



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment

## Discussion Paper - Delivery of the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program 2023

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through to 4 February 2022



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The document must be attributed as the *Discussion Paper - Delivery of the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program 2023*.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment is seeking feedback from interested stakeholders on possible changes to the Skills for Education and Employment program.

The discussion paper includes several questions to guide submissions. The department also welcomes submissions that respond to the paper more generally.

Responses to this discussion paper can be made through the [online submission form](#). Submissions close 5pm (AEST) Friday 4 February 2022.



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## Chapter 1- Introduction

### The importance of foundation skills

Strong foundation skills are essential to every individual's ability to adapt and thrive in a fast-evolving world. They equip Australian adults to participate confidently in the workforce, learn new skills and engage fully in the community.

In August 2020, the Commonwealth, state and territory governments agreed to improving the quality, relevance and accessibility of training through the vocational education and training (VET) sector through the [Heads of Agreement for Skills Reform](#). An agreed priority for reform is to provide stronger support for foundation skills and ensure access to foundation skills training for all Australians with low levels of language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND).

This commitment by all First Ministers recognises the critical importance that foundation skills have for economic and social participation. It also recognises that strong foundation skills are essential to Australia's future productivity, by ensuring Australians have the ability to learn new skills and transition to new jobs as they emerge.

Foundation skills are core LLND skills, including listening and speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and digital literacy. Foundation skills also include employability skills, such as initiative and innovation, planning and organising, problem solving and teamwork.

Research shows poor foundation skills are an indicator of low overall and lifelong educational attainment<sup>1</sup> and that people with low literacy and numeracy levels or with low educational qualifications are less likely to be employed or more likely to be employed in low-paid, insecure jobs. They may also face difficulties in participating in social and community life, where a range of communication skills are required for confident and meaningful relationships.

### Government action

The Commonwealth Government (the Government) is investing **\$6.4 billion** in the VET system in 2021-22 to ensure Australians have the skills needed for the jobs in demand. This includes increasing the funding available to support the development of foundation skills through the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program program, the Reading Writing Hotline and through JobTrainer.


The Government is also working closely with the states and territories to develop a new 10 year strategy for foundation skills policy and delivery – the Foundation Skills Framework. Due to be released for consultation in early 2022, the Foundation Skills Framework sets out a proposal for a 10 year model for collective action by governments to improve the foundation skills of Australian adults.

### The SEE program

The SEE program is the Government's primary program for helping eligible jobseekers improve their LLND skills and enable them to participate more effectively in training or obtain employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Productivity Commission (2014) Literacy and Numeracy Skills and labour Market Outcomes in Australia



The SEE program, formerly known as the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP), has been operating since 2002.

In the 2021-22 Budget the Government announced an increase to its investment in foundation skills by providing an additional \$20.6 million for the SEE program to enable the program to increase the amount of job seekers accessing the program and to achieve meaningful outcomes. The additional funding:

- uncaps funded places and expands eligibility to job seekers not on income support from 1 July 2021
- removes the maximum 650 hours training entitlement from 1 January 2022 and enables registered job seekers to undertake training to attain a VET qualification up to a Certificate III to increase employment or further training opportunities
- focuses on increasingly important digital literacy skills from 1 January 2022
- provides innovative project funding to:
  - integrate digital literacy skills training, and
  - trial innovative practices.
- delivers more training through flexible models in remote Australia from July 2023.

Additional information on the existing SEE program arrangements can be found at [www.dese.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment](http://www.dese.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment).

## JobTrainer

As part of the Government's commitment to increasing the accessibility of training, it has partnered with state and territory governments to roll out the **\$2 billion JobTrainer Fund**. JobTrainer provides free or low fee training for the jobs in demand for any Australian aged 17-24 and any Australian who is out of work. JobTrainer has helped 271,038 Australians impacted by the pandemic to upskill or reskill in full qualifications and short courses, with the expanded JobTrainer Fund to provide around 463,000 additional training places. This includes funding free foundation skills training in every state and territory, with many registered training organisations (RTOs) offering units of competency from the foundation skills training package in combination with other qualifications.

