy commencing in January 2017 and Employability Skills Training and Internships in April 2017.

From July 2020, the funding for Internships became demand driven, replacing the previous capped funding arrangements.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – National Work Experience Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	1 July 2022
TERMINATION DATE:	Ongoing
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
-	4,414	5,545	5,192	5,258

Funding Type – Procurement, incentives paid to employer and jobseeker (Demand driven)

Brief Description

The National Work Experience Program (NWEP) is available through to Workforce Australia, Transition to Work (TtW) and Disability Employment Services (DES) participants. The NWEP places job ready participants in real life, unpaid work trial placements where they can gain experience and confidence while demonstrating their skills to potential employers.

Policy Objective

The NWEP eligibility has been amended to support disadvantaged job seekers aged 25 years or older, who are competing with a much larger pool of job ready job seekers. Youth Jobs PaTH Internships will continue to be available to 17–24-year-olds for work trial opportunities.

The NWEP is a practical work trial experience placement for up to four weeks. It is a chance for job seekers to get their foot in the door and demonstrate to potential employers that they should be hired.

In Workforce Australia, provider caseloads will consist of job seekers with more barriers to employment, therefore the availability of pre-employment programs, such as NWEP, are important to getting job seekers into sustainable employment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To participate in an NWEP placement, job seekers must be:

- A Workforce Australia, TtW or DES participant
- aged 25 years or over
- receiving an income support payment such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance, or Parenting Payment
- subject to Mutual Obligation Requirements.

CTA, EST and Workforce Specialist providers may also arrange NWEP placements for their participants, subject to the above eligibility requirements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In addition to their income support, it is intended that job seekers who participate in an NWEP placement may be eligible to receive a $200 NWEP supplement for each fortnight they participate. Legislation has been passed supporting the supplement, which will be implemented in the 2022–23 financial year. In the interim NWEP participants will continue to receive the approved program work supplement of $20.80 per fortnight.

Evaluation

The Department conducted an evaluation of NWEP in 2016. The evaluation highlighted the importance of appropriately matching participants to placements and of correctly setting employer expectations of the purpose of the placement. The department anticipates another evaluation to be conducted at around 18 to 24 months of the NWEP operating under Workforce Australia

History of program

NWEP commenced in October 2015, replacing the Unpaid Work Experience program.

In July 2018 changes were made to NWEP in response to feedback received during the 2016 early insights NWEP evaluation, including the introduction of incentive payments, and lowering of the minimum eligibility age from 18 to 17.

From July 2022 under Workforce Australia NWEP placements will be available for Workforce Australia Services, TtW and DES participants aged 25 and older, and program payments will be increased in NWEP to align to levels in Youth Jobs PaTH Internships.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Labour Market Support Stream

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Labour Market Support Stream (LMSS) recognises that additional activities beyond mainstream employment services, may be needed to support workers impacted by large scale redundancies or, prolonged disadvantaged labour markets. It will also enable funding of small-scale place-based employment projects.

Policy Objective

The LMSS funding enables the Government to respond quickly to support workers and job seekers impacted by both expected and sudden firm closures. The LMSS has been enabling the timely delivery of support for workers and industries experiencing structural adjustment and in vulnerable regions, such as the Structural Adjustment Packages delivered for Hazelwood, Queensland Nickel, BlueScope, Caterpillar, Alinta and ASC Shipbuilding.

Eligibility for program and process for application

LMSS funding is only provided in exceptional circumstances after careful assessment on a case-by-case basis, and where sufficient funding is not available from other Commonwealth or state government programs.

Currently, LMSS projects of over $500,000 need the endorsement of both the Employment Minister and the Finance Minister, with smaller projects approved by the Employment Minister. The LMSS can only be used for administered funds.

History of program

The LMSS was established in 2015, as a quarantined fund within jobactive, to support workers impacted by the closure of large employers. Under Workforce Australia, the LMSS will no longer be used for major recruitment related exercises.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Evaluation

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 01 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	2,164	1,676	2,092	1,828

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Department will manage the evaluation of Workforce Australia Employment Services. Administered funding to support the evaluation will be used to undertake fieldwork research with key stakeholders, including program participants, services providers and businesses. The evaluation will use a mixed methods approach (utilising qualitative and quantitative research) to assess the extent to which the program achieves its policy objective. The Department has commenced developing an evaluation strategy to guide the evaluation.

Policy Objective

The evaluation will assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of Workforce Australia Employment Services to inform the management of the program and the development of labour market and employment services policies.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Evaluation

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Harvest Trail Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2020 (as per Harvest Trail Services Deed)

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
-	10,676	10,676	10,676	10,676

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Harvest Trail Services (HTS) operate in 16 harvest areas across Australia that do not have adequate local labour supply to meet seasonal peaks in employer demand. Together these 16 areas cover the vast majority of horticultural areas in Australia.

HTS is complemented by the Harvest Trail Information Service (HTIS) and the Harvest Trail website and jobs board. The HTIS provides comprehensive, up-to-date information about harvest work opportunities, working conditions, transport and accommodation around Australia, and also provides a telephone service for employers wanting to lodge vacancies outside of the harvest areas and people looking for harvest work.

The Harvest Trail jobs board lists all vacancies, advertised on the Employment Services JobSearch website and directly on the Harvest Trail website, that are flagged as seasonal work in harvest related occupations. HTS providers, the HTIS provider and employers across the country can utilise the jobs board to advertise harvest work opportunities to job seekers.

HTS providers administer AgMove.

Policy Objective

To help horticultural employers with their workforce needs. From 1 July 2020, a further objective to increase the number of Australian job seekers working in the horticulture industry and improve employers' access to seasonal workers at the right time.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All Australian citizens and permanent Australian residents are eligible for referral to the harvest vacancies by HTS providers. Anyone who is legally entitled to look for work in Australia can be placed into harvest work. This includes people visiting Australia, who hold the appropriate work visas such as Working Holidays visa but excludes Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme participants who can work only for their sponsoring employer.

To be referred to harvest work by HTS providers, all job seekers must be registered in the Department's IT Systems.

Evaluation

An evaluation of Harvest Trail Services (including AgMove) has commenced and is due to be completed by end 2022.

History of program

Harvest Labour Services have been in operation since 1998.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Flexible Funding Yarrabah

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APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Yarrabah community was chosen as the pilot for a local, community driven employment services model in the 2017–18 Federal Budget. The aim of the pilot is to determine if local autonomy over employment service delivery will increase employment outcomes and enhance service delivery for local job seekers. The pilot program commenced on 1 January 2018, and will continue under Workforce Australia.

The trial includes support through a flexible funding pool of $5 million over four years to build the capacity of the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council (YASC) to deliver Workforce Australia, boost the capability and capacity of Council and its partners (such as the Council's Leadership Team) and to engage with the community, employers, registered training organisations, other providers of services and peak bodies.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the trial are to respond to the needs of the Yarrabah Community, to build its capacity to inform and set service delivery priorities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

YASC is the only organization eligible to receive funding. The community was chosen by the Government for the pilot.

YASC submits proposals to the Department for assessment. If approved they receive money for the proposed activity through an individual funding agreement. Proposals need to support the capacity building of the Council to deliver Workforce Australia to jobseekers in the community.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Administration of the flexible funding pool funds is through individual funding agreements. Actual expenditure and the specific amounts are at the discretion of the relevant Delegate and depend on an assessment of the proposals for funding made by the Council.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Yarrabah Employment Services Pilot was undertaken in 2019. The evaluation found that overall rates of employment outcomes were broadly similar to those achieved by previous jobactive providers. The community and local employers experienced considerably higher satisfaction and were strong supporters of the new service. The evaluation findings have informed a continued focus on place based and targeted service delivery that is adapted to meet the needs of the local community.

History of program

The program is a trial that commenced in 2018 under jobactive.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Workforce Specialists

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
-	12,480	12,480	12,480	12,480

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

A panel of Workforce Australia – Workforce Specialists will be engaged to deliver projects to meet the workforce needs of identified industries and occupations, connecting them with eligible individuals in Workforce Australia Services (including Online Services) and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work.

The Workforce Connections: Workforce Specialist Project Framework (the Framework) identifies the key industries and occupations with significant labour market opportunities for job seekers to inform delivery of Workforce Specialist projects.

The Framework will be the core guiding document for the Workforce Specialist panel, the Department and other stakeholders to identify, develop, approve and deliver Workforce Specialist projects.

The Framework will be updated regularly by the Department to respond to changes in the labour market. Workforce Specialists may also be used to respond to emerging workforce opportunities or challenges.

Policy Objective

Workforce Specialists aim to assist with addressing the workforce needs of identified industries and occupations, particularly those are well suited to job seekers in employment services.

Eligibility for Program and process for application

Job seekers in Workforce Australia Services, Workforce Australia Online and Transition to Work are eligible to participate in Workforce Specialist projects.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Administered funding of around $12.5 million each year is available for projects under the initiative. The payment structure for each project will meet project requirements and value for money principles.

Recipients

Workforce Specialists will support identified industries and suitable job seekers through the delivery of targeted projects.

Evaluation

Workforce Specialists will be evaluated as part of the Workforce Australia evaluation. Evaluations of the pilot programs PaTH Business Placement Partnerships and PaTH Industry Pilots are nearing completion and will inform implementation

History of program

Workforce Specialists were announced as a new initiative in the 2021–22 Budget as part of Workforce Australia (formally the New Employment Services Model).

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Capacity Building Fund

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████████
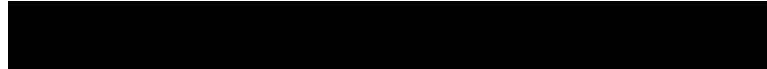
BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
2,000	2,000	500	500	500

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

A Capacity Building Fund will be established to support greater diversity in the Workforce Australia Employment Services Provider market and assist new entrants to prepare for and establish themselves.

