



# Terms of Reference

## Preschool Outcomes Measure Ministerial Expert Advisory Group

### Context

The 2021-22 Budget included \$2 billion over four years for a new Preschool Reform Agreement from 2022-2025, to be negotiated with States and Territories.

The agreement will continue to support universal access to at least 15 hours of preschool each week (600 hours per year) for children in the year before they start school, with a new focus on improving preschool attendance and measuring preschool outcomes.

The announcement included a commitment to ongoing funding, which is subject to the success of reforms undertaken during the course of the agreement. The reform agenda will focus on:

- Ensuring that each child benefits from the per child amount provided by the Commonwealth, regardless of the preschool setting they attend.
- Improving participation, with a focus on attendance rather than just enrolment.
- Measuring preschool outcomes.
- Improving preschool data.

### Role of the Preschool Outcomes Measure Expert Advisory Group

The Preschool Outcomes Measure Expert Advisory Group (the Group) will provide ongoing consultation and provide advice and support to the Minister, through the Department of Education. This may, where directed, extend to providing advice to the Preschool Reform Agreement Implementation Committee (PRAIC) and the working groups of the PRAIC.

Deliverables will include:

- Participation in regular meetings with departmental staff on the progress of the preschool outcomes measure.
- Provision of verbal and written advice on the preschool outcomes measure.
- Participation in PRAIC and policy working groups upon request of the department.
- Provision of advice on documents prepared to support the development of the preschool outcomes measure.

The Group will be available to provide further expert advice on the development and implementation of outcome measures up until the end of the appointment period.

Members will primarily contribute expertise through facilitated collaborative meetings and workshops conducted online. They may be asked to provide written input and comment on draft documentation.

Members of the Group will provide individual advice independent of any body they may be employed by, contractually connected with, or usually represent. They will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and declare any potential conflicts of interest, either perceived or actual.

### Scope

The Group will consider and provide evidence-based advice on:

- the elements or factors in preschool participation that improve or impact transition to school (noting preparation for school is not limited to numeracy and literacy skills),
- the feasibility of measuring these elements to formulate an overall measure of school readiness,
- existing measurement tools used in Australia,
- the international experience, including existing measurement tools,
- potential new outcome measures, or adaptation of existing measures, that could be trialled in 2023 with a view to measuring outcomes from 2025,
- design of validation studies and trials, and
- implementation considerations including stakeholder engagement.

### Period of appointment

The Group will be appointed from the date the member accepts the appointment until 31 December 2023.