JobTrainer is also providing free or low free training until the end of 2022 for any Australian who wishes to study a full qualification or a short course to strengthen their digital skills, regardless of employment status. 10,000 training places have been set aside for this purpose.

## Structure of this paper

This paper supports consultation by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) on the Government's proposed changes to the SEE program. Feedback provided in response to this paper will inform future procurement, contracting, funding and delivery arrangements for the SEE program from 1 July 2023.

In considering changes to the SEE program, the Government seeks to:

- improve access and participation
- increase program outcomes with a greater focus on quality LLND training

- improve performance reporting while also looking for opportunities to reduce the administrative and compliance burden on providers where practicable
- ensure flexibility to respond to change.

The paper focuses on the following areas:




The discussion paper is intended to stimulate conversation and ideas informed by expertise and evidence. A set of guiding questions has been included against each subject area. While the department encourages feedback on the questions posed in this discussion paper, you are also welcome to provide other feedback – particularly if it is informed by your own experience as a SEE program provider, teacher, employment services provider, other stakeholder or student.

In addition to this discussion paper, other consultation activities will be held, beginning in December 2021. For information on these sessions, please see the [www.dese.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment](http://www.dese.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment) page.

This discussion paper does not include future arrangements for the SEE program in remote and very remote regions of Australia. A discussion paper seeking feedback on proposed changes to the delivery of the SEE program in remote and very remote regions will be released in early 2022.

## Chapter 2- Job seeker access and engagement

The Government is considering ways to improve job seeker access to and engagement in the SEE program. Of the one million job seekers on the employment services caseload, approximately 16 per cent (159,000) self-identify with English language needs and/or have completed less than year 10 schooling, an



indication that these job seekers may need LLND training to gain a job or as a pathway to further training<sup>2</sup>. At the end of September, there were approximately 9,900 clients undertaking training in the SEE program. The 2021-22 Budget saw significant changes to the SEE program to improve job seeker access and engagement, and the SEE program is seeking feedback from stakeholders on how it can augment these changes to support more job seekers accessing, and then continuing to participate in, the program.

## New Employment Services Model (NESM)

In addition, the Australian Government is undertaking the largest reform to employment services since 1998. The New Employment Services Model (NESM) will commence in July 2022.

The new model will deliver a simple, efficient, trusted and connected service that delivers the best outcome for job seekers and employers.

The NESM will impact the ways in which job seekers access the SEE program. Job seekers will receive personalised service options to assist them to find a job via the digital platform, or through tailored servicing by Enhanced Services Providers for those job seekers who need more intensive assistance.

The model will introduce a more flexible approach to job seeker activation, which encourages personal responsibility to develop skills and take advantage of job opportunities. Under this new model, job seekers assessed as more 'job-ready' will be able to self-manage their activity participation on a new digital platform.

It is anticipated the introduction of NESM will improve referral pathways to the SEE program, by allowing some job seekers to self-refer into SEE, if they identify LLND skills needs. This change may open up a role for SEE providers in assisting job seekers who directly refer themselves to the SEE program to get the training they need. This will help to address some current provider concerns about the strong reliance on referring agencies to refer eligible participants to the program.

In conjunction with the NESM, the department has also commenced a project to replace the current SEE program IT system, SEE Online, and is exploring the option to integrate administration of the SEE program into the Employment Services System (ESS) from the commencement of the new contract on 1 July 2023.

## Addressing barriers to entry and retention

The department is seeking opportunities for changes to the SEE program that support more job seekers to access and continue in the program.


A range of factors impact on the likelihood of job seekers with foundation skills needs seeking, or agreeing to, referral to an LLND program, and then remaining engaged with the program.

Past poor experiences with formal education settings or with foundation skills development, social embarrassment or stigma associated with low foundation skills, low self-confidence, and assumptions

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<sup>2</sup> This information is sourced from employment caseload data- *jobactive*, ParentsNext and Transition to Work, as at 17 October 2021.





about the program learning setting and outcomes, can be strong barriers to initial engagement and successful ongoing participation.

There are also other factors, affecting a range of job seekers, that may prevent a job seeker accessing and staying in the SEE program including homelessness, and poor physical or mental health.