Policy Objective

The Fund provides financial assistance to eligible Providers to help cover some of the costs associated with attaining the required quality assurance standards these being ISO 9001 or National Standards for Disability (NSDS) and/or the Department's Right Fit for Risk (RFFR) IT security accreditation. It is a reimbursement model and Providers are able to seek reimbursement once they have attained the relevant requirements.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Eligibility is limited to small organisations that:

- are offered a licence to deliver Workforce Australia Services, and
- do not already have or have not been required to have the necessary accreditation and certification, including through any Related Entity, in delivering employment services or comparable services.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Employability Skills Training

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	127,069	85,810	85,163	93,453

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Employability Skills Training helps job seekers better understand what employers expect of them in the workplace and equips them with the skills and behaviours to be successful in finding and keeping a job. Employability Skills Training is primarily designed for individuals in Workforce Australia Online and represents the default way for this digitally serviced cohort to meet their key activation requirement. It will provide participants with vital job search and industry specific skills for entry level job opportunities available in their local area.

Employability Skills Training is the 'Prepare' element of Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire), which helps job seekers who struggle to enter the labour market.

Policy Objective

Employability Skills Training helps job seekers explore career options and, build employability skills, digital literacy and job search skills. It also helps job seekers understand the expectations of employers in the recruitment process and the workplace.

This measure builds on the 2020–21 Budget measure entitled Employment Services.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Employability Skills Training will be available to all Workforce Australia Online or Yarrabah Employment Services participants who are on income support and with Mutual Obligation requirements. Job seekers in Workforce Australia Services TtW or DES may be referred to EST by their provider on a fee for service basis.

Funding available to recipients under the program

EST providers receive a set fee for delivering each EST course.

<u>Block One</u>: Courses will be a flat rate of $1,250 and provides job search skills, pre-employment and employability skills training.

<u>Block Two</u>: Courses will be up to $1,500 and focus on intensive industry training.

Fees for Workforce Australia Services Online and Yarrabah Employment Services participants are fully government funded. Workforce Australia Services, TtW and DES providers will need to pay a fee for service.

Evaluation

Employability Skills Training was evaluated as part of the broader PaTH evaluation, published on 14 February 2020. The evaluation informed changes designed to increase course referrals and reduce cancellation or rescheduling of courses. It found that employers typically rated interns who had undertaken Employability Skills Training as more job ready than others.

History of program

Employability Skill Training has been available since April 2017 and is one of the three components of the Youth Jobs PaTH. This was announced in the 2016–17 Budget and is designed to help meet the government's youth employment goals.

Youth Jobs PaTH provides young people with a pathway to employment by responding to employer feedback that young people can increase their job prospects by improving their employability skills and gaining relevant work experience through work trials. It also provides an incentive for businesses to provide sustainable employment opportunities to young people.

Until October 2021, job seekers were eligible for EST if they were aged 15 to 24 years, are on income support, registered with a jobactive provider or a participant in the New Employment Service Trial, and had mutual obligation requirements. In October 2021, eligibility for EST was expanded to include job seekers of all ages in Online Employment Services.

From 1 July 2022, Employability Skills Training will be expanded so job seekers of all ages can explore career options, build employability skills, digital literacy and hone job search skills.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Communications

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 October 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	2,040	2,000	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Workforce Australia communication campaign will introduce and educate employers about the new employment services model. Workforce Australia is the master brand that was introduced to frame all employment and skills program communication going forward, consolidating over 50 existing brands to simplify the user experience and replace jobactive.

The aim of the campaign will be to help job seekers find jobs by attracting employers (the primary target audience) to use the new Workforce Australia Digital Platform.

Policy Objective

The Workforce Australia communication campaign aligns supports more strategic and targeted matching of employment opportunities that lead to increased labour force participation.

Recipients

Advertising will be targeted at employers, primarily SMEs. Secondary target audiences are Workforce Australia job seekers and large employers.

History of program

This is a new project.

4.1 Employment Services – Workforce Australia – Launch into Work

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2028 (TBC)

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
-	19,755	19,755	19,755	19,755

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Launch into Work (LiW) program funds organisations to deliver tailored pre-employment projects that support job seekers into entry level employment. The LiW Organisation is required to commit to employing all suitable Participants who successfully complete the LiW Project. LiW Organisations are usually employers. Industry associations can also deliver LiW Projects in partnership with employers.

The program encourages candidate selection based on values and attributes. The LiW Organisation prepares participants by providing training, work experience and mentoring tailored to the roles being filled. This creates opportunities for job seekers who would not otherwise have been offered employment through typical recruitment methods.

Policy Objective

Many industries are experiencing skill and labour shortages and business needs to take ownership of some solutions to this labour shortage. This program will ensure job seekers have the skills employers are looking for, without requiring large amounts of training (that fails to lead to employment).

This program will increase employment outcomes for job seekers on income support, help businesses to fill entry-level vacancies and assist businesses to increase the diversity of their workforce.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Employers who can commit to the requirements of the Launch into Work program (e.g. providing guaranteed jobs to job seekers who successfully complete Launch into Work Projects) can receive funding for the cost of screening and selection and workplace preparation of job seekers.

Peak bodies and industry associations can facilitate or lead a project, but must have employers with job vacancies that are committed to recruiting through the LiW Project.

Funding for Launch into Work is allocated through a procurement process. Project proposals must meet value for money requirements. Co-design support is available to interested employers.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Contracts are awarded throughout the program's duration until funding is exhausted for the respective financial year.

The value of an individual contract is based on the costs associated with running the procured pre-employment project.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been completed. The program is subject to regular review in consultation with relevant stakeholders to inform program delivery.

Recipients

Launch into Work Project Participants must be in Workforce Australia, Transition to Work or ParentsNext and must be over 18 years of age.

History of program

This program is an expansion of the previously funded Launch into Work Program, established in 2016. The program was designed to support Australia's G20 goal to reduce the gender gap in women's workforce participation and to provide employers with an alternative recruitment method to fill entry-level vacancies. Although initially targeted at women, the program is also open to other genders. The program has expanded to provide more employers with the opportunity to recruit job seekers via a tailored pre-employment pathway. The program retains a focus on workplace diversity. Participating employers can utilise co-design assistance from the Department to develop Launch into Work Projects that are open to the participation of a diverse range of suitable job seekers.

4.1 Employment Services – Transition to Work (TtW)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2022

TERMINATION DATE: Ongoing

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Estimate**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
Transition to Work (TtW)	236,173	287,491	299,243	275,368	288,596
Transition to Work (TtW) – Evaluation	-	157	246	-	-
Transition to Work (TtW) – Youth Advisory Sessions	-	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Total Transition to Work (TtW)*	**236,173**	**290,148**	**301,989**	**277,868**	**291,096**

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

*Note: This table includes funding announced at the 2022–23 Budget. Since that time, the 2022 PEFO update has provided DESE savings of $162.6 million administered over 5 years from 2021–22 by not proceeding with contingency measure to support the implementation of Workforce Australia (including jobactive and Transition to Work programs). The measure is no longer required as the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlines Participation requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2022* received Royal Assent on 1 April 2022.

Brief Description

Transition to Work (TtW) provides eligible young people (15–24 years old) with intensive employment support designed to improve their work readiness and help them into work (including apprenticeships and traineeships) or education. Eligible participants receive intensive assistance, for up to 18 months (increased from 12 months from 1 July 2020), from organisations with expertise in helping young people to develop the work-related skills employers want and need. A small portion of eligible participants, those with more complex Non-Vocational Barriers, may receive the same intensive assistance for up to 24 months.

This assistance may include support in overcoming barriers to work, mentoring and career advice, help to gain a driver's licence, or referrals to relevant support services in their local area. A Transition to Work provider can also help young people to develop practical skills to get a job, arrange work experience or connect with education and training.

Policy Objective

Whilst the majority of young people successfully transition between school and post-school education or employment, there is a group of young people who find this transition difficult due to a lack of foundation skills, such as the ability to read and write, to communicate clearly, to focus on work tasks, to work in a team and to cope with change. TtW was implemented to help disadvantaged young job seekers that need more intensive support to develop the types of attitudes, behaviours and skills that would improve their prospects in the labour market.

Youth Advisory Sessions

Youth Advisory Sessions offer eligible young people in online and digital employment services the option of participating in up to 3 one-hour consultations with a Transition to Work Provider.

Up to 10,000 young people per year can participate in the Sessions from 8 March 2021. The Sessions are complementary to digital services and are:

- appropriate and tailored for young people, being flexible and responsive to their needs, and
- effective in helping the target group of young people address barriers and develop life skills to improve their ability to largely self-manage through digital services and connect with education or employment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

TtW targets a subset of young people (15–24) who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Participants include:

- Group 1 – eligible early school leavers who have applied for income activity support
- Group 2 – volunteers who are disengaged from education and/or employment
- Group 3 – young people referred from jobactive (Stream C) that have the capacity to benefit from the service.

All Indigenous young people not living in remote areas are eligible for TtW following changes that commenced 1 January 2018.

Evaluation

On 2 June 2021, the Department published the Transition to Work Final Evaluation Report (the Report) which found that the human capital investment and tailored support provided through TtW increased participants' work readiness and contributed to their achievement of study and employment outcomes. The Report also indicated that TtW was more effective at reducing recidivism among some ex-offenders compared to jobactive.

A third-stage evaluation of TtW is currently being undertaken, which will further examine the longer-term and broader impact of the program on employment and building participants' human capabilities and wellbeing. It will also evaluate the impact of the policy change from 1 July 2020 which extended the duration of service from 12 to 18 months.

History of program

In 2016 Transition to Work was implemented as part of the Youth Employment Strategy component of the Growing Jobs and Small Business Package announced in the 2015–16 Budget. There are 41 providers operating in selected metro and regional locations across 51 Employment Regions in Australia. In January 2018 eligibility changes to TtW enabled all young Indigenous Australians eligible for activity tested income support payments since that date to access the service (regardless of educational attainment). By July the same year TtW changed to a demand-driven funding model.

In January 2020 Eligibility for TtW expanded to include participants aged 15–24 (Previously 15–21). By July participants were also able to access TtW for up to 18 months (previously the service was available for up to 12 months).

