Australian Government

Department of Education

Corporate Plan
2025–26

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Contents

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to their Elders past and present.

1

Introduction

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This plan sets out the significant agenda we are delivering on behalf of the Australian Government, to support Australians to achieve their potential through education.
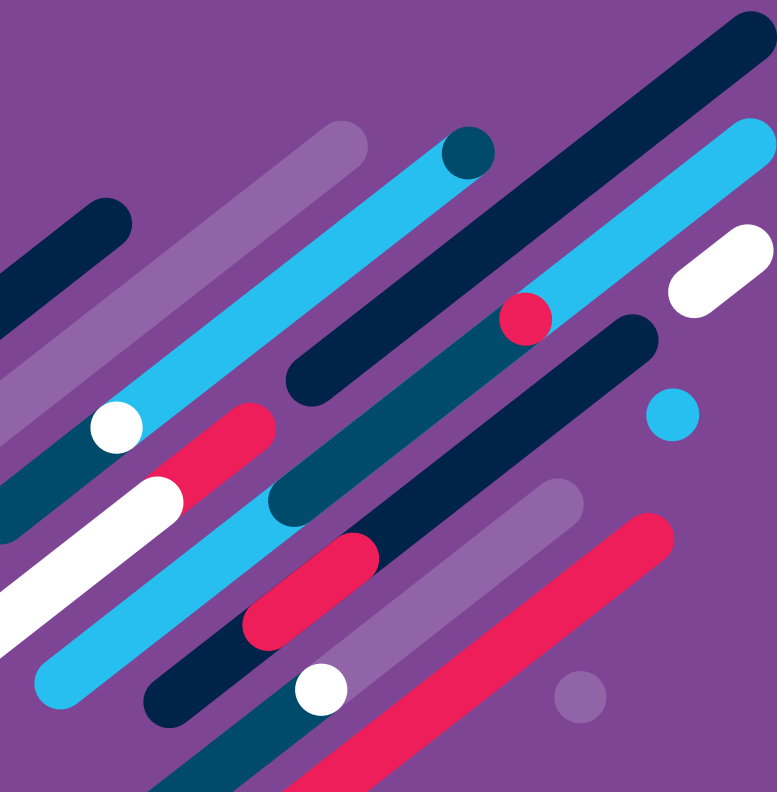
Secretary's introduction

The department's Corporate Plan 2025–26 outlines our purpose and strategic goals to guide us as effective, forward-thinking and innovative stewards of Australia's education system.

Education is fundamental to all Australians being able to reach their potential and ambitions for their future. Early childhood education and care, quality schooling and accessible higher education have positive impacts throughout a person's life – for individuals, their families, our communities and the economy.

This is an important planning framework to guide us in creating opportunities for Australians of all ages through better access to quality education. It prioritises equity and opportunity, stewardship, integrity and professionalism.

This plan is aspirational and practical. It outlines our priorities, operating context, actions and measurements, our commitment to supporting and developing our people, and our all-important governance frameworks.

We will continue to work closely with a wide range of participants in the Australian education and research sectors' peak and representative bodies. Respectful relationships encourage shared ideas, knowledge, experiences, collaboration and partnership approaches that effect positive change in all sectors.

Collaboration and partnerships are fundamental to how we deliver on government initiatives. Integral to our role is building on our strong links with essential partners to meet our policy, program and regulatory responsibilities; this includes building genuine, productive and trusted partnerships with First Nations people and organisations, ensuring we listen, learn and incorporate this into our work.

A primary role of the department is supporting our ministers to deliver government reforms to build a better and fairer education system. This year, we will focus on improving early childhood education and care, supporting the people who work in this sector, and building more centres through the Building Early Education Fund. We will also manage changes to the Child Care Subsidy and continue work on school reforms under the Better and Fairer Schools agreements. In higher education, we will set up the Australian Tertiary Education Commission, and develop a new funding system to better support students from under-represented backgrounds. We will also work to strengthen international education and make it more sustainable, and help bring higher education and vocational training closer together.

The government has indicated that addressing productivity will be its focus for the next 3 years. The department will support the government's ongoing productivity agenda by assisting in building a skilled and adaptable workforce.

There will also be a new framework to improve the quality and integrity of international education, and continued initiatives to support research that drives innovation, growth and a Future Made in Australia.

The department has made significant progress towards embedding the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms in relation to our people and our business, and will look at embedding these into the very fabric of our organisational culture. This includes transforming how staff think, work, and engage with each other, stakeholders, and the community. This commitment aims to accelerate change and significantly enhance the education outcomes of First Nations peoples.

The wellbeing of our people is central to our capability and culture. We continue to embed Australian Public Service reforms, particularly by responding to the department's Capability Review conducted in 2025. The Capability Review highlights opportunities and challenges for the department over the next 4 years. We are committed to building our capability to capitalise on opportunities and meet our challenges, in line with the findings.

I look forward to working together with our partners and stakeholders to deliver significant changes and improvements to education in Australia.

Statement of preparation

As the accountable authority of the Department of Education, I present the Department of Education Corporate Plan for the reporting period 2025–26, which covers the period 2025–26 to 2028–29, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Tony Cook PSM
Secretary, Australian Government Department of Education

1 July 2025
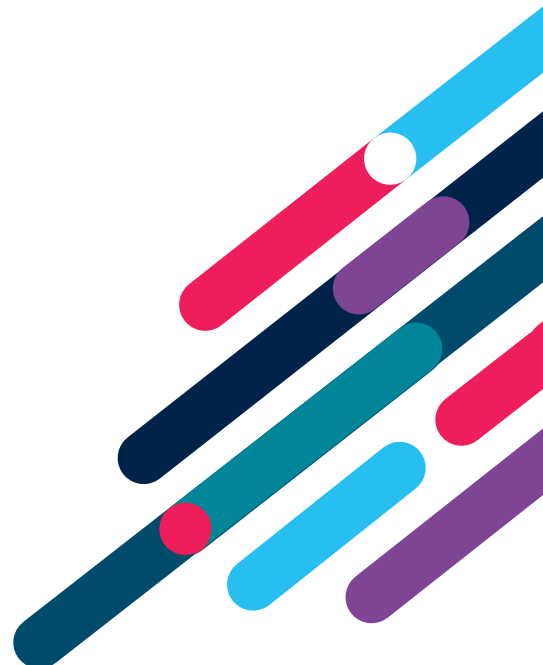
Our purpose

OUR PURPOSE – why we are here

We create a better future for all Australians through education.

OUR ROLE – what we do

◗ We provide strategic direction and national leadership of Australia's education system – through early years, school, youth, higher education, international and research.

◗ We advise the Australian Government on education.

◗ We steward the Australian Government's vision for reforming Australia's education system.

OUR IMPACT – who benefits

We support Australians to access education and realise the benefits of lifelong learning through national policies and programs that:

◗ lift education outcomes for learners from all locations and backgrounds so they can achieve their ambitions and aspirations

◗ prepare children for school and help families, particularly women, to re-engage in work or learning during the early years

◗ support children's learning through a positive school experience with equity and wellbeing outcomes for all students

◗ provide skilled and adaptable workers with higher education qualifications and opportunities for lifelong learning that boost workforce productivity, sovereign capability and innovation

◗ give young people a say on the issues, policies and programs that impact them

◗ empower First Nations peoples to be involved in decisions about their education and the education system

◗ give international students an opportunity to gain a world-class education

◗ support university researchers to undertake training and deliver cutting-edge research that drives innovation and economic growth.

OUR APPROACH – how we deliver

◗ Our work is wide ranging and underpinned by research, evidence and data.

◗ We provide expert advice to government, develop policy, deliver programs and administer legislation. Our detailed functions are outlined in the Administrative Arrangements Order.

◗ We work closely and in partnership with our stakeholders – ensuring our interactions are inclusive and underpinned by trust, transparency and integrity.

2

Operating context

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We will continue to monitor our operating environment and respond to the opportunities and challenges presented – enhancing our ability to achieve our purpose.

Our environment

Our operating environment determines how we deliver on our purpose. Factors that affect our operating environment include government decisions and the external social and economic landscape. Our success is dependent on our ability to assess, adapt to and respond to these factors.

The following key factors continue to impact our operating environment:

- The **changing nature of work and education** and the **increasing need for skilled workers** to drive productivity and **address workforce shortages**, particularly with the rapid evolution of technology and artificial intelligence (AI)
- **Changing geopolitical environments** requiring greater focus on skills and innovation that underpin our economic activity and sovereign capability
- The **Australian Public Service (APS) reform agenda**, which is improving capability, including through the department's participation in the Capability Review Program, and creating a culture that values integrity and builds community trust.

Factors that affect our operating environment include government decisions and the external social and economic landscape. Our success is dependent on our ability to assess, adapt to and respond to these factors.