Prior to acceptance in the SEE program the SEE provider and the referring agency assess a job seeker's suitability for training, including their capacity to benefit from the program. They must assure themselves that:

- upon completion of training, a job seeker would be more ready to progress to further training or employment
- there are no barriers which could inhibit the job seeker's capacity to measurably improve their LLND skills, and
- the job seeker can demonstrate that they have the intention and capacity to meet attendance requirements.

Despite this assessment process, program data shows 19 per cent of job seekers leave the SEE program within the first 50 hours<sup>3</sup> of training, and the SEE program is interested in exploring ways to reduce the number of clients who exit the program early.

**Submission response questions:**

1. What changes could be made to the SEE program to help job seekers understand its benefits and increase their willingness to participate in the program?
2. What additional support could be provided to job seekers with barriers to participation to help them enter and stay in the SEE program?

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<sup>3</sup> SEE Program Database - Data Period: July 2017 - July 2021



## Chapter 3- Training delivery

The SEE program is well placed to provide job seekers greater access to foundation skills training, and to deliver high quality and relevant training so they can take advantage of future education and employment opportunities.

Critical to its success is the type of training delivered, and how it is delivered. The primary purpose of the SEE program is to deliver LLND training to clients who have demonstrated need in one or more core skills, as described by the [Australian Core Skills Framework](#) (ACSF). This training is provided through accredited courses with clients' progress measured and reported against the ACSF.

Clients who are referred to the SEE program often have very low LLN proficiency. From July 2017 to July 2021, 97 per cent of clients who commenced training in the SEE program had at least one indicator at ACSF level 1 or below, with 60 per cent of clients commencing with ACSF level 1 or below for all indicators<sup>4</sup>. ACSF level 3 is regarded as a minimum LLN level for individuals to successfully meet the demands of everyday life and work tasks in the emerging knowledge-based economy<sup>5</sup>.

Program data identifies the following distinct demographic and location characteristics of learners in the SEE program. They are<sup>6</sup>:

- Youth – aged 15-24 (13%)
- Mature age – aged 45 and above (52%)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (7%)
- Culturally and linguistically diverse community (75%)
- Female (65%)
- Metropolitan (67%)
- Regional (29%)
- Remote (3%)
- Distance (1%)

As clients come from diverse backgrounds, it is essential that the needs of both English-speaking clients, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are provided for by the SEE program.

To meet the diverse needs of clients in the SEE program, providers deliver a wide range of accredited courses and qualifications to both develop clients' LLND proficiency and their broader employability skills. Providers must deliver this training with an intensive, structured, and explicit teaching approach to address client LLND needs, and ensure that it is culturally and needs appropriate.

### Flexible training


The SEE program allows providers flexibility to determine the appropriate qualifications and courses for their cohorts. Qualifications are designed for specific purposes and a single course or qualification cannot

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<sup>4</sup> SEE Program Database - Data Period: July 2017 - July 2021

<sup>5</sup> Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results, Australia, 2006 - Australian Bureau of Statistics (p.5)

<sup>6</sup> SEE Program Database - Data Period: July 2017 - July 2021



support the diverse needs of all cohorts in the SEE program. For example, the Foundation Skills Training Package (FSK) is used successfully to support contextualised delivery of VET Training Package learning outcomes that are primarily focused on work-oriented programs or employment skills. However, FSK may not be suitable as a standalone product for clients who have high LLND needs, or for CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohorts. These cohorts have substantial and individualised learning needs, which may not be addressed by the packaging rules and competencies of the training package or accredited course being delivered. As such, they require training that is tailored to support their specific needs.

Non-accredited training, offered in the form of a limited “pre-training” pathway and underpinned by the ACSF might offer another avenue for providers to better support the diverse needs of clients in the SEE program. This type of pathway can help clients to become accustomed to a formal education setting and to understand their own needs as learners. This added flexibility may provide further support to SEE providers to improve access and engagement in the program.

**Submission response questions:**

3. Should the SEE program include the limited use of non-accredited training to support the engagement of job seekers? If so, what criteria could be used, including to provide quality assurance?