From 1 January 2021 the waiting period for Group Two Participants reduced from 13 weeks to a maximum of four weeks. Then on 8 March young people aged 15–24 who are in online or digital employment services have been able to access up to three Youth Advisory Sessions with a TtW provider.

On 25 August 2021, the request for Tender for the next TtW contract (1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027) was released, which then closed on 24 September 2021.

On 28 February 2022 successful tenderers for TtW under Workforce Australia were announced.

Come 1 July 2022, the next TtW contract commences with:

- broader eligibility criteria to capture more young people at risk of not being successfully transitioning from school to employment.
- A one-off use of income payment suspension where activity tested income support payment may be put on hold or, following a number of attempts, stopped if young people refuse to attend their first appointment.
- increases to the maximum duration of service from 18 to 24 months for young people with more complex Non-Vocational Barriers.
- New, more robust performance framework.

4.1 Employment Services – ParentsNext

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
103,185	110,998	115,231	113,069	111,542

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

ParentsNext is a compulsory pre-employment program that assists eligible parents to plan and prepare for employment by the time their youngest child reaches school age.

ParentsNext provides flexible services delivered from child-friendly sites. Providers support participants to identify education and employment goals, any barriers participants have to achieving these goals, and agree on a participation plan to work towards these goals.

Participants may be referred to local services for financial advice, health care, parenting courses, childcare, transport, further education and training, secure housing, and job readiness activities such as volunteering and developing or updating their résumé.

Policy Objective

ParentsNext aims to reduce welfare reliance and intergenerational welfare dependency, increase female labour force participation and help Close the Gap in Indigenous employment.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Services Australia identifies eligible participants and refers them to a ParentsNext provider. ParentsNext is compulsory for eligible participants.

A person is eligible for ParentsNext if they:

- Reside in a jobactive employment region (that is, a geographical region in Australia in which employment services were delivered by one or more jobactive employment service providers on 1 December 2020)
- Have been receiving Parenting Payment (partnered or single) for the last six months
- Have a youngest child who is at least nine months and under six years of age
- Have not engaged in work in the last six months

- Are under 55 years of age; and
  - o Are under 22 years of age and have not completed the final year of school (or equivalent) or
  - o Are 22 years of age or over; have not completed the final year of school (or equivalent) and have been receiving income support continuously for more than two years or
  - o Have been receiving income support continuously for more than four years.

Parents who are not required to participate in ParentsNext can volunteer into the program, provided they receive Parenting Payment and have a child under six years of age.

Funding available to recipients under the program

All ParentsNext providers have access to the Participation Fund and receive a $600 credit for each new participant upon commencement. The Participation Fund is a flexible pool of funds that providers can use to claim reimbursement for goods and services that support and assist participants to address their barriers and achieve their goals.

Recipients

Parenting Payment recipients who meet the program eligibility criteria.

Evaluation

The Department is currently finalising the evaluation of the ParentsNext national expansion (2018–2021), which focuses on the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of the program. The final evaluation report is due in June 2022 as the evaluation was delayed as a result of COVID-19. The evaluation of the ParentsNext program for the 2021–2024 period has commenced.

History of program

In 2012, there were two trial programs, Helping Young Parents and Supporting Jobless Families, which had similar objectives to ParentsNext. The outcomes of these trials contributed to the design of the current ParentsNext model which commenced in 10 locations in April 2016. In July 2021, program changes were made to streamline the ParentsNext program and expand access to support, including access to the Participation Fund.

4.1 Employment Services – Skills and Training Incentive

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
10,864	17,424	17,382	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Skills and Training Incentive (Incentive) supports mature Australians to invest in, and adopt a life-long approach to, training and upgrading their skills to better equip them to take up new and emerging job opportunities.

Policy Objective

The Incentive, together with the other element of the package, the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program (Skills Checkpoint), aims to reduce the risk of older Australians entering the income support system.

The Incentive provides an opportunity for employers to assist their older workers to update their skills so both businesses and workers will be better able to adapt to change.

The Incentive also addresses skills shortages by providing funding for training related to an occupation in national shortage on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Australian citizens or permanent residents aged 40 years and older and currently employed or recently unemployed (within twelve months) and not registered with an employment services provider are eligible for the Incentive.

The Incentive is available to Participants who have completed the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program including a Career Plan that identified training opportunities (accredited or non-accredited) linked to an occupation in national shortage on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List (Skills Priority List), published on the National Skills Commission's website.

Funding available to recipients under the program

The Incentive provides up to 7,500 eligible Participants per year with funding of up to 75 per cent of the course cost for eligible training courses, up to a total of $2,200 (GST inclusive). Either the Participant or the Participant's Employer must fund the balance of the training course costs through the co-contribution.

Recipients

The Incentive is delivered to participants in all states and territories that meet the eligibility criteria of the program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Incentive was undertaken in 2021 and the report is expected to be published in mid-2022. The Incentive encouraged small employers to invest in staff training and recipients of the incentive were more likely to undertake and complete training. The evaluation also found there could be better targeting to particular industries. These findings informed the extension and implementation of the Incentive under Workforce Australia.

An evaluation of the extension of the Incentive will commence in early 2021–22.

History of the program

The Incentive was announced in December 2018 and commenced in January 2019 with two providers chosen to deliver the incentive nationally. The Program was initially extended to June 2022 and in December 2021 it was further extended to June 2024. At this time, caps to the program were also increased as well as an increase in the Government contribution of up to 75 per cent, to a maximum of $2,200 (GST Inclusive) for training related to an occupation in national shortage on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List (published June 2021).

4.1 Employment Services – Time to Work (TWES)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2023

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
3,422	2,681	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Time to Work Employment Service (TWES) is a national voluntary in-prison pre-employment service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Department is responsible for TWES in 66 non-remote prisons. The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) manages TWES in eight remote prisons.

Extending the service by 12 months will provide continuity of service and ameliorate any service gaps while new and Specialist Providers under Workforce Australia establish linkages with prisons and Indigenous communities.

Policy Objective

TWES aims to:

- help participants prepare for employment on their release
- improve the likelihood of participants connecting with post-release employment services
- support post-release providers to place ex-offenders in jobs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All sentenced, adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners can volunteer to participate from around one to four months before their release.

Participation is based on a prisoner's self-identification of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

Funding available to recipients under the program

From 1 July 2022, the payment rate for non-remote providers will increase by 3.8 per cent from $803.88 to $834.43 (GST inclusive) per participant. Providers are paid an upfront payment of $574.20 per expected participant (increasing to $596.02) (GST inclusive) and a transition plan payment of $229.68 per participant (increasing to $238.41 (GST inclusive) is paid when a participant completes TWES.

Recipients

Thirteen providers deliver TWES in non-remote prisons around Australia.

Providers deliver the following services to participants:

- three face-to-face in-prison appointments. In exceptional circumstances, providers can undertake two face-to-face appointments.
- comprehensive assessments using the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) and the Employment Services Assessment (ESAt)
- transition plans incorporating barriers, employment history and career aspirations
- facilitated transfers to post-release employment service providers, where possible.

Evaluation

An evaluation of TWES was conducted to review its effectiveness. NIAA funded the evaluation, which was completed in July 2021. Recommendations included enhancing TWES in its current form, improving guidance materials, and improving employment service providers' knowledge of TWES to increase facilitated transfer meeting rates. Work has commenced to implement the recommendations.

History of program

TWES was originally due to end on 30 June 2021 and has been extended, initially to 30 June 2022 and then in the 2022–23 Federal Budget to 30 June 2023, to continue to assist the highly vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ex-offender cohort.

A range of issues have been identified since TWES started in non-remote prisons, which impacted program servicing. These included lower than anticipated take-up of the service by prisoners, impacts of COVID-19 restrictions and challenges in delivering in the prison environment. The recently announced extension will provide an opportunity to implement recommendations from the evaluation and undertake analysis to identify any service gaps between TWES and the introduction of Workforce Australia, and inform future policy for servicing this highly disadvantaged cohort.

4.1 Employment Services – Entrepreneurship Facilitators

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 2016 and 2019

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
4,927	-	-	-	-

Note the funding allocation for the three youth facilitators is included separately in the jobactive appropriation.

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped).

Brief Description

Entrepreneurship Facilitators help people to start and run their own business by providing information advice, and tailored mentoring and by linking and referring people to appropriate support services.

Policy Objective

Entrepreneurship Facilitators aim to increase entrepreneurship in Australia by helping people to create their own job by starting a new business.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Facilitators provide assistance to anyone looking to start or run a business. The facilitators in 20 locations have a focus on supporting mature age Australians, including those at risk of unemployment due to structural changes in the economy (commenced January 2019).

Facilitators in an additional three locations focus on young people (commenced December 2016).

Facilitators provide support through:

- general assistance — delivered via phone, online or attending large events such as expos.
- comprehensive assistance — delivered through one-on-one support or small group mentoring.

Recipients

Entrepreneurship Facilitators support anyone located in 23 locations across all states and territories (except the ACT).

Evaluation

An assessment of the three original Entrepreneurship Facilitators was conducted as part of the Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment measure. This highlighted the role facilitators can play in addressing a gap in service by forming local networks and providing personalised and localised services. The Department is currently evaluating the Entrepreneurship Facilitator initiative expansion.

History of program

Three Entrepreneurship Facilitators started delivering services to young people in December 2016 as part of the Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment measure.

The success of the three facilitators resulted in the expansion of the initiative to 20 additional locations as part of the More Choices for a Longer Life package in the 2018–19 Budget.

4.1 Employment Services – Career Revive Initiative

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2024

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
937	1,073	1,073	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Career Revive Initiative aims to increase women's workforce participation by supporting businesses to attract and retain women returning to work after a career break.

The initiative supports 90 medium-to-large businesses (over five years), across a diverse range of industries and locations.