In 2025–26, the department will:

- continue to support the **Australian Government's reform initiatives** across early childhood education and care, schools, and higher education to reshape the Australian education system and lift workforce participation through educational attainment

- support the **early childhood education and care system** through the Building Early Education Fund, the Three Day Guarantee and the Worker Retention Payment

- collaborate with state and territory regulators and sector stakeholders to **strengthen quality and safety** of the early childhood education and care system

- focus on **improving student outcomes** for all students

- focus on **reducing difference in educational access and outcomes** across students, particularly students most at risk of falling behind and in need of more assistance

- continue to support all people in **rural, regional and remote Australia** so that they can access the education they need to reach their full potential

- reduce the barriers to education for **people with disability** in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

- advance our world-class education system through the goals set out in the **Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration**, encouraging and supporting every student to achieve their potential, no matter where they live or the learning challenges they face

- continue to work in **genuine partnership with First Nations people and organisations** like the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and SNAICC – National Voice for our Children (SNAICC) to ensure better outcomes for First Nations children and students

- support government agencies to work effectively with **young people** and empower them to engage on policies and programs that impact young people. This support will be delivered by the Office for Youth

- establish the **Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC)** as steward of the higher education sector in an interim capacity from 1 July 2025, and permanently (subject to the passage of legislation) from 1 January 2026

- **support students** by implementing government policy including the 20 per cent reduction of student loans, establish the Commonwealth Prac Payment to support eligible higher education and VET students while undertaking mandatory placements and expand access to tertiary education through growing the network of regional and suburban university study hubs

- ensure higher education providers are meeting best practice standards and requirements to effectively prevent and respond to **gender-based violence** to create safe learning and work environments through establishing a new standalone regulatory framework, subject to the passage of legislation

- uphold the integrity and sustainability of the **international education sector**

- continue to drive improvements in Australia's university **research system** by fostering innovation and an entrepreneurial culture that is critical to economic growth and productivity.

3

Partnerships and cooperation

We prioritise and value our relationships with our diverse range of stakeholders. Our cooperation with others ensures our policies and programs reflect evidence-based advice and meet the needs of our stakeholders and the Australian community.

How we engage

The department's collaborative culture supports our people to work together and build genuine partnerships with our stakeholders. We use contemporary ways of consulting and connecting with our stakeholders and the community, including the use of digital platforms to boost inclusion. Our meaningful and respectful relationships encourage shared ideas, knowledge and experiences. We tailor how we engage with our stakeholders, recognising their valuable contribution.

Collaboration is an important part of our role as a steward of the education system. Together, we provide strategic direction for and oversight of Australia's education system. We work with our stakeholders to develop informed and impactful advice, and effective policies and programs. These partnerships support us to achieve our purpose and are crucial to the delivery of outcomes in a shared policy environment.

Our portfolio entities

We work closely with others in the Education portfolio to support them in meeting their objectives, including with the:

- **Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority** on improving the learning of all young Australians through world-class curriculum, assessment and reporting
- **Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency** as the independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency for the higher education system
- **Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership** on a high-quality and nationally consistent approach to teaching and leadership in schools and education settings
- **Australian Research Council** on advising the government on research matters, funding the highest quality research, and assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research
- **Australian National University** to ensure it is meeting its governance and accountability obligations under the *Australian National University Act 1991* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

Collaboration is an important part of our role as a steward of the education system. Together, we provide strategic direction for and oversight of Australia's education system.

Statutory office holders operating within the Department of Education

The **Tuition Protection Service**[1] Director operates with support from the department. The Annual Report of the Tuition Protection Service Director can be found within the Department of Education Annual Report.

The **Australian Tertiary Education Commission** will commence in an interim capacity from 1 July 2025 and, subject to the passage of legislation, be fully operational by 1 January 2026. It will be led by 3 commissioners, who will be appointed as independent statutory office holders.

Figure 1. Our key stakeholders and partners
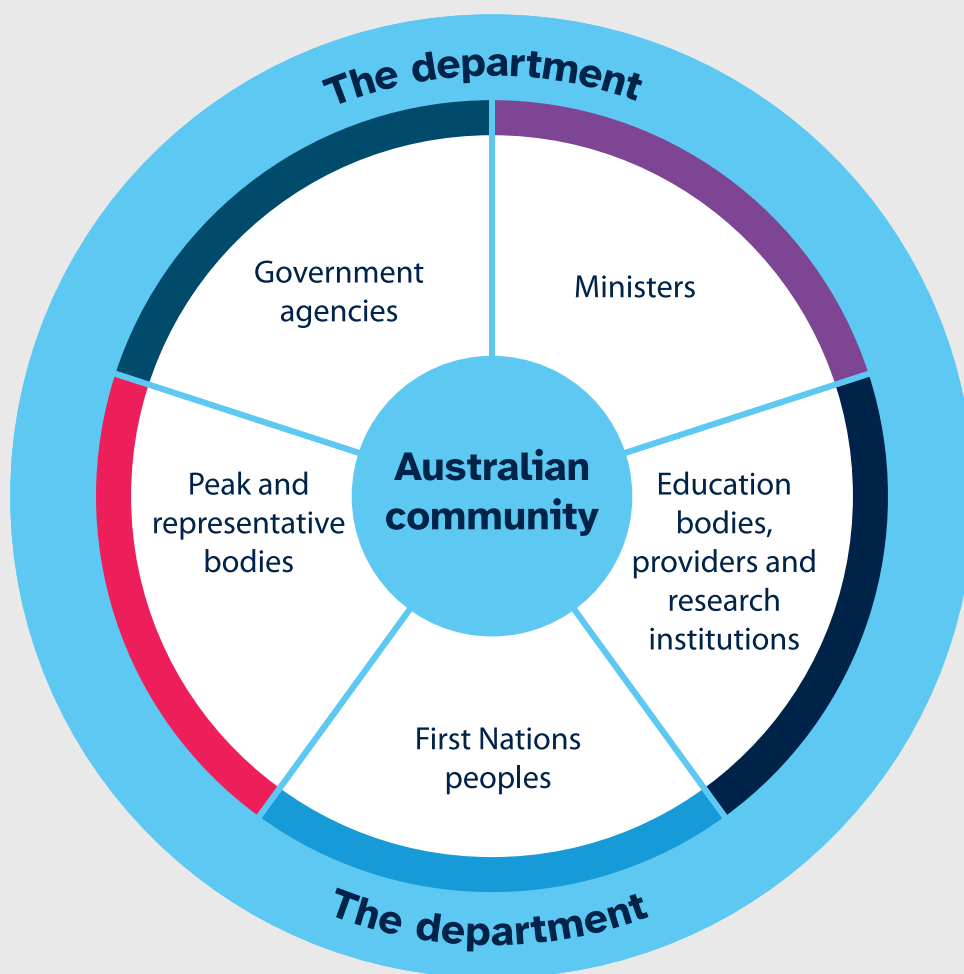
1 The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is preparing a Statement of Intent in response to a joint Ministerial Statement of Expectations. This statement will outline its regulatory role in safeguarding Australia's reputation as an education destination by supporting registered education and training providers to understand and meet their obligations to students, and supporting eligible students whose education provider closes. The regulatory functions of the TPS fall within the accountable authority of both the Department of Education and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR). In 2025–26, the Statement will be published on the department's website **www.education.gov.au/tps**.

Education bodies, providers and research institutions

Domestically, we work closely with education bodies, providers, research institutions and other organisations to improve Australia's education and research sectors. Our partnerships allow us to make informed recommendations to government and enhance Australia's position as a leader in education and research globally.

Internationally, our offshore network posted in Australian missions across key regions is critical to building positive government-to-government education relationships. The overseas network aims to advance Australia's strategic priorities, diversify our international student markets and identify opportunities for Australian education providers to grow their provision of transnational education.

For example, we work closely with:

- the Preschool Outcomes Measure Expert Advisory Group to provide advice to the Minister for Early Childhood Education, and to all governments via the Early Childhood Policy Group, on policy issues and deliverables for the development of the national Preschool Outcomes Measure

- research institutions to deliver national research infrastructure

- research forums through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which supports improvements in education and research policy domestically and globally

- Australia's education and research contributions to the G20, which strengthen key partnerships, influence the policy agenda, and increase market access opportunities for Australian education providers

- Australia's Regional Education Commissioner to provide all Australians with access to high-quality education, including those in regional, rural and remote areas.

We collaborate with many education bodies, such as:

- the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, an independent statutory body owned by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, to support the early childhood education and care sector to improve outcomes for children

- Education Services Australia, a ministerial not-for-profit company that works with all education systems and sectors to improve student outcomes, enhance teacher impact and strengthen school communities

- the Higher Education Standards Panel, which provides advice to the minister(s) responsible for delivering higher education and research in Australia

- the Australian Education Research Organisation, which provides Australia's independent education evidence to promote better educational outcomes for Australian children and young people

- the Council for International Education, which oversees Australia's role in international education and training.