## **LLND embedded vocational training**


In the 2021-2022 Budget, the Government announced a greater focus on the delivery of VET occupationally focused courses, with embedded LLND delivery, to meet the training and employment goals of SEE clients. It is important to note that this type of delivery is suitable to clients with higher ACSF levels, and who want to focus on developing occupationally focused skills that are obtained through VET mainstream delivery.

Embedding LLND delivery in VET occupationally focused courses can be achieved through shared teaching between VET and LLND teachers, or with LLND teachers providing specialist support. Providers may also choose to revise mainstream course material for SEE delivery or deliver units from foundation courses that focus on LLND skills prior to, or concurrently with, a VET mainstream delivery.

Providers proposing to offer vocational qualifications using the SEE program need to be able to demonstrate how they are addressing a client’s LLND needs according to the client’s training profile as described at the pre-training assessment.

**Submission response questions:**

4. What are some of the challenges that arise when LLND delivery is embedded in vocational training?
5. What additional support is needed to deliver LLND embedded in vocational training to job seekers?

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6. Should the SEE program prescribe LLND specific courses for clients with low levels of LLND? What prescriptions should be required?

## Modes of delivery

The SEE program contracts two types of training providers: general and distance learning.

A future SEE program model is likely to continue face-to-face training as its primary model. However, providers may be required or enabled to provide a range of flexible options to support the needs of clients, for example through COVID-19 lockdowns, short term caring responsibilities or other personal circumstances.

Currently, general SEE service providers must deliver face-to-face training, but they may combine this with offsite training to provide 'mixed mode' delivery. Mixed mode delivery is normally capped at 50 per cent of a SEE client's weekly training load. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this delivery can be greater than 50 per cent through the submission of a Remote Delivery Plan.

Distance learning is included as a separate delivery model in the current contract to reflect the specialised infrastructure required to support training delivery. Distance learning is normally available for students unable to attend general training due to their remote location or personal circumstances. The department currently engages one provider, nationally, to deliver distance learning.

The pandemic has also seen a substantial increase in online learning by adults. Of necessity, training that was originally planned for the classroom has been and continues to be delivered online. This has given rise to innovation and opportunities but has also revealed the difficulty of delivering traditional learning online, particularly to learners with low levels of English language and literacy and low digital literacy. The challenges and limitations include the need for adequate digital skills, for computer equipment and internet connections for participants to undertake training online, and the challenge presented to teachers delivering to cohorts accustomed to face-to-face instruction in a classroom setting.


The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increased take-up of mixed mode and offsite training by the majority of SEE providers. Program data shows that pre-pandemic, 16 per cent of SEE clients accessed mixed mode learning compared to 68 per cent during COVID-19<sup>7</sup>. The department is considering options for incorporating distance learning provision in the next contract to give providers more flexibility to deliver training that meets client needs.

### Submission response questions:

7. Should distance learning continue in its current form or should all providers be given the opportunity to deliver distance learning? If so, how can this be managed to ensure face to face delivery is the primary delivery mode?
8. What else should the department consider to ensure client needs are the driver of delivery modes offered by the SEE program?

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<sup>7</sup> SEE Program Database- Comparison of clients assisted in 2018 vs 2020

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9. What else should the department consider to ensure distance learning meets the needs of clients who require this mode of delivery?

## Innovative projects

As part of the 2021-22 Budget the Government introduced ongoing project funding of up to \$1 million per year to support SEE providers to trial innovative training delivery to better engage and retain learners. Projects are focusing on trialling different models of contextualised delivery and ways to more successfully engage job seekers to remain in the program. These projects provide an opportunity to develop creative solutions to support industries with skills shortages and to assist clients who can be challenging to engage. Training resources or tools developed by SEE providers under innovative project funding will be made publicly available.

### Submission response questions:

10. What future opportunities are there for using project-based funding to improve participation and engagement in the SEE program?

## Appropriately qualified and skilled workforce


Foundation skills training assists some of the most vulnerable groups in the community and effective delivery requires teachers who possess a range of specialist skills. The SEE program is committed to delivering high quality LLND focused training to its clients and recognises that skilled and experienced teachers and assessors are critical to the success of the program. The SEE program is considering the need to increase the minimum level of qualification across the program for teachers and assessors.

Australian RTOs must comply with conditions and standards to maintain their registration. As part of the conditions of registration RTOs must have appropriately qualified teaching staff to deliver courses on their scope of registration.