KPMG, the business improvement consultant, has completed work with 37 businesses. A tailored action plan was developed for each business and provided advice on a range of strategies including:

- adopting innovative recruitment practices to access a wider talent pool,
- establishing and supporting flexible working practices for employees,
- creating a supportive organisational culture that includes visible leadership on the value of a supported returner program,
- development opportunities to improve skill sets, knowledge and confidence, and
- mentoring and networking options to offer short to long-term career advice and inspiration.

The Department conducted an expression of interest process to select 22 businesses for the 2022 intake. These businesses will commence participation in July 2022.

The Career Revive initiative is supported by the Employing and Supporting Women hub which provides information on ways businesses can improve their recruitment and retention of women. It includes an interactive self-assessment which provides businesses with actions and resources to help them improve their workplace for women and find employees suitable for their business.

Policy Objective

Career Revive aims to prepare employers to attract and retain women returning to work after a career break.

Evaluation

The first three years of Career Revive is being evaluated. Surveys have been conducted with the thirty businesses from the pilot. The Department has used the interim report findings and learnings to improve and enhance the Career Revive initiative. The final evaluation report is due in June 2022 and will inform future policy.

History of program

The Career Revive pilot initiative was announced on 20 November 2018, as part of the 2018 Women's Economic Security Statement with funding of $1.5 million over three years, commencing on 1 July 2019. Thirty regional businesses participated in the pilot.

An amendment to the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997* to include an item providing legislative authority for spending for the initiative for regional women commenced on 23 February 2019.

The Australian Government announced on 11 May 2021, additional funding of $2.583 million over three years commencing on 1 July 2021 to expand the Career Revive initiative to 60 additional businesses. This includes expanding to metropolitan businesses. As part of the 2021 intake, seven businesses participated. For the 2022 intake, 22 businesses will commence in July 2022. Expression of Interest processes will be undertaken in August 2022 and February 2023 to identify a further 31 businesses to participate in the initiative.

An amendment to the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997* to update the item providing legislative authority for spending for the initiative for women commenced on 21 August 2021.

4.1 Employment Services – Local Jobs

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 September 2020

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2025

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
58,361	49,072	49,072	48,975	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The $276.3 million Local Jobs Program brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to accelerate reskilling and upskilling of job seekers to meet the needs of local employers.

The Program commenced in 25 Employment Regions on 1 September 2020, and at the 2021–22 Budget, the Program was expanded to cover the remaining 26 Employment Regions across Australia and extended until 30 June 2025.

The program includes the following key elements for each employment region:

- a local Employment Facilitator
- a Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- a tailored Local Jobs Plan, and
- a Local Recovery Fund to address each region's priorities.

The expansion also included a $50 million National Priority Fund, which seeks to support activities that address structural barriers to employment and complement job creation initiatives to support Australian job seekers into work.

Policy Objective

The program aims to ensure people are placed in employment or training opportunities as quickly as possible to meet employer needs as labour markets recover. Employment Facilitators bring together key local stakeholders including employers, employment services providers, and training organisations. They provide a locally driven and informed insight into the needs of employers and job seekers.

Employment Facilitators work to build capacity within their community to address both existing and emerging workforce needs and to enable corresponding pathways to employment for locals. They work collaboratively to connect job seekers with employers and address the priorities identified in each region's Local Jobs Plan.

Employment themes from local regions can be used to inform initiatives under the National Priority Fund, as well as broader policy and program delivery at a national level.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Local Jobs Program is being conducted by an external consultant to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

History of program

The program was announced on 1 September 2020, as part of a suite of measures to assist regions to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

4.1 Employment Services – ReBoot

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: February 2023

TERMINATION DATE: February 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
-	5,260	12,598	12,423	7,488

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

Reboot is a new program that will be delivered through procurement of not-for-profit organisations over three years at a cost of $42.1 million. ReBoot will form a precursor to existing youth employment programs such as Transition to Work and Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare–Trial–Hire), by engaging with and building the capacity of young people to participate in existing programs.

ReBoot Initiatives will be short-term (up to 12 weeks) and engage up to 5,000 disadvantaged and disengaged young Australians by providing:

- a compelling opportunity to undertake an interesting and intensive activity and 're-boot' their employment and training pathways
- holistic support across life and employability skills in an environment that values work ethic, teamwork and communication, nutrition, physical and emotional wellbeing, and resilience
- ongoing support to cement the changes in the young person's life, including help to connect to career pathways, through the existing Transition to Work service, and where eligible, Youth Jobs PaTH.

Policy Objective

The policy objectives of ReBoot are:

- to engage young people who are disadvantaged and/or disengaged from an education or employment pathway and are at risk of being left behind in the economic recovery
- to build the aspiration, motivation and capacity of participants to pursue an employment pathway
- following participation in ReBoot, connect participants directly to employment or training opportunities, or to employment services, such as Transition to Work, to build on the momentum generated and follow through to an employment or training outcome.

Eligibility for Program and process for application

Participants need to be aged between 15–24 and may or may not be in receipt of income support. Priority will be given to those who are disadvantaged, unemployed and those at high risk of long-term unemployment. Participants can be referred by their employment service provider, refer themselves directly, or be referred through community organisations.

Funding available to recipients under the program

No funding will be made to individual recipients under the program.

Evaluation

An evaluation of reboot is planned. The evaluation will focus on appropriateness and effectiveness and will be informed by qualitative and quantitative analysis. Reboot has been informed by an earlier pilot that was evaluated as part of Empowering Youth Initiatives. This earlier pilot highlighted the effectiveness of structured support for young people significantly disengaged from the labour market.

History of program

On 19 March 2022, the ReBoot initiative was announced as part of the 2022–23 Budget.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
jobactive					
jobactive – employment services*	1,272,010	122,121	-	-	-
New Employment Services Trial	39,828	-	-	-	-
Youth Jobs PaTH	154,110	-	-	-	-
Capped Wage Subsidy Pool	18,300	-	-	-	-
Career Transition Assistance	28,861	-	-	-	-
Work for the Dole	66,339	-	-	-	-
New Business Assistance with NEIS	141,286	-	-	-	-
Labour Market Support Stream	13,595	-	-	-	-
Jobs Fairs	9,353	-	-	-	-
Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) and AgMove	16,608^	2,511	-	-	-
Harvest Trail Services	10,676	-	-	-	-
Launch into Work	6,820	-	-	-	-
National Work Experience Program	3,131	-	-	-	-
Evaluation	1,823	-	-	-	-
Communications	8,563	-	-	-	-
Flexible Funding Yarrabah	1,300	-	-	-	-
Total jobactive	**1,792,603**	**124,632**	**-**	**-**	**-**

^AgMove funding is managed within the Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) budget allocation

*NOTE: This table includes funding announced at the 2022–23 Budget. Since that time, the 2022 PEFO update has provided DESE savings of $162.6 million in administered funding over 5 years from 2021–22 by not proceeding with contingency measure to support the implementation of Workforce Australia (including jobactive and Transition to Work programs). The measure is no longer required as the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Streamlines Participation requirements and Other Measures) Bill 2022* received Royal Assent on 1 April 2022.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Employment Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,272,010	122,121	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

jobactive is the mainstream employment service that connects job seekers with employers through a network of providers across Australia (excluding remote areas) and helps them find a job. jobactive providers are paid Administration Fees and Outcome Payments and can use the Employment Fund to help job seekers find and keep a job.

- **Administration Fees:** Administration Fees are paid to jobactive providers on commencement of a participant into the service, and every six months thereafter to cover the provision of provider services.
- **Outcome Payments:** jobactive providers may claim an Outcome Payment when a job seeker they are helping to move from welfare to work achieves employment for a period of 4, 12 or 26 weeks. The amount payable for an Employment Outcome reflects the job seeker's stream, the length of time they have been unemployed, and whether or not they are in a regional location.
- **The Employment Fund:** The Employment Fund is designed to provide assistance to eligible participants based on their individual needs and circumstances and according to employment opportunities in the local labour market. The Employment Fund can be used for assistance that helps participants to prepare for work (for example training) and may not be directly linked to a job (for example mental health counselling), or it can be used for assistance that is linked to a specific job (for example wage subsidies, work-related licences or work tools and clothing).

Policy Objective

The objectives of jobactive are to:

- help job seekers to find and keep a job;
- help job seekers move from welfare to work;
- help job seekers meet their mutual obligations; and
- deliver quality services to job seekers.

Eligibility for program and process for application

jobactive services are generally available for people who receive an income support payment, such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance (other), or Parenting Payment, and have mutual obligation requirements.

Evaluation

The jobactive evaluation has been completed and is awaiting publication. The Evaluation of jobactive Report presents evidence on the effectiveness of the program during its first several years of operation, capturing outcomes from interventions and servicing in this period. The analysis indicates that jobactive performed better than JSA 2012 on a number of key indicators, noting differences in caseload demographics.

The Department noted the evaluation's findings that addressing participant barriers to employment continues to be a challenge under the jobactive model. The finding that providers consider it more difficult to address barriers to work under jobactive relative to JSA 2012 may be a reflection of the jobactive 'work first' approach, which focuses providers on achieving pathways to employment for job seekers.

Following the evaluation, the Department continued to monitor jobactive program settings and implemented a number of measures to ensure that providers used the flexibility available in the jobactive model to address barriers to employment for job seekers on their caseload. This included expanding the range of goods and services a provider can fund using the Employment Fund.

Many features of the New Employment Services Model are designed to respond to the lessons learnt from jobactive and its predecessor models, as well as feedback received from stakeholders during consultation to date.

History of program

jobactive replaced Job Services Australia (which operated from July 2009 to June 2015). jobactive contracts are due to expire on 30 June 2022. There have been trials of New Employment Services Model in Adelaide South (South Australia) and the Mid North Coast (New South Wales) from July 2019, before being rolled out nationally from July 2022.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – New Employment Services – Trial

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	01 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE:	30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
39,828	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

The Government is introducing Workforce Australia (formerly known as the New Employment Services Model) to replace jobactive in July 2022.