Ministers

We support the Education Ministers Meetings, which are chaired by the Minister for Education and include the Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth, the Assistant Minister for International Education, and state and territory education ministers. Regular meetings enable ongoing national cooperation and consistency on strategic issues related particularly to early childhood education and care and school education.

Supporting the Education Ministers Meetings is the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee. This committee is chaired by the Secretary of the Australian Government Department of Education and attended by the Directors-General and Secretaries of state and territory education departments.

First Nations

We are focused on building genuine partnerships with First Nations people and organisations – ensuring we listen, learn, and incorporate First Nations aspirations along with the department's cultural learnings into our work.

Embedding the priority reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and transforming the way the department works with First Nations people and communities enabling shared access to data and information at the regional level, and ensuring services are safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, continue to be priorities in 2025–26. This includes improving early childhood education and care outcomes of First Nations children and students.

Our commitment to genuine partnership will be supported through the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership and our formal partnership arrangements with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and National Voice for our Children (SNAICC).

Government agencies

We engage across the APS and with state and territory education departments to deliver our current and long-term reform priorities for the education system.

For example, we work with:

- Services Australia on the shared delivery of the Child Care Subsidy for families
- the Department of Social Services on the Early Years Strategy to support the education, wellbeing and development of children and National Disability Insurance Scheme reforms
- the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia on data to understand Australia's education performance
- state and territory governments on national initiatives through the Preschool Reform Agreement and the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement
- the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) on aligning education policy with workforce needs and skills, and as our information and communications technology (ICT) service delivery partner supporting the department's digital operations
- the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Finance and the Treasury, as the central agencies, on policy coordination, program evaluations and budget considerations
- the Department of Home Affairs on management of international student policy settings, including quality and integrity

- the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on aligning our education objectives with Australia's foreign policy interests
- the National Indigenous Australians Agency to support the department's contribution to the Commonwealth's shared commitment to implement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- the National Office for Child Safety and the e-Safety Commissioner to improve child safety
- Australian Government agencies to deliver the Australian Government's agenda – for example, the 18 agencies with policy or program responsibilities that affect young people. This work across agencies happens at all levels and includes our Secretary's participation in monthly Secretaries Board meetings.

Peak and representative bodies

Our interactions with peak bodies inform the design and implementation of education policies and programs nationally, ensuring education is accessible, inclusive and relevant to meet Australia's workforce needs.

For example, we engage with:

- SNAICC
- NATSIEC
- the Early Childhood Education and Care Reference Group, which comprises a broad audience of peak body and sector representatives
- the National Catholic Education Commission, a peak body for Catholic education in Australia, which is responsible for the national coordination and representation of Catholic schools and school authorities
- Independent Schools Australia, a peak body representing the interests of the independent school sector nationally
- Independent Higher Education Australia, a peak body representing registered and accredited higher education providers
- Universities Australia, a peak body representing member universities and providing expert policy advice, analysis, statistical evidence and media commentary on higher education
- the International Education Stakeholders Forum, which brings together peak bodies across all education sectors with responsibilities in international education
- peak bodies for principals across all sectors
- peak bodies for parents across all sectors
- unions representing teachers, early childhood educators, the academic and research workforce, and university students
- a range of other stakeholder groups, organisations, experts and practitioners relating to people with disability, First Nations, regional Australia, students experiencing disadvantage, and other matters.

4

Risk oversight and governance

We empower our staff to proactively manage risk and make decisions in line with our Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework.

Risk oversight and governance

Enterprise risk management arrangements

A better future for all Australians through education cannot be delivered without engaging with risk.

The department's Accountable Authority Instructions and Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework provide staff with resources to engage with and manage risk. Staff are empowered to proactively identify and manage risks and make decisions in line with our risk appetite and tolerance limits and our governance and accountability arrangements.

The Executive Board has overarching responsibility for overseeing the department's enterprise risk management arrangements, including setting our risk appetite and tolerance limits. Risk management is embedded in our planning, governance and performance arrangements. We use the following committees to support risk management arrangements:

- The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent advice to the Executive Board on the appropriateness of risk oversight and management.
- The People, Culture and Integrity Committee oversees a positive risk and pro-integrity culture.
- The Project and Investment Committee provides oversight and assurance over the department's project portfolio, including projects of high strategic importance.

The Chief Risk Officer (CRO) plays an important role in championing enterprise risk management arrangements. The CRO promotes risk awareness and communicates and engages with staff to build risk capability and maintain a positive risk culture.

Our positive risk culture is underpinned by trust, transparency and a no-blame approach to dealing with issues and emerging risks. Our risk appetite and tolerance statement defines our willingness to accept risks to deliver our purpose.

All staff have a role in identifying, managing and mitigating risks as part of their day-to-day activities. Through our enterprise risk management arrangements, we support staff to incorporate risk management practices into daily business activities at the operational and strategic levels, providing guidance on acceptable risk taking, and building capability through a range of training and awareness activities, including mandatory risk management training for all staff every 12 months and tailored risk management workshops.

Figure 2. Overview of our enterprise risk management arrangements

Our enterprise risk management arrangements

Who we are and why we are here
- Our Purpose
- Culture – Values and Behaviours
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*

What guides our decision-making
- Governance and Assurance
- Commonwealth Risk Management Policy
- Accountable Authority Instructions

How we manage risk
- Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Enterprise-wide Risks
- Risk Appetite and Tolerance Statement
- Enterprise Risk Management System (RiskNet2) and Supporting Tools
- Training and Education

Strategic risk environment

The department has robust mechanisms in place for managing current and emerging risks in its internal and external environment. The department regularly considers security, cyber security, service delivery, regulatory changes, psychosocial factors, natural disasters and emergencies as part of the ongoing management of our enterprise risk arrangements, including risks shared with our service providers.

Our enterprise-wide risks (EWRs) consider the department's current strategic and operating environment, challenges and opportunities. The EWRs and mitigation strategies align with our risk appetite and tolerance statement.

Enterprise-wide risks and mitigation strategies

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk
Policy	**The department gives poor-quality policy advice impacting its ability to achieve government agendas and strategic outcomes**

Mitigation strategies

- The department invests in its internal research and analysis capabilities to build strategic policy expertise across the department. These capabilities are deployed in areas of need, prioritising the delivery of high-quality and evidence-based policy advice.

- The department has strong collaborative partnerships with experts, institutions and other departments; enhances communication channels; and provides continuous professional development opportunities for its staff.

- The department will use data and evidence to inform policy development, to ensure alignment to the government's Policy Impact Analysis framework.

- The department has a People Strategy and Enterprise Workforce Plan that sets the overarching direction and priorities for how the department and its leadership will support and develop its people and build capability. This will enable it to deliver on its strategic objectives and provide high-quality evidence-based advice to government.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

Delivery

The department fails to deliver on its strategic objectives to the speed or expectations of its clients

Mitigation strategies

- The department has established robust processes for regular review and evaluation of policies, programs and initiatives to assess their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- The department has adopted a proactive approach to staying informed about emerging trends, research and best practices in education and related fields, both domestically and internationally.
- The department fosters partnerships and collaborations with other government agencies, educational institutions and industry stakeholders to leverage collective knowledge and expertise.
- The department continues to build on its internal environmental scanning and research capabilities to continue to identify, understand and invest in changes and innovation. A key element of this is to also continue managing and investing in relationships with our stakeholders.
- The department has established agreements for services with other agencies and monitors their effectiveness and delivery as they impact the department (e.g., interagency agreements with DEWR).
- The department's Child Safe Policy sets out our approach to ensuring the welfare and safety of every child and young person who has contact with the department's staff, contractors, consultants and service providers.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

Regulatory & Compliance

The department fails to discharge its regulatory responsibilities and/or fails to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements

Mitigation strategies

- The department adopts a whole-of-system perspective, continuously improving performance, capability and culture to build trust and confidence in Australia's regulatory settings.
- The department proactively engages with education sector entities, other key regulators, industry bodies, and the public to understand its concerns and implement regulations in a transparent and collaborative way.

- The department ensures adequate resources (funding, staffing and technology) are allocated to meet regulatory responsibilities.

- The department takes a risk-based approach to maintaining essential safeguards while minimising regulatory burden, and leverages data and digital technology to support those it regulates to comply.

- The department's Regulatory Statement of Intent, Resource Management Guide 128, and the PGPA Act Fraud and Corruption Rule provide greater clarity about how the department should carry out its regulatory roles.

- The department requires that all major programs conduct a fraud and corruption risk assessment as required under the PGPA Act Fraud and Corruption Rule.

- The department's Conflict of Interest Policy and provisions in contracts help it to guide and set clear expectations for its staff and providers.

- The department's legislative compliance is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Board.