In addition to these requirements the SEE program, which delivers specialised LLND focused training, requires teachers to support the substantial individualised learning needs of clients. The SEE program also requires a client's LLND core skills to be assessed against the ACSF prior to commencing training and then at regular 200-hour intervals. These assessments, and the training required to develop a client's core skills as they progress through the program, require appropriately qualified and experienced teachers. In addition, an increase in the frequency of mixed mode and remote training, due to impacts of COVID-19, also require specialist skill sets and delivery methodology.

Given the high-level needs of the clients referred to the SEE program, and the additional reporting requirements against the ACSF, the SEE program considers service delivery is best supported by teachers and assessors who have specialist LLND teacher qualifications.

The department notes that the Education Industry Reference Committee (IRC) has proposed a holistic review of the TAE Training Package, including the TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Cert IV TAE), to ensure it aligns with the current skills needs of the VET sector. The IRC considers that TAE units of competency do not deliver the variety or depth of skills and knowledge that are relevant in a



modern VET teaching, training and assessment environment, and specifically that the Cert IV TAE packaging rules do not provide adequate flexibility for learners pursuing VET teaching, training and assessment roles in the labour market.<sup>8</sup>

**Submission response questions:**

11. Does the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (or equivalent) appropriately equip teachers to deliver “best practice” training to SEE clients? If yes, why? If not, why not?
12. Should the SEE program mandate minimum qualifications for teachers to better support the clients? If yes, what should they be? If not, why not?
13. Noting that the SEE program does not directly employ teachers, how else can the SEE program provide reasonable support for teachers?

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<sup>8</sup> [Education – TAE – PwC’s Skills for Australia](#) – case for change



## Chapter 4- Payment model

The department is reviewing the SEE program's payment model. The current SEE funding model is based on tendered prices paid to the provider for:

- a Pre-Training Assessment (PTA) fee for each job seeker
- an incomplete PTA fee, 25 per cent of a PTA fee, where the job seeker fails to attend, or the provider is unable to complete the PTA
- a fee for each hour of tuition the job seeker receives, based on actual attendance

From September 2021 the SEE program commenced funding the delivery of innovative projects. Payments for these projects are based on milestones and achievements against outcomes identified in the project applications.

The current funding model, adopted in 2013, is an input-based payment model. The model provides a regular flow of payments to SEE providers and focuses on attendance as the primary driver for payment. Prior to 2013 the SEE program payment model was based on the achievement of milestones with providers being paid block payments for training delivered in 200-hour blocks. There were four milestone payments made at set intervals within a block of training, based on an hourly rate of payment.

The department adopted the current payment model following stakeholder feedback which suggested that an hourly payment model would better support participation and engagement in the SEE program for all cohorts. Training tailored to client needs is an important element of the SEE program's delivery model with 70% of job seekers undertaking the SEE program on a part time basis over an average of eight months in the program<sup>9</sup>.


The department will consider the work done by the National Skills Commission (NSC) and its development of a national pricing framework and efficient prices for VET qualifications (NSC).

The NSC has been tasked by the Government to develop national efficient prices for VET courses. Currently, VET prices, subsidies and fees vary considerably around Australia, with different amounts being paid for the same course. A more nationally consistent approach to pricing provides the opportunity for simpler, more transparent VET pricing arrangements that balance consistency with local needs.

The NSC launched the first ever national cost study of RTOs in late 2020. The NSC is working with the Government and all states and territories to develop efficient prices for all VET qualifications using the results of this cost study. The efficient price for a given qualification is not the lowest possible price but the price that delivers training while meeting (or exceeding) a defined quality threshold. The prices and supporting methodology are expected to be finalised by the end of 2021. Learners who identify as at risk of educational disadvantage may require additional support and the costs of this may exceed the price providers receive. As part of the development of the national pricing framework, the NSC is undertaking research and analysis to identify learner cohorts with educational disadvantage and propose appropriate loadings.