Prior to the national rollout, the New Employment Services Trial (NEST) is testing key aspects of the new model in two locations, Adelaide South, South Australia and Mid North Coast, New South Wales. This includes:

- elements of the new Digital Services and Enhanced Services
- new payment structures
- a new, flexible, points-based activation system
- aspects of a new job seeker assessment framework
- an enhanced IT system.

Policy Objective

The new model aims to:

- help more job seekers into sustainable jobs, particularly the most disadvantaged
- better leverage digital technology and data, with more personalised service delivery
- improve the effectiveness of mutual obligations and increasing personal responsibility
- increase employer engagement with the service
- reduce red tape, removing unnecessary obstacles and streamline processes
- create a more efficient and cost-effective model
- improve provider performance, with a new licensing arrangement to allow for easier renewals for high performers and non-renewals for poor performers.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the NEST is being conducted and adjustments were made to the design of Workforce Australia Services based on NEST learnings.

Qualitative data collection activities have been undertaken with a range of stakeholders, including NEST job seekers, NEST providers, Registered Training Organisations and employers in NEST regions. Administrative data analysis is ongoing and will be used to inform the Interim Evaluation Report. Further data collection activities and analysis of longer-term outcomes will continue over the 2021–22 financial year and used to inform the Final Evaluation Report.

History of program

The recommendation of the Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel provided the framework for the new model. Current jobactive contracts and complementary programs were extended to June 2022 while the new model was tested and refined through the NEST.

The NEST commenced from 1 July 2019 in a phased implementation approach, starting with Digital First on 1 July 2019, Digital Plus on 1 October 2019 and Enhanced Services on 4 November 2019. All eight providers in the two regions executed new Deeds to deliver employment services under the NEST.

jobactive contracts were extended in all other regions until June 2022. The following complementary employment programs and initiatives were also extended:

- New Business Assistance with NEIS
- Youth PaTH Employability Skills Training (EST)
- Norfolk Island Deed
- Online Employment Services Trial (subsequently replaced by Online Employment Services as a response to COVID-19 – see 4.1.4)
- Online Job Seeker Classification Instrument Trial
- early access to tailored employment services for retrenched workers and their partners
- The Labour Market Support Stream
- Launch into Work
- Transition to Work.

Workforce Australia will commence in July 2022.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Youth Jobs PaTH

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2017 (Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy)
                                                 and 1 April 2017 (EST and Internships)

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
154,110	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire) helps young, inexperienced job seekers who struggle to enter the labour market. It has three elements:

- **Prepare**—Employability Skills Training helps young people better understand what employers expect of them in the workplace and equips them with the skills and behaviours to be successful in finding and keeping a job.
- **Trial**—voluntary PaTH Internships of four to 12 weeks give young unemployed people a chance to show what they can do in real workplaces.
- **Hire**—a Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy of up to $10,000 (GST inclusive) has been available since 1 January 2017 to help more businesses hire young people.

Two additional programs have been funded through the PaTH appropriation; the PaTH Industry Pilots (ceased on 30 June 2021) and the PaTH Business Placement Partnerships.

The PaTH Business Placement Partnerships commenced in October 2020 to trial a co-design approach, between the Department and industry peaks, to develop workforce solutions that generate employment opportunities for young job seekers. There are 7 active Business Partnerships (at 19 April 2022). The PaTH Business Placement Partnerships cease on 30 June 2022.

Policy Objective

The Youth Jobs PaTH, announced in the 2016–17 Budget, provides young people with a pathway to employment by responding to employer feedback that young people can increase their job prospects by improving their employability skills and gaining relevant work experience through work trials. It also provides an incentive for businesses to provide sustainable employment opportunities to young people.

Eligibility for program and process for application

- **Employability Skills Training:** young people aged 15–24 years registered with a jobactive provider and in the New Employment Services Trial regions.
- **PaTH Internships:** young people aged 17–24 years in jobactive, Transition to Work and Disability Employment Services.
- **Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy:** young people aged 15–24 years in jobactive, Transition to Work, ParentsNext Intensive Stream and in the New Employment Services Trial regions.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Eligible PaTH Internship participants receive $200 per fortnight as an internship incentive paid on top of income support. Eligible businesses hosting a PaTH Internship receive a $1000 host business payment per Internship.

Employers may be eligible to receive a wage subsidy of up to $10,000.

Recipients

As at 31 May 2021, over 122,931 young people had participated in at least one element of Youth Jobs PaTH, with (63 per cent) obtaining a recorded job placement.

At the individual program element level:

- 76,121 young people have commenced the Employability Skills Training since 1 April 2017
- 14,385 young people have been placed into 15,849 internship placements since 1 April 2017
- 67,786 wage subsidies have assisted 58,687 young people into work since 1 January 2017.

To end of April 2021, 1,922 participants had commenced in the PaTH Industry Pilots. 364 participants had commenced work experience, including 172 PaTH internships. There were 517 job placements at that date.

At 13 April 2022 there are 7 active and one closed PaTH Business Placement Partnerships. 500 job seekers have commenced in the Business Partnerships and (as of 13 April 2022) there have been 138 job placements.

Evaluation

The evaluation of Youth Jobs PaTH informed the legislatively required review into the operation of PaTH which was tabled in the House of Representatives on 21 October 2019. The final report of the evaluation was published on 14 February 2020.

History of program

The PaTH Industry Pilots commenced 2 January 2020 and ceased 30 June 2021. COVID-19 had an adverse impact on employer recruitment needs in many regions and industry sectors, reducing some demand for recruitment through several of the pilots.

The PaTH Business Placement Partnerships program in October 2022. COVID-19 disruptions have had an impact on both demand and supply for the Business Partnerships. The program will run until 30 June 2022.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Capped Wage Subsidy Pool

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
18,300	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Capped Wage Subsidy Pool is the funding source for providers of Disability Employment Services (DES), Transition to Work (TtW) and ParentsNext (intensive stream only until 1 July 2021) to offer financial incentives of up to $10,000 (GST inclusive) to employers who hire eligible people in ongoing work, including Indigenous Australians, parents, long-term unemployed job seekers, mature age people, and young people aged 25–29 years. Wage subsidies for the Volunteer Online Employment Services Trial (VOEST), Online Employment Services Trial (OEST), Digital First participants in New Employment Services Trial (NEST) and Community Development Programme (CDP) are also funded from the capped pool.

A wage subsidised placement must be a sustainable and ongoing position providing at least an average of 20 hours of work per week for the six-month wage subsidy period.

Since 1 January 2019, jobactive providers ceased to have access to the Capped Wage Subsidy Pool, with wage subsidies since that time being drawn from the Employment Fund. jobactive providers continue to have access to the demand-driven Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy (under PaTH).

Policy Objective

Wage subsidies encourage employers to provide ongoing jobs to people they might not otherwise employ.

Recipients

The Department offers four types of wage subsidies under the Capped Wage Subsidy Pool (below), each targeted to a cohort that needs help to secure employment.

Wage subsidy	Target group	Amount (GST incl) (From 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022)
Restart	50 years of age and over	Up to $10,000
Youth	25 to 29 years of age	Up to $10,000
Parents	Parenting payment or principal carer	Up to $10,000
Long Term Unemployed & Indigenous[1]	12 months in employment services	Up to $10,000

Evaluation

Wage subsidies were considered as part of the evaluation of jobactive. The evaluation found that inflexible subsidy amounts under jobactive led to higher subsidies in jobactive compared with Job Services Australia (during which providers could negotiate the level of the subsidy). There was also a greater number of subsidies paid where the employer reported they would have employed that participant anyway (deadweight) in jobactive than under Job Services Australia. Both of these findings have been addressed in the development of the Workforce Australia Employment Service wage subsidy design.

History of program

Wage subsidies in their current form commenced on 1 July 2014.

Since 1 January 2019, jobactive providers ceased to have access to the Capped Wage Subsidy Pool, with wage subsidies since that time being drawn from the Employment Fund. The Capped Wage Subsidy Pool was retained for DES, TtW, ParentsNext and CDP providers as well as OEST, VOEST and NEST participants who do not have access to the Employment Fund.

From 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, all current wage subsidies have increased to up to $10,000 (previously up to $6,500 for some job seeker cohorts) to provide greater incentives to employers to hire disadvantaged job seekers. This change also brings wage subsidy settings closer to the approach that will apply under Workforce Australia from July 2022.

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[1] Indigenous Australians may get immediate access to wage subsidies if all eligibility requirements are met.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Career Transition Assistance Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
28,861	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement – Capped and Terminating – From 4 May 2020 to 30 June 2022, CTA moved out of the Employment Fund to its own Administered funding.

Brief Description

Career Transition Assistance (CTA) supports mature-age job seekers to identify opportunities in their local labour market and provide them with practical assistance to help them increase their employability.

CTA was rolled out nationally on 1 July 2019 following a trial in five Employment Regions. As part of the national rollout, the eligibility age for CTA was lowered to 45 years and older (originally 50 years and older).

Policy Objective

Primary principles and objectives of the CTA program are to:

- support participants to increase their confidence in the skills and experience they have, and increase their motivation and as a result, their resilience to continue looking for work
- help participants to increase their understanding of the opportunities available in their local labour market and facilitate engagement with local Employers
- support participants to better tailor their job applications to particular industries and Employers
- develop participants' ICT skills including building their confidence to apply for jobs online, along with core digital literacy capabilities required to work in a variety of workplaces.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All job seekers aged 45 and older in jobactive, OES, VOEST and NEST are eligible to participate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Fees for CTA are $1,800 or $2,250 in Employment Regions that attract a Regional Loading fee. Fees are paid automatically to the CTA providers via the Department's IT system upon commencement of an eligible job seeker.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the CTA program was completed in two phases. The CTA Trial had an early evaluation (phase one) to inform the rollout of the national program which commenced on 1 July 2019. Draft findings indicated improvements in job search skills, increased digital literacy, greater knowledge of local jobs markets and improved resilience and confidence in applying for jobs.

Phase two of the evaluation encompassed the entire program, and the report is expected to be published in 2022.

History of program

The CTA Trial was one of the key measures in the Australian Government's Mature Age Employment Package announced in the 2017–18 Federal Budget.