- The department conducts a program of internal audits with periodic audits and reviews of compliance against regulatory requirements, policies and processes, to detect instances of non-compliance.

- The department has clear and accessible policies, procedures and training materials outlining key compliance requirements and obligations, which are updated regularly.

- The department continues to embed a pro-integrity culture through its Integrity Framework and processes applicable to all our people, contractors and service providers.

- The department has access to appropriate legal advice from qualified and experienced advisers via its Legal Branch and the Australian Government Solicitor.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

Stakeholders

The department fails to effectively foster professional, inclusive and collaborative relationships with stakeholders, third parties and partners

Mitigation strategies

- The department identifies and prioritises key stakeholders based on their influence and engagement. We have undertaken thorough stakeholder analysis to understand their interests and concerns.

- The department develops and embeds a consistent approach to and principle for establishing formal partnership and shared decision-making mechanisms with First Nations stakeholders across the portfolio.

- The department invests in developing staff capability to engage with stakeholders in genuine partnership and ensures sufficient resourcing and timeframes.

- The department maintains comprehensive communication plans prioritising digital communications and ensuring transparency, regular updates, and tailored information for each stakeholder group. The department dedicates time to manage existing relationships and build new relationships.

- The department continues to co-design future projects and policies with key stakeholders.

- The department will continue to invest in further developing forums for consultation with internal and external subject matter experts.

- The department uses standard Commonwealth contracting suite contracts or agreements, or interagency agreements that are reviewed and approved by all relevant stakeholders, including the Australian Government Solicitor and the department's Legal Branch.

- All contracts at the department are assigned to a procurement team for consistent application of new regulatory requirements (e.g. the Commonwealth Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF)) or as required by the department. This includes incorporating requirements to address protective security threats, including those relating to supply chain, third-party risk management, foreign interference and security of emerging technology.

- The department has established due diligence, onboarding and ongoing monitoring and exit processes to ensure that all external workers are able to meet their obligations and agreements and are doing so.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

People

The department fails to attract, develop and retain a skilled and effective workforce and/or fails to protect the health, safety and welfare of its workers

Mitigation strategies

- The department has a People Strategy that sets the overarching direction and priorities for how the department and its leadership will support and develop its people. It focuses on fostering health, safety and wellbeing; mobilising and building capability; and living our culture.

- Supporting health, safety and wellbeing, the department has a centralised overarching Work Health and Safety Risk Plan that forms a part of its Work Health and Safety Management System. This plan includes the management of psychosocial risks as outlined in the Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work) Code of Practice.

- The department's Enterprise Workforce Plan 2024–26 outlines the critical roles, capabilities, key focus areas and priority actions to support our people to deliver on our purpose now and into the future.

- The department has committed to supporting our diverse workforce to take advantage of flexible arrangements, including in relation to time, place and practice, while remaining affiliated with and connected to their team and the department.

- The department continues its objective of being a workplace that attracts top talent. This includes developing a strategic plan to manage workforce and investing in its current and future workforce through approaches such as structured career pathways, identifying talent, deliberate succession planning, mobility and provision of career opportunities.

- The department continues to focus on the attraction and retention of First Nations people through the use of affirmative measures recruitment and through participation in pathway programs, including the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program and the Indigenous Development Employment Program.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

Data & Digital

Digital services are ineffective and/or data is not accessible, managed or leveraged effectively to support delivery of policy, programs, projects and services

Mitigation strategies

- The department has established a strong partnership with DEWR and will continue maturing this relationship.
- The department has actively sought to enhance its internal capabilities and expertise, investing in staff training and development to minimise reliance on external systems where possible.
- The department will work with the providers of key services to support the co-delivery of programs, projects and services.
- The department has clear governance structures to ensure oversight of major ICT investments and delivery.
- The department has clear governance structures to ensure oversight of its data assets, data-sharing agreements and data releases.
- The department articulates a clear strategic plan for technology and data, in accordance with its ICT Strategy and Data Strategy.
- The department continues to invest in modernising legacy systems, improving data infrastructure, leveraging new capabilities and adopting new technologies.
- The department adopts an agreed strategic approach to data sharing.
- The department adopts quality assurance checks on data releases.

Risk category	Enterprise-wide risk

Security & Integrity

The department experiences breaches of the security of information or assets due to cyber-attacks, insider threat, or fraudulent or unethical behaviour

Mitigation strategies

- The department's Agency Security Plan and the PSPF govern and outline the department's responsibilities, policies and procedures to protect our people, information and physical assets.

- The department has embedded information management into its business activities. The department has sound arrangements in place to protect information in our Agency Security Plan, Information Security Framework and Data Strategy.

- The department will effectively manage risks that could compromise the security of classified and sensitive data and information, including insider threats.

- The department will continue monitoring the internal and external environments, in collaboration with DEWR, for any cyber threats.

- The department must consider the security risks before engaging third-party providers and ensure they comply with PSPF requirements.

- The department has a Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and takes all reasonable steps to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption.

- The department's Cyber Security Strategy 2023–26 supports its continued investments in strengthening the security of its ICT network, systems and data holdings.

- The department requires staff and contractors to complete security awareness training at engagement and annually thereafter to ensure they understand, mitigate and escalate security risks.

- The department continues to embed a pro-integrity culture through its Integrity Framework and processes applicable to all our people, contractors and service providers. The department's values and the APS Code of Conduct promote a culture of compliance and ethical behaviour.

- The department's Conflict of Interest Policy and provisions in contracts help guide and set clear expectations for its staff and providers.

Governance

The department's governance committees (Figure 3) support the delivery of its strategic goals and deliverables. These governance committees play a key role by overseeing and managing risk, monitoring performance, providing a forum for consultation and overseeing reporting. Each group has internal governance arrangements in place.

The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent advice on the appropriateness of financial and performance reporting, risk management and internal control mechanisms.

Figure 3. Overview of our governance structure

Secretary (Accountable Authority) — Audit and Risk Committee

Executive Board

People, Culture and Integrity Committee

Project and Investment Committee

Indigenous Business Is Everyone's Business Committee

Performance Reporting Sub Committee

Financial Statements Sub Committee
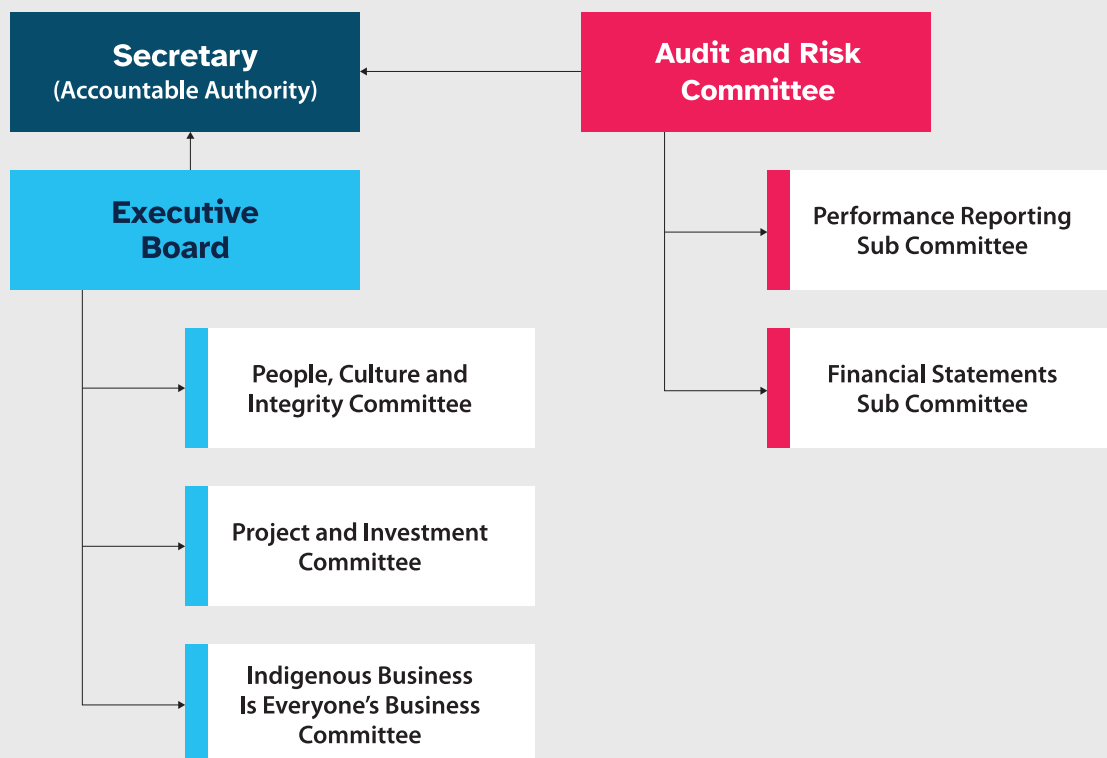
5
Enabling capabilities

Corporate and enabling services support our staff to deliver on the department's purpose by ensuring we have the right people in the right place and with the right tools to do their job. Over the 4-year period of this plan, we will continue to refresh our strategies and build capability to deliver our key activities and achieve our purpose.