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<sup>9</sup> SEE Program Database - Data Period: July 2017 - July 2021



Several student cohorts, listed below, are identified as disadvantaged groups that may be eligible for loadings. The student identified cohorts are diverse and students from one cohort may appear in others, and may include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners
- learners with a disability
- migrant and CALD learners
- long-term unemployed learners
- learners in remote locations
- learners in regional locations
- learners with high LLND needs.

Loadings may be additive, with some learners eligible to receive multiple loadings depending on their level of disadvantage.

The department acknowledges that SEE providers may have additional cost drivers associated with the full delivery of SEE program services, for example:

- additional IT and administration support costs such as program reporting requirements, including the submission of program annual reports and business plans
- engagement with employment service providers for referrals and ongoing client management
- initial and progressive assessments against the ACSF.

These additional requirements of delivering the SEE program are key components to meeting job seeker demand, delivering quality training, and ultimately achieving program outcomes.

**Submission response questions:**

14. What should the department consider in reviewing the SEE payment model?
15. What costs are faced by SEE providers which need to be accounted for in the payment model?
16. If the department were to adopt a model based on payments on achievement of milestones would this impact the business of delivering SEE? If yes, how? If no, why not?
17. How do you think the application of loadings could support better engagement of disadvantaged cohorts?



## Chapter 5- Performance

### Provider performance framework

The department must ensure that SEE providers perform their obligations under the contract. The department is seeking to introduce a new performance and compliance framework for the next contract. This will assist the department to ensure high quality service delivery and will determine contract renewals during the life of the Deed of Standing Offer. The provider performance framework will include:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- contract compliance monitoring, including through site visits
- feedback from stakeholders, contract managers and SEE clients
- targeted risk assessments.

### Key Performance Indicators

The introduction of a performance framework provides the department with an opportunity to review the current KPI structure to ensure it continues to support the objectives of the SEE program.

The current KPIs included in the SEE program contract are outlined in the table below.

Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Minimum performance standard
Participation	Number of clients recommended for training who commence in the program	90 per cent of clients recommended for training commence training
Attainment	Measures LLN improvements against the ACSF as a result of training	80 per cent of all clients achieve a minimum of 1 ACSF indicator increase per 100 (Initial Stream) or 200 hours of training (Basic or Advanced stream)
Accurate Assessment	Client assessment is accurate in accordance with ACSF	80 per cent of client portfolios contain assessments outcomes that are appropriate and accurate against the ACSF based on PTAs and client Progress Assessment verification results
Data Timeliness	Data is entered into the system within the required timeframes	95 per cent of data is entered into the system within the required timeframes

With the uncapping of training hours, the SEE program is moving towards a dual outcomes focus. While LLND remains the primary focus of the SEE program there is an increased focus on achieving outcomes through the completion of units of competencies or qualifications (whether LLND or VET occupationally focused qualifications). To underpin this, new provider KPIs are under consideration. These are outlined in the table below.

**Table 2: Proposed 2023 SEE Key Performance Indicators**

Provider KPIs	Measurement
KPI 1- Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- client progression against the ACSF</li><li>- accuracy of assessments against the ACSF</li></ul>
KPI 2- Quality Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- appropriateness of curriculum delivered to clients</li><li>- appropriateness of training material and educational resources</li></ul>
KPI 3- Engagement and Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- client completion of Units of Competency (UoC)</li></ul>
KPI 4- Service Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- client satisfaction surveys</li></ul>

**Submission response questions:**

18. Are the proposed KPIs outlined in the table above appropriate? If yes, why? If no, why not?

## Program outcomes

The SEE program has two main objectives, to:


- increase the LLND skills of job seekers that undertaken training
- assist job seekers to gain a job or enter into further training following an improvement to their LLND skills.

Currently, SEE providers are required to assess a client’s LLN skills at a PTA, and then at set intervals during their training (every 200 hours), to demonstrate the client is making progress. The SEE program uses the ACSF to assess a client’s proficiency and development of six core skills – Learning, Reading, Writing, Oral Communication, Numeracy and Digital Literacy. The department expects clients will progress against the ACSF as they gain or improve their LLND skills.

The ASCF enables a consistent, valid, and standardised measurement of student performance features, and is used by the SEE program to:

- document an individual’s competencies in LLN at the start of training
- assist in determining the stream of training appropriate to the client’s needs
- measure increases in LLN competencies.