The More Choices for a Longer Life Package in the 2018–19 Australian Government Budget announced that CTA would be available nationally from July 2019.

As part of the national rollout, the eligibility age for CTA was lowered to 45 years and over, from 50 years and over. It was one of a number of initiatives targeting mature age people in the More Choices for a Longer Life Package, including establishing a Collaborative Partnership on Mature Age Employment, encouraging entrepreneurship among older Australians, and enhancing the funding arrangement for Restart wage subsidies.

As part of the 2018–19 MYEFO announcement, the two CTA Elements (Tailored Career Assistance Element and the Functional Digital Literacy Element) were amalgamated into one 'CTA Course' from July 2019. In conjunction with this, policy authority was granted to change to a single program design with a single fee.

On 21 April 2020, the Government announced additional funding of $41.7 million for CTA until 30 June 2022. From 4 May 2020 CTA moved out of the Employment Fund to a separate capped funding source.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Work for the Dole

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
66,339	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Work for the Dole is one of a number of approved activities that may be undertaken by eligible job seekers on income support to meet their mutual obligation requirements. The program is administered by jobactive providers, in collaboration with Host Organisations, who provide a range of work-like activities in either an individual or group based setting.

Work for the Dole is also an approved activity that exists under the New Employment Services Trail (NEST) and the program structure is predominantly the same as in jobactive.

Policy Objective

Work for the Dole is a work experience and activation program that keeps people connected with the labour market and their communities. It provides an opportunity for job seekers to demonstrate their capabilities and positive work behaviours which will stand them in good stead with potential employers while at the same time making a positive contribution to the local community. Work for the Dole does not match people with jobs.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Work for the Dole activities can only be hosted by eligible Host Organisations. Host Organisations need to be not-for-profit organisations/charities; local, state, or Australian Government organisations or agencies; or a not-for-profit arm of for-profit organisations. Providers and Host Organisations work together to arrange suitable Work for the Dole activities.

In assessing the eligibility of a Host Organisation, providers must also ensure organisations meet a range of requirements, including being of good reputation and that the activity proposed will not displace paid workers.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Funding of up to $1,000 per six-month place is available for Individual Hosted activities and up to $3,500 per six-month place for Group Based activities. This funding is provided to jobactive/NEST providers who are required to negotiate with Host Organisations the proportion of funding that is passed on to assist with the costs of hosting an activity.

Eligible job seekers receive an Approved Program of Work Supplement of $20.80 per fortnight while they are undertaking Work for the Dole activities to assist with the cost of participating in the activity. The policy owner for this supplement is the Department of Social Services.

Participants

Job seekers in jobactive and the NEST who are on income support and aged 18 years and over. Job seekers aged 60 and over and those on a part-rate of income support can participate on a voluntary basis but are unable to have Work for the Dole as a compulsory requirement. Job seekers on the Disability Support Pension with participation requirements may undertake Work for the Dole. Disability Employment Services participants may also participate in Work for the Dole activities, where appropriate.

Evaluation

The evaluation of Work for the Dole in jobactive found that:

- Participants reported improvement in their ability to:
  - work with others (78.0 per cent)
  - keep a routine (76.0 per cent)
  - adapt to a new environment (80.5 per cent).
- Many participants appreciated the social interaction associated with their placement.
- Other participants, however, struggled with their placements due to study or caring responsibilities and found the expense of travel to their activities prohibitive.

History of program

The first Work for the Dole pilot commenced in 1997. The program continued until 2009, with Community Work Coordinators initially responsible for administering Work for the Dole activities until Job Services Australia providers took over the role.

Following the 2014 Federal Budget, a new pilot programme was announced, with a clear objective of providing 'work-like experiences'. This model was initially trialled in 18 Priority Employment Regions. After 12 months, Work for the Dole was extended nationally, across 51 Employment Regions, as part of the jobactive program.

For three years (2015–2018), Work for the Dole Coordinators in each of the 51 jobactive Employment Regions identified potential Host Organisations, secured Work for the Dole places and connected the Host Organisations with jobactive providers.

Changes to Work for the Dole announced under the 2017–18 Budget came into effect in 2018. To help streamline Work for the Dole administration, Work for the Dole Coordinator contracts ceased, and jobactive/NEST providers sourced all Work for the Dole places.

From March-September 2020, Work for the Dole was suspended nationally, as a result of COVID-19. Activities resumed on 28 September 2020, once providers could assure that it was safe and suitable to do so, in all states and territories except Victoria. Job seekers had to opt-in to participate in Work for the Dole.

Activities returned to normal face-to-face servicing arrangements in March 2021. This meant that job seekers could no longer opt-out of face-to-face participation in activities – including Work for the Dole (unless they had a reasonable excuse). Providers are still required to assure that activities are safe and suitable before they can commence.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – New Business Assistance with the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: Current jobactive contract commenced on 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitions to Self Employment Assistance
                                                under Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
141,286	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

New Business Assistance with NEIS provides accredited training and support to help people start and run a new business.

NEIS training provides accredited small business training (Certificate IV in Entrepreneurship and New Business or Certificate III in Entrepreneurship and New Business), and assistance to develop a business plan.

NEIS participants receive mentoring for up to the first 12 months of their business. If eligible, NEIS participants can also receive NEIS Allowance for up to the first 39 weeks and NEIS Rental Assistance for up to the first 26 weeks.

NEIS is delivered by a national network of 18 providers across 51 Employment Regions. There are 8,600 NEIS places available each financial year.

Policy Objective

NEIS aims to help people create their own job by starting and running a business or support existing micro-businesses (with up to four employees) to remain financially viable.

Eligibility for program and process for application

A person is eligible for assistance if they are:

- at least 18 years of age
- are not prohibited from working in Australia
- are available to work in their NEIS business for the required hours based on their personal circumstances
- have not received NEIS Assistance in the previous year and
- are not an undischarged bankrupt.

A proposed business is eligible if it is not currently operating on a commercial basis; is lawful and capable of withstanding public scrutiny; has an independent business structure; is assessed as commercially viable based on the required hours; will be established, located and operated solely within Australia; and is structured so the participant has the controlling interest in the business.

From 15 October 2020, NEIS was expanded to help people with part-time work, study or caring responsibilities to access NEIS to start a part-time business (at least 25 hours per week).

From 7 December 2020, NEIS was expanded to help owners of existing micro-businesses (with up to four employees) impacted by COVID-19 to adapt their business and remain financially viable.

From 1 July 2021, NEIS was expanded to give early access for veterans prior to their transition date to support them to safely explore self-employment while still supported by the Australian Defence Force. Access to the program is also available to family members of veterans.

Participants can register directly with a NEIS provider for assistance.

Amount of funds available under the program

Participants are provided with free accredited training and mentoring.

If eligible, a participant receives:

- NEIS Allowance (equivalent to JobSeeker payment) for the first 39 weeks of business operation—currently $642.70 per fortnight
- NEIS Rental Assistance for the first 26 weeks of business operation—currently up to $145.80 per fortnight.

Evaluation

The Department conducted an evaluation of the Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment initiative, including analysis of New Business Assistance with NEIS, Entrepreneurship Facilitators and the Exploring Being My Own Boss Workshops. The evaluation found participants generally responded well to the program. Further places have been allocated in the new model. The evaluation report is being prepared for publication in mid-2022.

NEIS provider performance is measured against three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined in the jobactive Deed 2015–2022:

- Utilising NEIS places
- Achieving Post-Programme Outcomes
- Delivering quality services, compliant with the Deed.

History of program

NEIS commenced on 1 July 1985 and has been running for 36 years.

The eligibility of the program has expanded overtime, particularly in the last decade where people not on income support, existing business owners and part-time businesses are able to participate in the NEIS program.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Labour Market Support Stream

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitions to Workforce Australia.

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
13,595	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Labour Market Support Stream (LMSS) recognises that there are occasions when additional activities, beyond those funded under jobactive, may be needed to support job seekers and jobs growth in certain labour markets.

Policy Objective

The LMSS was established in 2015, as a quarantined fund within jobactive, to support workers impacted by the closure of large employers and satisfy the demand by large-scale recruitment exercises. The scope of the LMSS was expanded in the 2018–19 Budget, to fund small-scale employment projects and engage Employment Facilitators in regions experiencing, or at risk of, prolonged disadvantaged labour markets.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All spending under the LMSS need the endorsement of both the Employment Minister and the Finance Minister, with smaller projects approved by the Employment Minister. The LMSS can only be used for administered funds.

LMSS funding is accessed after careful assessment on a case-by case basis and where sufficient funding is not available from other Commonwealth or State Government programs.

Evaluation

Insights from program evaluations have found that there is utility in providing place based, targeted support based on local conditions. These broader findings have been taken into account when providing advice on how best to undertake expenditure of the LMSS fund.

History of program

The LMSS has been in operation since 2015.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Jobs Fairs

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 January 2018

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

JOBS FAIRS (PART OF THE JOBS PACKAGE)

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
9,353	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

Jobs fairs allow job seekers, workers and employment service providers the opportunity to connect and talk face-to-face with a range of local employers and learn about jobs, apprenticeships, training, and career options available in their area.

Additional support services are provided at jobs fairs that help build the capacity of job seekers in securing their next role. These services include free 15-minute one-on-one sessions to have their resume reviewed or work on their interview skills. Attendees can also take part in free interactive workshops that help them improve their chances of getting a job and hear from local employers about what they are looking for in an employee.

Policy Objective

These fairs provide opportunities for job seekers to talk with local employers who have real vacancies available.

Evaluation

The Department has engaged an external supplier to conduct an evaluation of the jobs fair program, which is currently underway.