People

The 2023–2025 People Strategy sets the overarching direction and priorities for how we support and develop our people. The strategy helps the department deliver on its purpose by creating an environment where people want to work and stay because of our positive and inclusive workplace culture.

The strategy focuses on 4 key themes:

- nurturing health and wellbeing
- mobilising and building capability
- bringing our culture to life
- promoting positive workplace behaviours through our leadership.

In 2025 we will begin working on our future People Strategy. The new strategy will have regard to progress made against priority actions outlined in the 2023–2025 People Strategy, be informed by an external environmental scan to ensure alignment with broader community expectations, and give consideration to how we can best continue embedding contemporary and effective work practices.

Figure 4. Our workforce composition as at 31 May 2025

1,788 People (head count)				
1,795 Ongoing (96.3%)	**69** Non-ongoing (3.7%)	**1,571** Full-time (84.3%)	**293** Part-time (15.7%)	**89** Contractors (4.6%)

Diversity					
69.0% Female	**30.5%** Male	**2.9%** First Nations	**6.4%** Disability	**22.9%** CALD*	**4.5%** LGBTQIA +
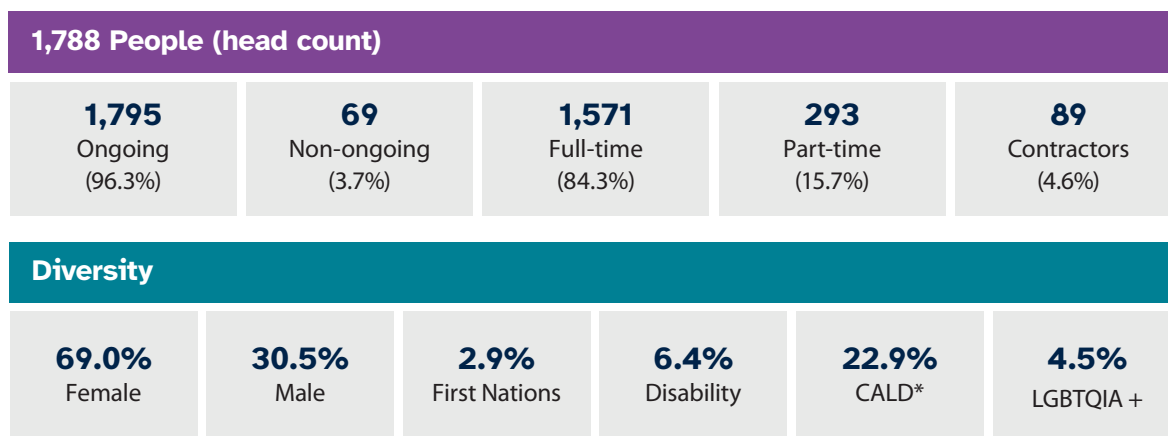
*CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) refers to the measure 'First language not exclusively English', used for the purposes of benchmarking and tracking progress towards a target in accordance with the APS CALD Employment Strategy.

Integrity

Integrity is at the heart of what we do collectively and individually. We recognise that integrity is a cultural issue and are committed to ensuring the department embeds a strong integrity culture.

During 2025–26 we will continue to support whole-of-government integrity measures, including the APS reform agenda, which includes acting on the findings of the APS Integrity Taskforce and continuing to support the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

The department will continue to implement integrity measures. These include our Integrity Action Plan for enhancing our integrity maturity; and our Integrity Framework, which sets the foundation for integrity-based decision-making by providing guidance and strategies. Our integrity policies and processes extend to all our people, including our contractors and our service providers, through contract provisions, conflict-of-interest provisions and clear expectations.

Workforce planning

The department's 2024–26 Enterprise Workforce Plan identifies core and critical roles and capabilities required to support our people to deliver on our purpose now and into the future.

Through the plan we will also continue to focus on strategic prioritisation and streamlining our recruitment processes, while also considering the APS Location Framework and the Australian Public Service Commission's review to update the Job Family Framework.

The department's APS Employee Census action planning, in conjunction with the Enterprise Workforce Plan, outlines key activities that align with our commitment to psychological safety and wellbeing, fostering positive workplace relationships, enhancing our pro-integrity culture and promoting the Charter of Partnerships and Engagement, the APS Values and the Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours, and guides our approach to how we work together.

The department will continue to monitor our alignment with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. In 2024, 13 capabilities and functions were identified as core work for the department, with 9 of these functions not currently outsourced. For 2025–26, our focus will be on enhancing the capability of current personnel, with a specific focus on delivering core work in-house and recruiting relevant expertise. Responsible sourcing will continue to meet business demands, providing short-term surge capacity or specialist skills when required, supported by robust framework implementation and monitoring practices.

People capability

By investing in the development of our staff we will enhance their skills, knowledge and expertise, and empower them to continue performing at their best.

Our learning and development priorities support our current and future capability requirements and are aligned to the APS Learning and Development Strategy and broader APS reform agenda. Through the revised 2024–26 Enterprise Workforce Plan, our priority actions will inform focused learning programs to enhance our capability maturity and position us well to respond to the department's Capability Review outcomes.

We will also use our knowledge of core and job-specific capabilities, along with findings from the annual APS Employee Census and the broader operating environment, to determine training needs and solutions that support our goals. We encourage individual and team growth through learning programs, mobility opportunities and on-the-job training, ensuring the department has the capability required to deliver on its priorities.

Capability Review

During 2024–25 the department participated in the APS-wide Capability Review pilot program. The review was an opportunity to assess our department's capability to meet its current objectives and future challenges and opportunities. The review report was delivered in June 2025, and the department is developing an action plan in response to the review's findings, which will be published in August 2025. The action plan will build on existing and planned work to uplift capability across the department and provide an opportunity to focus on areas of importance, such as strategy, partnerships and user focus.

Diversity and inclusion

The department values and seeks diversity in its workforce. We recognise the importance of employing people who reflect the community we serve in helping us achieve our purpose. We will continue to actively pursue strategies, policies and practices that promote diversity and inclusion and provide a safe working environment.

The department's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024–25 encompasses the key actions identified across the various APS diversity and inclusion strategies, and sets out our vision for, and shared commitment to, inclusion. The strategy and its supporting action plan outline 3 focus areas:

- diverse workforce
- positive employee experience
- good governance.

The department recognises that we deliver results through people and that people are our greatest strength. The department is committed to creating an inclusive and diverse workplace for everyone. We have refreshed the Employee Support Officer Network, ensuring representation from a diverse range of backgrounds. The department has 6 employee-led diversity networks, which are supported by Senior Executive Service officer co-champions:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network
- Ability and Carers Network
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Network
- Gender Equity Network
- Neurodiversity Network
- Pride Network.

We recognise the importance of employing people who reflect the community we serve ... We will continue to actively pursue strategies, policies and practices that promote diversity and inclusion and provide a safe working environment.

Reconciliation

The department's Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–2025 (RAP) has been formed around 3 pillars of reconciliation – relationships, respect and opportunities – which are supported by governance and reporting. The RAP outlines the strategies and initiatives required to advance and embed reconciliation in how we work and what we do, to achieve our vision for a reconciled Australia. The department will continue to report progress on reconciliation activities following the expiry of the RAP, until governance arrangements are renewed.

The department is committed to its responsibilities under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. To achieve this, we are focused on building cultural capability and accountability to deliver priority reforms that improve educational outcomes for First Nations peoples. To build our cultural awareness, we provide a range of programs and initiatives, including the Jawun APS Secondment Program, the department's annual First Nations Staff Conference, and cultural appreciation training.

We have also applied a First Nations focus in our work on the Capability Review, which will allow us to build organisational capability in all areas of the department to support better outcomes for First Nations peoples.

The department strives to create a culturally safe and respectful workplace that strengthens our cultural integrity.

Safe, inclusive and respectful workplace

The department is providing a safe, supportive and respectful workplace that prioritises physical, mental and psychosocial health, safety and wellbeing. Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2023–25 encompasses 3 primary goals and associated actions that set the foundation for a safe, healthy and productive workplace. Our Working WELL program is expansive, ranging from free flu vaccinations and workstation assessments to mental health training and coaching services. It operates alongside our dedicated employee assistance program.

Our approach to managing physical, mental and psychosocial risks is embedded in our systems and policies. Everyone is aware of their responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of our people and of how to appropriately manage workplace risks and hazards. We are establishing this capability through a range of training and awareness activities.

We have embraced the Respect@Work reforms to prevent workplace sexual harassment and adjusted our policies and programs to ensure we provide a supportive, person-centred response should it occur.