The [Digital Literacy Skills Framework](#) (DLSF) sits alongside the ACSF and was added as the sixth core skill to this framework to reinforce the concept that digital literacy is part of an integral suite of core skills that are fundamental for individuals to be able to participate in society and work. The ACSF, including the DLSF, facilitates a consistent national approach to the identification and development of the core skills in diverse personal, community, work and education and training contexts. From early 2022 digital literacy, supported by the DLSF, will be included as an option for SEE providers in their service delivery offering.



SEE providers often undertake two forms of assessment – assessment against the qualification being delivered and additional assessment to measure a client’s progress against the ACSF. SEE providers often have to conduct multiple assessments to meet these requirements, and this can give rise to concerns around assessment fatigue for participants and more administration for teachers.

The SEE program will retain assessments against the ACSF to measure a client’s initial LLND skills, and then measure and report progress of LLND skill levels during delivery. To reduce administrative burden and assessment fatigue, the department is seeking options to streamline the assessment process. For example, this may include:

- using alternative methods of when/how to measure improvement (i.e. is every 200 hours appropriate), and
- reviewing the quality assurance process around the accuracy of these assessments.

**Submission response question:**

19. How often should a client’s LLND progress in the SEE program be assessed?
20. What other assessment strategies could reduce over-assessment while still meeting regulatory and program requirements?
21. What other factors should be considered to measure service delivery effectiveness to achieve the SEE program’s outcomes?



## Chapter 6- Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance (QA) forms part of the department's performance and program management process. The department procures independent QA expertise at the same time as it procures providers to deliver the program.

QA in the SEE program involves the monitoring of a provider's assessment and delivery practices, and the provision of feedback to the provider, to allow for continuous improvement.

The SEE program currently has one QA provider, which performs the following three roles:

- ensuring quality delivery of the ACSF and LLN focused training
- professional development - ACSF workshops and resource development for SEE providers and their LLN workforce
- resource development.

The department is considering the ongoing role of the QA provider, including relative focus between roles.

It is not intended that the QA provider duplicate the role of the Australian Skills Quality Authority but that the QA provider examines areas that are specific to the SEE program.

Each of the roles of the QA provider are explained below.


### Ensuring quality LLND delivery

A client's progress against the ACSF is a key measure of a SEE program provider's performance. As part of the department's compliance process the QA provider reviews client files to verify that the assessment results reported against the ACSF are recorded by the SEE provider accurately. The QA provider also reviews a sample of client task files to assess the appropriateness of the curriculum delivered, and the resources used, in the delivery of training. The intent behind this monitoring is to support and encourage quality training. Importantly, this function is designed to ensure the accuracy and validity of assessments, and that clients receive appropriate and high-quality training, providing a level of assurance to Government that the SEE program delivers high-quality service.

The department considers the review of client files an important mechanism to provide program assurance but remains open to exploring ways to reduce the administrative burden on providers while providing strong assurance to support effective SEE program delivery.

### Professional Development

Professional development (PD) workshops are offered to all SEE providers to assist with building their capacity to deliver quality training. The workshops are used to give feedback to SEE providers on task assessments, creating a collaborative opportunity for providers to share best practice delivery methods. Workshops include regular PD workshops on ACSF task design and assessment, as well as workshops to support remote or online delivery and 'best practice' in the SEE program.



These workshops, which are well regarded by SEE providers, are usually delivered face to face nationally to allow for the workshops to be tailored to suit development needs of SEE providers within each location. During COVID-19 these workshops have continued to be delivered virtually.

## Resource development

The QA provider also plays an important role in supporting the department and the SEE program's providers by developing common resources and guides which clarify program policy requirements. Examples include developing:

- pre training ACSF assessment kits
- the *Guidelines for best practice design and delivery in the SEE program*
- streamlining administrative processes such as through mapping qualifications to the ACSF.

The department is considering the ongoing role of the QA provider, including relative focus between roles.

### Submission response questions:

22. What do you think could be improved or prioritised within the current quality assurance provider role?
23. How can the quality assurance process be streamlined for SEE providers while providing similar or better levels of assurance?
24. How should the quality of training be evaluated / measured?