History of program

To date 69 jobs fairs have been held since July 2018 in various locations across Australia, including virtual events. More than 68,722 people have attended these events, with over 157,500 job vacancies on offer from over 3,160 exhibitors.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) and AgMove

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE:	Current jobactive contract commenced on 1 July 2015
	1 November 2020 – AgMove
TERMINATION DATE:	Transitioning to Workforce Australia.
	AgMove is a terminating measure with an end date of 31 December 2022.
CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:	████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

	$'000s				
	2021–22 Estimated Actual	**2022–23 Budget**	**2023–24 Estimate**	**2024–25 Estimate**	**2025–26 Estimate**
RATTUAJ	6,581	-	-	-	-
AgMove	10,027	2,511	-	-	-
Total Employment Services	**16,608**	**2,511**	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand Driven for RATTUAJ, Capped for AgMove)

Brief Description

Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) helps eligible unemployed participants with the cost of moving to take up an ongoing job.

Policy Objective

RATTUAJ encourages unemployed job seekers who are unable to find work in their local area to relocate to take up an ongoing job.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Relocation positions must be ongoing, offer more than 20 hours of work per week, and be at least 90 minutes away from a participant's current residence.

Employment services providers manage all elements of the RATTUAJ, including determining eligibility and creating an agreement with the participant.

Providers can pay a supplier directly on behalf of the participant, or reimburse the participant for pre-approved relocation expenses.

Providers may also make upfront payments or provide a pre-paid debit card to assist participants who are experiencing significant financial hardship. Providers then claim reimbursements from the Department.

2020–21 Budget measure – Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job for Short-term Agricultural Work – AgMove

To support the agriculture sector, the Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) program has been temporarily modified to make financial support available to people who relocate to regional or harvest areas to take up short-term agricultural work.

From 1 November 2020 until 31 December 2022, Australians, including those not on income support (such as grey nomads and domestic students), will be eligible to claim a reimbursement of up to $6,000 when they relocate to take up this work. Visa holders who have a right to work in Australia (including Working Holiday Makers and international students) will be eligible to claim up to $2,000 (Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme workers are not eligible as they are sponsored by employers to work in the agriculture and other critical sectors). The funding for this measure updated under the 2022–23 Budget is $22 million. It is managed within the RATTUAJ budget allocation.

In Harvest Areas, Harvest Trail Service providers deliver AgMove. A Harvest Trail Information Service Provider delivers it for non-harvest jobs in agriculture (such as work with livestock or on dairy farms) and for harvest jobs outside of 16 Harvest Areas.

In response to feedback from the sector, changes were made so that the initiative will be called AgMove to simplify communication and improve take up.

To encourage more people to take up roles in agriculture, from 5 May 2021 the required work hours and time periods to be eligible for claiming AgMove have been reduced. From the initial requirement to work 120 hours over at least six weeks the AgMove eligibility has been changed to:

- 40 hours in at least two weeks – for Australian workers to claim reimbursement up to $2,000 and for temporary visa holders up to $650
- 120 hours of work in at least four weeks – for Australian workers to claim reimbursement of up to $6,000 and temporary visa holders up to $2,000
- Note: Maximum payment to an individual is $6000 for Australian workers and $2,000 for visa holders.

This provides an incentive for workers to give a harvest job a go and therefore helps to increase the take up of AgMove.

2021–22 Budget changes

The 2021–22 Budget announced $12.0 million for providers to support job seekers with up to $2,000 in upfront support when they take up ongoing work under the Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job program. Eligibility was expanded to job seekers who take up ongoing work of 20 hours per week (previously 30 hours per week). As part of the Six-Month Activity Requirement, providers also inform job seekers of the job opportunities in regional areas and the Relocation Assistance available to them if they choose to move. The funding is for administered and departmental costs for the Department and DSS. These changes took effect from 1 May 2021 and are ongoing.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Participants can receive up to $9,000 (GST exclusive) to help with the cost of relocating:

- $3,000 if relocating to a capital city
- $6,000 if relocating to a regional area
- an extra $3,000 if relocating with a dependent (eligibility requirements apply).

Recipients

Unemployed job seekers who meet the eligibility criteria.

Evaluation

A Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job (RATTUAJ) Evaluation Report was published in August 2018. The evaluation examined take up, administrative burden and issues with a reimbursement model that required prepayment by providers prior to seeking reimbursement from the department. The department has subsequently adapted the program to reduce administrative burden and improve clarity of available support.

History of program

The RATTUAJ program commenced on 1 July 2014.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Harvest Trail Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2020 – Harvest Trail Service

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
10,676	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Demand driven)

Brief Description

Harvest Trail Services (HTS) operate in 16 harvest areas across Australia that do not have adequate local labour supply to meet seasonal peaks in employer demand. Together these 16 areas cover the vast majority of horticultural areas in Australia.

HTS is complemented by the Harvest Trail Information Service (HTIS) and the Harvest Trail website and jobs board. The HTIS provides comprehensive, up-to-date information about harvest work opportunities, working conditions, transport and accommodation around Australia, and also provides a telephone service for employers wanting to lodge vacancies outside of the harvest areas and people looking for harvest work.

The Harvest Trail jobs board lists all vacancies, advertised both on jobactive's JobSearch website and directly on the Harvest Trail website, that are flagged as seasonal work in harvest related occupations. HTS providers, the HTIS provider and employers across the country can utilise the jobs board to advertise harvest work opportunities to job seekers.

From 1 July 2020, the program, renamed under the common Harvest Trail brand, includes:

- HTS providers operating in 16 harvest areas, with many of the former 11 areas expanded to cover new horticulture regions. This expanded national coverage ensures that every major horticulture region across the country has access to the services.
- Financial incentive for HTS providers: 4-, 12- and 26-week outcome payment, when they place and keep Australian job seekers in harvest work, which will help job seekers to gain work experience, move off welfare and, possibly, start a career in agriculture.
- The Harvest Trail Information Service continuing to provide information about harvest work opportunities around Australia.
- The Harvest Trail website has been re-designed to give easy access to information for growers and includes an enhanced jobsearch facility for both Australian job seekers and working holidaymakers.

- The Industry Engagement element of the budget measure to address myths and misconceptions about seasonal work and help make Australian job seekers more aware of the benefits of seasonal work. Five industry peaks have been contracted to deliver the HTS Industry Collaboration Trial projects which test different approaches to change agricultural employers' attitudes towards local workers and to attract more Australian job seekers to the sector.

In Harvest Areas, Harvest Trail Service providers deliver AgMove. A Harvest Trail Information Service Provider delivers it for non-harvest jobs in agriculture (such as work with livestock or on dairy farms) and for harvest jobs outside of 16 Harvest Areas.

Policy Objective

To help horticultural employers with their workforce needs. From 1 July 2020 a further objective to increase the number of Australian job seekers working in the horticulture industry and improve employers' access to seasonal workers at the right time.

Eligibility for program

All Australian citizens and permanent Australian residents are eligible for referral to the harvest vacancies by HTS providers. Anyone who is legally entitled to look for work in Australia can be placed into harvest work. This includes people visiting Australia who hold the appropriate work visas, such as a Working Holidays visa, but excludes Seasonal Worker Programme and Pacific Labour Scheme participants, who can work only for their sponsoring employer.

To be referred to harvest work by HTS providers, all job seekers must be registered in the Department's IT Systems.

Evaluation

An evaluation of Harvest Trail Services (including AgMove) has commenced and is due to be completed by the end of 2022.

History of program

Harvest Trail Services have been in operation since 1998.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Launch into Work

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2017

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ████████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
6,820	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Launch into Work program funds tailored pre-employment projects that support primarily female job seekers to secure entry level employment. Projects are co-designed with the businesses offering the employment opportunities.

Under the program, participants receive accredited and non-accredited training, work experience and mentoring. Beyond delivery of these required components, projects can be designed flexibly to meet employer and/or cohort needs. Project duration is typically 4–12 weeks and projects generally deliver 10–15 jobs, depending on the recruitment needs of employers.

Employers must commit to employing suitable participants who successfully complete a pre-employment project. The number of project participants must not exceed the number of available jobs.

The program emphasises the selection of job seekers with the values and attributes required for the role and for work with the organisation. Participants then develop the technical skills required for the role and gain work experience through the course of the pre-employment project.

Policy Objective

The program supports Australia's G20 goal to reduce the gender gap in women's workforce participation by 25 per cent by 2025 and will work towards addressing future workforce skills shortages.

Although targeted at women, who typically face greater barriers to employment, men may also participate in the program.

Eligibility for program and process for application

Employers who can commit to the objectives of the program are eligible to move to project co-design discussions. This includes for profit, not-for-profit and state and local governments or councils. This is followed by a formal application and assessment process.

Peak bodies and industry associations can facilitate or lead a project, but must have committed employers with job vacancies that are willing to participate in the co-design process and project delivery.

Job seekers from the jobactive, ParentsNext and Transition to Work caseloads are eligible to participate.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Contracts are awarded on a rolling basis throughout the program's duration until funding is exhausted for the respective financial year.

The value of an individual contract is based on the costs associated with running the procured pre-employment project.

Recipients

Employers are contracted to deliver pre-employment projects for registered job seekers with a the jobactive, ParentsNext or Transition to Work provider.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been completed. The program is subject to regular review in consultation with relevant stakeholders to inform program delivery.

History of program

Prior to this, the Department partnered with UnitingCare Australia and the Office for Women to design and implement pre-employment projects that aimed to help women into the workforce and fill positions within UnitingCare agencies. Due to the success of these projects, the government announced the introduction of Launch into Work.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – National Work Experience Program

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 October 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING:

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 **Estimated Actual**	2022–23 **Budget**	2023–24 **Estimate**	2024–25 **Estimate**	2025–26 **Estimate**
3,131	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The National Work Experience Programme (NWEP) is available through jobactive, Transition to Work (TtW), and Disability Employment Services (DES) providers. The NWEP places job ready job seekers in real life, unpaid, work trial placements where they can gain experience and confidence while demonstrating their skills to potential employers.

Policy Objective

The NWEP is a practical work trial placement for up to four weeks, and usually used towards the end of a job seeker's journey towards employment. It is a chance for job seekers to get their foot in the door and demonstrate to employers that they should be hired. NWEP places can also be used to develop confidence and provide vital work experience without the guarantee of a job.