The department has flexible work arrangements to attract and retain the best capability and deliver on its important work. We recognise that flexibility is a contributor to wellbeing and engagement. We facilitate and support remote and hybrid forms of work that maintain people's connection with colleagues and the department irrespective of their location.

Fraud and corruption control

The department recognises that fraud and corruption pose significant risks to public trust, financial resources and operational efficiency. Accordingly the department maintains a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption and takes all reasonable steps to prevent, detect and respond to fraudulent and corrupt activities.

The department has a robust Fraud and Corruption Control Framework aligned with the Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and the PGPA Act, incorporating strategies for prevention, detection and response.

Strategic policy and data

The department harnesses strategic insights and data to inform policy development and program delivery across the Education portfolio. This includes analysing the impact of technological, societal and geopolitical shifts on the education system and identifying dependencies between emerging reforms, both within and outside the portfolio.

In 2025 we are developing a long-term strategy which will articulate the department's strategic priorities as stewards of the education system. It will further embed strategic policy and stewardship capabilities in our work for the benefit of learners and all Australians.

Consistent with its Data Strategy 2023–2025, the department will release, share and use its data where it is ethical, legal and safe to do so. The department is working towards further transparency around its data releases, including a regular data publication schedule. This supports the government's open data practices, which aim to build community trust.

This will build on our Data Strategy, which sets the strategic direction for the department's data capability, analysis and visualisation, release, sharing and development. It aligns with the Data and Digital Government Strategy and the APS reform agenda. The Data Strategy supports the use of data for better decision-making, while reflecting the need to maintain public trust in how we protect the privacy of individuals. The accompanying implementation plan outlines the initiatives we will undertake to progress the objectives of the Data Strategy, which are:

- building the capability of all staff to use and understand data
- recognising ourselves as data people
- emphasising the importance of leadership in our data culture
- improving the capture, management and quality of our data to ensure continued trust in our use of data
- enhancing our data analytics, data science and data visualisation capabilities
- ensuring our data is secure and access to tools and infrastructure is maintained
- maximising the release, sharing and use of our data in a safe, legal and ethical manner.

The department is committed to uplifting in-house capabilities such as high-quality policy development, data proficiency, economic analysis and evaluation. This includes using and drawing insights from data to inform policy and measure education outcomes. We are strengthening our capabilities to consider longer term implications in policy development in line with the broader APS reform agenda.

A strong data capability supported by the Data Strategy enables the department to optimise the use of data and evidence in policy development and program delivery. This will, in turn, support more Australians to experience the social and economic benefits of a high-quality education. We will build on and increase our data capability, ensure our data is secure and well governed, and engage with cutting-edge data infrastructure, tools and techniques.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an integral part of the policy and program life cycle. It enables the department and stakeholders to measure the impact of policies and programs and to understand what is working well, how it is working and for whom it is working.

The department is strengthening its policy and program capability by evaluating the appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency and social benefits of its work. Strong and credible evaluation provides clear insight into the impact of our policy and programs, measured against key objectives. It allows future policy development to be informed by evidence about how best to achieve target outcomes.

The department's evaluation unit partners with policy and program teams to co-design and support their evaluation activities, and develops support and guidance materials. This will ensure that we ask the right questions, measure the right things in the right way, and undertake effective and credible evaluations of education policy and programs.

The department's Evaluation Strategy 2025–2027 sets out our approach to evaluation in more detail, including a vision and commitment to:

- embed evaluative approaches in our policy and program design and delivery
- support transparency and accountability
- improve the robustness of our evidence base
- encourage a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Information and communications technology

The department receives the majority of its ICT services from DEWR through a shared services arrangement. Under this arrangement, DEWR provides:

- ICT infrastructure
- application development and hosting
- cyber security.

The department has governance structures in place to ensure oversight of ICT project investments and project delivery. Underpinning the department's approach to the use of technology is our ICT Strategy 2023–2026, which outlines 4 priorities for transforming the way we work:

- Get the basics right – provide contemporary, reliable and secure digital services that centre on the end-user experience and provide our staff and clients with the right tools.
- Set a clear direction – govern, develop and deliver ICT services for maximum business value from the portfolio level down.
- Strengthen partnering – work collaboratively across our business and ICT areas and with our service providers and our stakeholders to get the best value and outcome.
- Accelerate innovation – enable the department's digital transformation, be ambitious and look for opportunities to leverage new capabilities and technologies.

Ensuring the security and protection of data entrusted to us is a critical priority. The department continues to implement the Australian Cyber Security Centre's Essential Eight (E8) mitigation strategies to protect against harmful cyber incidents. Our Cyber Security Strategy 2023–26 supports our continued investments in strengthening the security of our ICT network, systems and data holdings.

The department embraces innovation and will continue to trial new technologies and capabilities, including AI, in a safe and secure way as outlined in our *Guidelines for the use of AI*. In 2024 the department participated in the whole-of-government trial of Microsoft Copilot 365 led by the Digital Transformation Agency, and the department is continuing to deploy Copilot across a range of roles where it has been found to be effective. While doing so the department is also strengthening its governance around AI. The department has appointed an AI Accountable Officer, and in February 2025 made its AI Transparency Statement available on its website.

Financial management

Our Finance Strategy 2025–28 outlines key priorities and our approach to meeting the department's requirements under Commonwealth finance law by maintaining robust governance arrangements to support the department in achieving its priorities while ensuring resources are managed in an efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner.

The financial management landscape continues to change. In 2025–26 the department will continue to focus on meeting its financial compliance requirements and maintaining financial sustainability. We are also building financial capability in our staff.

Integrity is at the forefront of our financial management practices. Effective financial management is central to supporting integrity through the department's performance, stewardship and accountability.

Information regarding the department's budget estimates, average staffing levels and budgeted financial statements is set out in our 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS).

Project management

The department's project delivery approach is underpinned by established project and risk management frameworks.

The Project and Investment Committee provides oversight and assurance of the department's project portfolio, particularly regarding projects of high strategic importance.

The department's Project Office supports project teams through the life cycle of a project. The Project Office provides guidance and support to build consistent project management practices and strengthen capability across the portfolio. It supports our project teams by:

- improving confidence in project delivery
- building project management capability among departmental staff
- keeping the senior executive and project management community informed
- serving as the department's authority on project management practices.

Communication

The department's communication and engagement initiatives are informed by our 2024–2026 Communication Strategy, which guides how we engage and connect people and communities to the work of the department and to our purpose. Through high-quality and timely communication services, we support our ministers, the Secretary and the department to deliver outcomes.

Internally, we communicate with all staff to ensure they are engaged, informed, and enabled to contribute, fulfill their duties as public servants, and promote a positive and respectful workplace that supports wellbeing, productivity and inclusion.

Externally, our communication and media activities are targeted and designed to raise awareness and inform audiences of programs and initiatives administered by the department. We prioritise digital channels to reach our audiences and stakeholders in ways that support the department to deliver education policies and programs that reflect the Australian Government's vision for reforming the Australian education system.

We are committed to partnering effectively across government and engaging proactively with stakeholders, including states and territories and peak bodies, to inform our communication strategies and campaigns. We develop meaningful relationships with First Nations peoples to work together to address priorities and co-design the best approach to achieve outcomes.

We take an evidence-based approach to informing our messaging, to ensure it is timely, factual and relevant and uses effective channels and methods of communication. We aim to create engaging and innovative communication messages and products, written in plain English, to inform Australians about the importance of education and connect them to initiatives and programs to support them.

Our communication supports the Australian Government's reform agenda to improve access to quality and affordable education from early childhood and care to schools and higher education.

6

Performance

Our performance information provides transparency and accountability to the Australian Parliament and the Australian community on how we are delivering on our purpose. We will continue to mature the quality of our performance reporting over the period of this plan.

Our approach to performance

The Commonwealth Performance Framework, established under the PGPA Act, involves a cycle of performance planning, monitoring and reporting. The PBS and Corporate Plan are our key forward planning publications and outline how we will measure and assess our performance. The Annual Report is our primary reporting publication and provides information on our actual performance.

The Department of Education Performance Reporting Framework, based on the Commonwealth Performance Framework, guides how we develop, monitor and report our performance information.

We are committed to meaningful, transparent and accurate performance measuring and reporting. We will achieve this through:

- regular reviews of our key activities and performance measures to ensure they reflect our purpose and how we will achieve our outcomes
- independent assurance on the compliance of new or significantly changed performance measures, and independent verification of our performance results to ensure accuracy and compliance with the Commonwealth Performance Framework
- continuous improvement in our performance reporting tools and guidance to support high-quality data and documentation
- greater visibility to readers of changes in performance information in our key performance publications – the PBS, Corporate Plan and Annual Report.