## Chapter 7- Procurement

### Request for Tender

The department intends to approach the market for the next SEE program contract in 2022 through an open tender.

### Contracting arrangements

In line with the current procurement arrangements the department proposes to establish a new panel arrangement for service delivery from 30 June 2023.

A national panel of organisations will be established following a Request for Tender (RFT). Panel members will receive a Deed of Standing Offer and Work Orders (which form the contract) for specified contract regions for delivery. The department is considering an extended Deed of Standing Offer for longer than the current 6 years. The department would review Work Orders every three years to assess provider performance against the performance framework and determine value for money before offering a contract extension. A panel arrangement allows the department flexibility to increase service delivery quickly when demand is identified. It also allows for continued service delivery in areas where a provider is unable to continue delivering training.

Longer contracts may improve stability in the market with the aim of improving SEE program outcomes. Longer contracts may encourage organisations to invest in infrastructure and the professional development of staff, which further promotes quality training.

### Contract Regions


Currently SEE providers are contracted to deliver services at a contract region (CR) level. The contract region aligns with Employment Regions in metropolitan and regional areas. A map of the contract regions and service providers for SEE can be found at [www.dese.gov.au/resources/skills-education-and-employment](http://www.dese.gov.au/resources/skills-education-and-employment).

The department proposes to continue to align the contracting of services with a CR in metropolitan and regional areas. The alignment with employment regions streamlines the referral process to the SEE program.

### Multi-provider model

With the uncapping of the SEE program and expansion to the job seeker eligibility criteria the department is looking at ways to expand access and support for job seekers.

There are currently two providers per contract region in most metropolitan CRs and in some regional CRs (a multi-provider model) and one provider per region in most outer regional CRs. The department is considering expanding the multi provider model to both ensure sufficient coverage across a CR and to allow more scope for providers to focus support on specific cohorts or differential training as part of their response. This would mean that in a CR more than one or two providers could be issued with a Work Order to deliver services.



A multi provider service delivery model in metropolitan and regional areas will provide increased opportunities for participants to access the program across the whole contract region, ensuring better service coverage. This model would also allow for greater client choice in training courses offered.

Expanding the number of providers delivering the SEE program could also allow specialised SEE providers to deliver training to identified cohorts, recognising some organisations have extensive experience delivering training to specific cohorts with improved outcomes. For example, an organisation could tender to deliver general SEE program services to eligible young job seekers. This would also allow greater opportunities for smaller RTOs to deliver training, particularly in regional CRs.

**Submission response questions:**

25. Do you think a longer contract duration will provide more value to clients and government from the SEE program? If so, why? If not, why?
26. Do you think a multi-provider model will support increased access to training in the SEE program? Why?
27. Do you think specialist service delivery to groups of learners with certain characteristics/needs will improve engagement and attainment in the SEE program?

## Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Name</b>
ACSF	<b>Australian Core Skills Framework</b>
AMEP	<b>Adult Migrant English Program</b>
AQF	<b>Australian Quality Framework</b>
CALD	<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</b>
Department	<b>Department of Education, Skills and Employment</b>
DESE	<b>Department of Education, Skills and Employment</b>
DES	<b>Disability Employment Service</b>
CR	<b>Contract Region</b>
EAL	<b>English as an Additional Language</b>
ITP	<b>Individual Training Plan</b>
JA	<b>jobactive</b>
LLN	<b>language, literacy, and numeracy</b>
LLND	<b>language, literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy</b>
ESP	<b>Employment Services Provider</b>
AASN	<b>Australian Apprenticeship Support Network</b>
PTA	<b>Pre-Training Assessment</b>
RFT	<b>Request for Tender</b>
RTO	<b>registered training organisation</b>
SEE	<b>Skills for Education and Employment</b>
SGT	<b>Small Group Training</b>
TESOL	<b>Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages</b>
VET	<b>vocational education and training</b>
QA	<b>Quality Assurance</b>
QAA	<b>Quality Assurance Assessment</b>
NESM	<b>New Employment Service Model</b>
ESS	<b>Employment Services System</b>
PA	<b>Progressive Assessment</b>
TTW	<b>Transition to Work</b>
PN	<b>ParentsNext</b>
CDP	<b>Community Development Program</b>