Eligibility for program and process for application

To participate in an NWEP placement, job seekers must be:

- registered with jobactive, TtW or DES
- aged 17 years or over
- receiving an income support payment such as JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance, or Parenting Payment
- subject to Mutual Obligation Requirements.

Funding available to recipients under the program

In addition to their income support, job seekers who participate in an NWEP placement may be eligible to receive a $20.80 supplement each fortnight to assist with the costs of participation.

Evaluation

The Department conducted an evaluation of NWEP in 2016. Key findings from the early insights evaluation found that the program's flexibility regarding length, the ability to incorporate productive work into placements, and the provision of insurance coverage for participants were all positive elements, which are being maintained under Workforce Australia. The evaluation also highlighted the need for incentive payments to support participation, which were subsequently introduced on 2018, and will be increased under Workforce Australia to align with those offered under PaTH Internships. Please note the NWEP Early insights evaluation is not published.

History of program

NWEP commenced in October 2015, replacing the Unpaid Work Experience Programme.

In July 2018 changes were made to NWEP in response to feedback received during the 2016 early insights NWEP evaluation, including the introduction of incentive payments, and lowering of the minimum eligibility age from 18 to 17.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Evaluation

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2015

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,823	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

Administered funding to support the evaluation of employment services and programs.

Policy Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of jobactive and related programs.

There has been an ongoing program of evaluation across jobactive programs, findings of which have been reported to relevant program and policy areas as they have become available. While the final report is not yet published, findings have informed ongoing development and improvements to program design.

Workforce Australia design has been informed by jobactive evaluation findings, specifically with regard to wage subsidies, Work for the Dole, and the Points Based Activation System design.
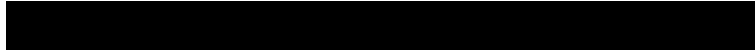
4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Communication

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2019

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
8,563	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

To help meet the costs of communication and promotion activities for employment services and related programs. This includes costs associated with job seeker messaging.

Policy Objective

To help build awareness amongst employers and job seekers of Australian Government employment services.

History of program

N/A

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Flexible Funding Yarrabah

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
1,300	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – Procurement (Capped)

Brief Description

The Yarrabah community was chosen as the pilot for a local, community-driven employment services model in the 2017–18 Federal Budget. The aim of the pilot is to determine if local autonomy over employment service delivery will increase employment outcomes and enhance service delivery for local job seekers. The commencement date for the pilot program was 1 January 2018.

The trial includes support through a flexible funding pool of $5 million over four years to build the capacity of the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council (YASC) to deliver jobactive, boost the capability and capacity of Council and its partners (such as the Council's Leadership Team) and to engage with the community, employers, registered training organisations, other providers of services and peak bodies.

Policy Objective

The objectives of the trial are to respond to the needs of the Yarrabah community, to build its capacity to inform and set service delivery priorities.

Eligibility for program and process for application

YASC is the only organization eligible to receive funding. The community was chosen by the government for the pilot.

YASC submits proposals to the Department for assessment. If approved, they receive money for the proposed activity through an individual funding agreement. Proposals need to support the capacity building of the Council to deliver employment services to jobseekers in the community.

Funding available to recipients under the program

Administration of the flexible funding pool funds is through individual funding agreements. Actual expenditure and the specific amounts are at the discretion of the relevant Delegate and depend on an assessment of the proposals for funding made by the Council.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the Yarrabah Employment Services Pilot was undertaken in 2019. The evaluation found that overall rates of employment outcomes were broadly similar to those achieved by previous jobactive providers. The community and local employers experienced considerably higher satisfaction and were strong supporters of the new service. The evaluation findings have informed a continued focus on place based, culturally sensitive and targeted service delivery that is adapted to meet the needs of the local community.

History of program

The program is a trial that commenced in 2018.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Targeted Compliance Framework

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 1 July 2018

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Budget	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – NA

Brief Description

Participants must meet compulsory mutual obligation requirements as a condition of receiving income support, these obligations may include engaging with employment services providers, undertaking activities to improve employment prospects, and looking for and accepting offers of suitable paid work they are able to undertake.

The Targeted Compliance Framework applies if participant fails to meet their compulsory mutual obligation requirements. This may include demerits and financial penalties.

Relevant legislation for the Targeted Compliance Framework is contained in the *Social Security Act 1991* and *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*, as well as legislative instruments made under powers contained in these acts.

Policy Objective

The objective of the Targeted Compliance Framework is to focus resources and financial penalties on participants who persistently and wilfully do not comply with their mutual obligation requirements, as well as providing protection for vulnerable participants by ensuring their mutual obligation requirements match their capability.

Eligibility for Program and process for application

The Targeted Compliance Framework applies to and participants with mutual obligation requirements except those in the Community Development Program. The framework was modified for ParentsNext participants to ensure that employment-related failures do not apply to these participants.

Recipients

Participants in jobactive, Workforce Australia from July 2022, participants in ParentsNext and Disability Employment Services.

History of program

The Targeted Compliance Framework commenced on 1 July 2018 and replaced the Job Seeker Compliance Framework.

The Targeted Compliance Framework will continue in Workforce Australia, with operational changes to reflect points-based activation.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Volunteer Online Employment Services Trial

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 9 December 2019 (VOEST)

TERMINATION DATE: 30 June 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ██████████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – N/A

Brief Description

Volunteer Online Employment Services Trial (VOEST) is testing a digital employment services model that allows volunteer job seekers to manage their job search efforts using an online platform. In July 2022 it will be replaced by Workforce Australia Online for Individuals.

Policy Objective

The purpose of VOEST is to test whether job seekers and volunteer job seekers can self-manage effectively with online services.

Eligibility for program and process for application

The VOEST is targeted to Stream A volunteer job seekers. Eligible volunteers can participate in VOEST for up to 12 months.

From 1 July 2021, job seekers with a disability who do not receive income support or pension payments will be ineligible for DES. It is expected around 33,808 job seekers with a disability may be eligible for VOEST (Workforce Australia Online for Individuals) over three years from July 2021.

Evaluation

The VOEST evaluation commenced in January 2020. Findings on the effectiveness of online service delivery, ease of use and participant satisfaction for many participants as well as challenges for others are contributing to the Government's decision making in design and implementation of Workforce Australian Employment Services. The evaluation report is being finalised.

History of program.

The VOEST commenced on 9 December 2019. The VOEST is an expansion of the Online Employment Services Trial, which has now ended and been adapted with the introduction of the Online Employment Services (OES) as a response to COVID-19.

4.1 Employment Services – jobactive – Online Employment Services

APPROPRIATION: Appropriation Bill No. 1

START DATE: 16 April 2020

TERMINATION DATE: Transitioning to Workforce Australia

CONSTITUTIONAL RISK RATING: ███████████████████████

BUDGET AND FORWARD ESTIMATES AS AT 2022–23 BUDGET:

$'000s				
2021–22 Estimated Actual	2022–23 Budget	2023–24 Estimate	2024–25 Estimate	2025–26 Estimate
-	-	-	-	-

Funding Type – N/A

Brief Description

Online Employment Services (OES) is the Australian Government's mainstream online employment servicing platform on the jobactive website. This service focuses on Stream A job seekers who have been assessed as the most job ready. In July 2022, it will be replaced by Workforce Australia Online for Individuals.

Core functionality of the OES includes:

- creating a Job Plan
- creating a Career Profile and résumé
- Self-management of participation in and recording of activities to meet mutual obligation requirements
- searching and applying for jobs
- uploading job search details
- access to support tools and resources
- access to support from the Digital Services Contact Centre
- notifications via SMS or email.
- support to upskill or reskill through links to subsidised training
- skills matching tools – including Job Switch which is powered by Jobs and Education Data Infrastructure (JEDI) data through the National Careers Institute (NCI)
- support to connect job seekers to complementary programs and training opportunities
- greater access to support through expansion of the Digital Services Contact Centre.

Policy Objective

OES allows job seekers to self-manage their job search and reporting requirements online.

Eligibility for program and process for application

All non-remote job seekers granted activity-tested income support by Services Australia are automatically referred to the OES. Based on an assessment, job seekers are referred to an employment services provider or the most job ready remain in the OES. Participation in OES is time limited to 12 months, unless the job seeker is working or undertakes study, which will allow them to remain in the online platform for up to six months after the completion of their course.

Regardless of whether a job seeker is ultimately referred to an employment services provider, they can continue to access the online tools and resources on the jobactive website.

Job seekers can opt out of the OES any time and transfer to a provider. Safeguards have been introduced in the OES to ensure job seekers are not disadvantaged in online services and can access face-to-face provider services. These include a Digital Assessment to help identify those job seekers potentially at risk and prompt them to consider opting into face-to-face servicing, and a Digital Service Review every four months to ensure job seekers are successfully managing their online job search requirements.

From March 2021, up to 15,000 young people (aged 15–24) per year in OES and Digital Employment Services have access to a maximum of three one-hour advisory sessions with a Transition to Work (TtW) provider. From June 2021, young people in OES and Digital Employment Services in the New Employment Services Trial have had access to online learning modules to help them develop their job search and employability skills.

From 1 July 2021, job seekers who can work 30 hours or more per week have been ineligible for DES. It is expected an additional 33,656 job seekers with a disability will enter jobactive over three years from July 2021.

Evaluation

The Department actively monitors administrative data and is closely consulting with stakeholders to ensure the Online Employment Services is meeting the needs of job seekers.

An evaluation of Online Employment Services is being conducted by the Department to assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and quality of the services and identify cohorts of job seekers who experienced the most benefit and those who required additional support.

The evaluation is taking a mixed methodology approach including qualitative and quantitative research with key stakeholders and analysis of administrative data.

History of program

The OES was created on 16 April 2020 in response to the increased demand for Centrelink payments and employment services, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government expanded the Online Employment Services Trial (OEST), which commenced on 1 July 2018, to become the OES. The decision to expand the OEST to become the OES was informed by early evaluation results of the OEST, which showed that trial participants were as likely to exit from income support or employment services as comparable job seekers receiving provider servicing.