Our regulatory performance

The regulatory environment across Australia's education sectors is complex and involves a broad range of organisations and levels of government. The department has a role in regulating components of the early childhood education and care, school, and higher education sectors. As part of this we work closely with state and territory governments, portfolio entities such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority, and other education bodies such as the Tuition Protection Service and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

In 2024–25, the government committed to establishing an ATEC as steward of the higher education sector. The ATEC will begin operating in an interim capacity from 1 July 2025, and permanently from 1 January 2026, subject to the passage of legislation. Performance measures for the ATEC will be developed for the 2026–27 financial year, once the ATEC has been permanently established.

The department continues to examine its regulatory performance to ensure its approach is fit for purpose. The Minister for Education's Statement of Expectations signed on 5 July 2024 and the department's Regulatory Statement of Intent signed on 6 August 2024 are published on our website.

Our approach to fulfilling our regulatory responsibility is underpinned by the Australian Government's 3 best practice principles for regulation as guided by Resource Management Guide – Regulator Performance (RMG 128).

Principles of regulator best practice		Measures	
	1. **Continuous improvement and building trust:** regulators adopt a whole-of-system perspective, continuously improving their performance, capability and culture to build trust and confidence in Australia's regulatory settings.	PM002 PM012 PM014	PM015 PM079 PM080
	2. **Risk based and data driven:** regulators manage risks proportionately and maintain essential safeguards while minimising regulatory burden, and leveraging data and digital technology to support those they regulate to comply and grow.	PM002 PM012 PM014	PM015 PM079 PM080
	3. **Collaboration and engagement:** regulators are transparent and responsive communicators, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way.	PM002 PM012	PM079 PM080

The department will continue to consider and review performance reporting on our regulatory functions.

Measuring our performance in 2025–26

As outlined in Figure 5, we intend to achieve our purpose by delivering on our 2 outcomes:

Outcome 1

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

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education, and international quality research.

These outcomes are linked to the programs set out in our 2025–26 PBS. For each outcome, we have identified:

- key activities we will undertake
- performance measures to assess our performance
- delivery strategies for our policy, program and regulatory responsibilities.

In 2025–26 we will assess our performance through 27 performance measures. Our performance measures are a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures of outputs, effectiveness and efficiency. The assessment and results for each performance measure will be reported in the 2025–26 Annual Performance Statements in our 2025–26 Annual Report.

Figure 5. Overview of our approach to measuring and assessing our performance

Purpose

We create a better future for all Australians through education

Outcomes

Outcome 1

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

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education, and international quality research.

Programs

1.1 Support for the Child Care System

1.2 Child Care Subsidy

1.3 Government Schools National Support

1.4 Non-Government Schools National Support

1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support

2.1 Core Commonwealth Funding for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education[2]

2.2 Higher Education Superannuation Program

2.3 Higher Education Support

2.4 Higher Education Loan Program

2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research

2.6 Research Capacity

2.7 International Education Support

2.8 Nuclear Powered Submarine Program

Key activities

1. Provide targeted support to families, children and early childhood education and care providers who need it[3]

2. Support to families who rely on subsidised early childhood education and care to work, train, study or volunteer

3. Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to government schools

4. Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to non-government schools

5. Support children to have access to quality early learning, particularly in the year before reaching school

6. Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs

7. Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform

8. Improve Australian Government engagement with young people on issues, programs and policies that impact them

9. Enhance the quality of the higher education system

10. Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment

11. Support eligible current and former university employees for certain superannuation expenses

12. Support the research system through investment in research, research training and national research infrastructure[4]

13. Support a high-quality and sustainable international education sector

14. Support sovereign workforce development through broader access to education pipelines

Performance measures (PM)

Delivery strategies

2 Since the 2024–25 Corporate Plan, the program title has been updated from 'Commonwealth Grant Scheme' to better capture its sub-programs.

3 Key activity revised to better reflect Program 1.1 activities.

4 Key activity revised to better reflect Program 2.5 and Program 2.6 activities.

Outcome 1
Key activities, performance measures and delivery strategies

Key activity 1

Provide targeted support to families, children and early childhood education and care providers who need it[5]

Performance measures

- The proportion of services supported by the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) and Inclusion Support Program (ISP) in socio-economically vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. [PM054]

Delivery strategies

- Provide support to vulnerable and disadvantaged families and communities through the Community Child Care Fund and Inclusion Support Program. [Program 1.1]

Key activity 2

Support to families who rely on subsidised early childhood education and care to work, train, study or volunteer

Performance measures

- Proportion of accurate Child Care Subsidy payments to all services. [PM002]
- Average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Additional Child Care Subsidy. [PM067]

Delivery strategies

- Provide families with access to subsidised early childhood education and care to support parents to work, train, study or volunteer. [Program 1.2]
- Through our monitoring and compliance frameworks, ensure the accuracy and integrity of the Child Care Subsidy, transition and other program payments. [Program 1.2]
- Remove unnecessary barriers and ensure early childhood education and care sector regulation is appropriate and fit for purpose. [Program 1.2]
- Develop, maintain and improve early childhood education and care policy frameworks, with a focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable, disadvantaged and First Nations children. [Program 1.2]

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5 Key activity revised to better reflect Program 1.1 activities.

Key activity 3

Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to government schools

Performance measures

- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]
- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]
- Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059]
- Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates by states and territories for government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013*. [PM079]

Delivery strategies

- Administer recurrent funding entitlements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* based on the Schooling Resource Standard, which provides a base amount for every student and loadings to target students and schools experiencing disadvantage. [Program 1.3]
- Monitor the policy and financial assurance and compliance of approved authorities with requirements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* and ensure the accuracy and integrity of payments. [Program 1.3]

Key activity 4

Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to non-government schools

Performance measures

- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]
- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]
- Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059]
- Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates and audited financial statements by approved authorities for non-government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013*. [PM080]

Delivery strategies

- Administer recurrent funding entitlements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* based on the Schooling Resource Standard, which provides a base amount for every student and loadings to target students and schools experiencing disadvantage. [Program 1.4]
- Calculate and produce annual direct measure of income and capacity to contribute scores for the non-government school sector, including the quality assurance and data validation of annual scores; and separately, a review process for individual school scores as required. [Program 1.4]
- Monitor the policy and financial assurance and compliance of approved authorities with requirements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* and ensure the accuracy and integrity of payments. [Program 1.4]

Key activity 5

Support children to have access to quality early learning, particularly in the year before reaching school

Performance measures

- Proportion of children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year. [PM069]

Delivery strategies

- Work with states, territories and stakeholders to support early learning in the year before full-time school (i.e. preschool); this includes implementing the Preschool Reform Agreement, focused on improving attendance and preschool outcomes. [Program 1.5]

Key activity 6

Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs

Performance measures

- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]
- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]
- Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059]
- Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above. [PM072]

Delivery strategies

- Contribute to ongoing support for implementation of the Australian Curriculum. [Program 1.5]
- Support teachers to have access to the best available evidence and resources about effective teaching and learning practices and ensure that teachers are supported to incorporate evidence-based practices. [Program 1.5]
- Provide funding and support to implement national and international assessments, including the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and online delivery of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), including the development of a NAPLAN Future Operating Model. [Program 1.5]
- Work with state education agencies around delivery programs that supplement the Australian Curriculum and support teachers to monitor student progress and respond to student learning needs, through access to resources and the delivery of literacy and numeracy initiatives; science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) initiatives; civics and citizenship initiatives; language initiatives; and music and arts programs. [Program 1.5]
- Deliver programs and policies that support teaching supply, quality and practice; teacher and principal wellbeing; and alternative pathways into teaching. [Program 1.5]
- Deliver programs under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034 and Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034 reforms that include supporting student learning and wellbeing, with a focus on priority equity cohorts (i.e., First Nations students, students living in regional, rural and remote locations, students with disability and students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds). [Program 1.5]

Key activity 7

Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform

Performance measures

- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]
- Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]
- Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059]
- Proportion of children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year. [PM069]
- Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above. [PM072]

Delivery strategies

- Work in partnership with state and territory governments, non-government peak bodies, national education agencies and other key stakeholders to develop and implement national policy initiatives. [Program 1.5]
- Support the National School Resourcing Board in undertaking reviews of the operation of the Australian Government's school funding model under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, and implement the Australian Government's response to the board's reviews. [Program 1.5]
- Improve national data quality, consistency and collection to support the national evidence base and inform policy development. [Program 1.5]
- Use outputs of the Australian Education Research Organisation to encourage adoption and effective implementation of evidence in policy to improve learning outcomes. [Program 1.5]
- Work in partnership with state and territory governments to implement the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan. [Program 1.5]
- Engage the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to develop national standards and frameworks supporting the consistency and quality of teaching and leadership across jurisdictions. [Program 1.5]

Key activity 8

Improve Australian Government engagement with young people on issues, programs and policies that impact them

Performance measures

- Percentage of Office for Youth program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program. [PM077]
- Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people. [PM078]

Delivery strategies

- Implement the new national youth engagement strategy to support increased engagement of young people with the Australian Government. [Program 1.5]
- Engage with Australian Government agencies that have investments in youth to provide a whole-of-government overview and coordination of policies and programs that affect young people. [Program 1.5]

Outcome 1
Changes to performance measures

Changes to Outcome 1 performance measures from previous financial year

2024–25 published performance measure	Change	Rationale
Lower the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]	**Reduce** the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]	The performance measure title has been revised to align with one of the Improvement Measures in the Heads of Agreement (Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034).
Lower the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]	**Reduce** the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]	The performance measure title has been revised to align with one of the Improvement Measures in the Heads of Agreement (Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034).
Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059] **Target** Increase on previous year	**Targets** **(a) Nationally:** 　Increase on previous year **(b) In government schools:** 　Increase on previous year **(c) In non-government schools:** 　Increase on previous year	The performance measure's target has been revised to report on disaggregated data by sector.
Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner. [PM070]	**Removed**	The performance measure has been removed as it did not meaningfully contribute to an assessment of the department's performance. A new performance measure relating to Program 1.3 – Government Schools National Support [PM079] has been developed for 2025–26 and forward financial years.

2024–25 published performance measure	Change	Rationale
Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for non-government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner. [PM071]	**Removed**	The performance measure has been removed as it did not meaningfully contribute to an assessment of the department's performance. A new performance measure relating to Program 1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support [PM080] has been developed for 2025–26 and forward financial years.
Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above. [PM072]	Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 **certification**, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above. [PM072]	The performance measure title and methodology has been revised to clarify what certification/qualification is being measured.
The Australian Government will work to deliver a Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (the Agreement) with states and territories, focusing on driving real improvements in learning and wellbeing outcomes for students, with a focus on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Agreement will be operational from January 2025. [PM073]	**Removed**	The performance measure has been removed as the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (2025–2034) has been developed in consultation with the states and territories, and became operational on 1 January 2025, noting that 2 states were operating under interim agreements at the end of January 2025.
Percentage of program participants who felt they directly influenced a government policy or program. [PM077] **No target**	Percentage of **Office for Youth** program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program. [PM077] **Target** **Increase from previous year**	The performance measure title has been amended to remove 'directly', as 'directly' is subjective and not necessary to measuring the outcome of the program, and to clarify that the measure relates to Office for Youth participants. A target has been established and the evaluation survey's methodology updated from binary responses to scaled responses, removing potential biases.

2024–25 published performance measure	Change	Rationale
Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people. [PM078] **No target**	Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people. [PM078] **Target** **Increase from previous year**	A target has been established and the evaluation survey's methodology updated from binary responses to scaled responses, removing potential biases.
N/A	Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates by states and territories for government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013.* [PM079] **Target** 100%	This new performance measure has been developed for Program 1.3 – Government Schools National Support to report on for 2025–26 and forward financial years.
N/A	Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates and audited financial statements by approved authorities for non-government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013.* [PM080] **Target** 85% or higher	This new performance measure has been developed for Program 1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support to report on for 2025–26 and forward financial years.

Outcome 1
Performance measures

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.1 The proportion of services supported by the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) and Inclusion Support Program (ISP) in socio-economically vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. [PM054]	Increase on previous year	Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) and Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) data is applied to each service funded through the CCCF and ISP during the financial year. Services located in areas with no assigned SEIFA decile are removed. The proportion of services in the lowest 2 SEIFA deciles (i.e. 20% most disadvantaged areas of Australia based on SA2 and SEIFA) is calculated. Data source: – ABS, SEIFA, Table 2 SA2 Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, 2021 (or latest publicly available data) – Department of Education, CCCF administrative data report – Department of Education, ISP administrative data report – Department of Education, Child Care Subsidy Approved Services Report	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.2 Proportion of accurate Child Care Subsidy payments to all services. [PM002]	90% or higher	The Random Sample Parent Check (RSPC) process involves asking a stratified random sample of parents about the hours of early childhood education and care their child attended over the preceding week to ascertain the extent to which the early childhood education and care sessions reported by providers/services (and hence the Child Care Subsidy payments and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) payments) are correct/incorrect. Data source: RSPC Checking Tool	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Collaboration and engagement

1.2 Average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Additional Child Care Subsidy. [PM067]	Equal to or higher than the average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Child Care Subsidy	Data is obtained for each of the Additional Child Care Subsidy and Child Care Subsidy groups and broken down by service type (Centre Based Day Care, Family Day Care and Out of School Hours Care). The average weekly attended hours is calculated for each group by pooling all attended hours in the most recent 12-month period (of available data) and dividing this by the number of pooled weeks of care provided to children. Data source: Services Australia, Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS)	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.3	Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates by states and territories for government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013*. [PM079]	100%	The number of acquittal certificates lodged by states and territories for government schools on or before 30 June divided by the total number of acquittal certificates issued to states and territories for completion, expressed as a percentage. Data source: Department of Education, Financial Submission Tracker	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Collaboration and engagement

Changes from previous year

This new performance measure relating to Program 1.3 – Government Schools National Support has been developed for 2025–26 and forward financial years.

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.4	Timely lodgement of acquittal certificates and audited financial statements by approved authorities for non-government schools by 30 June, as set out within the *Australian Education Act 2013*. [PM080]	85% or higher	The number of acquittal certificates and audited financial statements lodged by approved authorities on or before 30 June divided by the total number of individual acquittal certificates and audited financial statements to be lodged by approved authorities, expressed as a percentage. Data source: Department of Education, Financial Submission Tracker	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Collaboration and engagement

Changes from previous year

This new performance measure relating to Program 1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support has been developed for 2025–26 and forward financial years.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.5 Proportion of children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year. [PM069]	a) Overall: 95% or higher b) First Nations children: 95% or higher c) Disadvantaged children: 95% or higher	The number of 4 and 5 year-old children who are identified by the ABS as enrolled in an early childhood education program in the year before they start full-time school for 600 hours per year. This is divided by the number of 4 and 5 year-old children who are identified by the ABS as enrolled in an early childhood education program, from the Preschool Education, Australia publication, for all children, First Nations children, and disadvantaged children (ABS SEIFA Quintile 1). Note: The states and territories can provide supplementary data, which is assessed by the department and, if considered acceptable, is included in the performance results. Data source: National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection, published by the ABS as Preschool Education, Australia 2024	• 2025–26[6]

6 The current Preschool Reform Agreement concludes at the end of 2025. Preschool funding is an ongoing commitment, with future performance reporting to be determined once an updated agreement is in place.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.5 Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24), attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above. [PM072]	a) 96% of all people in Australia by 2031[7] b) 96% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by 2031[8]	a) Number of people aged 20–24 who have attained a school qualification of Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or attained a non-school qualification at Certificate level III or above, divided by the total number of people aged 20–24 years. Data source: ABS, Survey of Education and Work b) Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 who have attained a school qualification of Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or attained a non-school qualification at Certificate level III or above, divided by the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 years. Data source: Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Dashboard, with underlying data from ABS Census of Population and Housing	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title and methodology has been revised to clarify what certification/qualification is being measured.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.3 **1.4** **1.5** Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM055]	Decrease on previous year	Full cohort assessment of Year 3 reading (national level results) through the annual NAPLAN test. Data source: NAPLAN National Report	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised to align with one of the Improvement Measures in the Heads of Agreement (Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034).

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7 This target reflects one of the Improvement Measures in the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034 and Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034.

8 This target reflects Outcome 5 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and one of the Improvement Measures in the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034 and Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034.

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.3 **1.4** **1.5**	Reduce the proportion of students in the Needs additional support proficiency level in NAPLAN for numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally). [PM056]	Decrease on previous year	Full cohort assessment of Year 3 numeracy (national level results) through the annual NAPLAN test. Data source: NAPLAN National Report	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised to align with one of the Improvement Measures in the Heads of Agreement (Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034).

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.3 **1.4** **1.5**	Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time. [PM059]	a) Nationally: Increase on previous year b) In government schools: Increase on previous year c) In non-government schools: Increase on previous year	The proportion of full-time students in Years 1–10 whose attendance rate in Semester 1 is equal to or greater than 90%. The attendance rate is the number of actual full-time-equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in Years 1–10 as a percentage of the total number of possible student-days attended in Semester 1. Data source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, National Report on Schooling in Australia	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure target has been revised to report on disaggregated data by sector.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.5 Percentage of Office for Youth program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program. [PM077]	Increase from previous year	Office for Youth program participants will be asked in the relevant post-program evaluation survey if they feel they were able to influence a government policy or program. This will be recorded as a proportion of the total Office for Youth program participants' responses. Data source: Evaluation Survey of Office for Youth Program Participants	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been amended to remove 'directly', as 'directly' is subjective and not necessary to measuring the outcome of the program, and to clarify that the measure relates to Office for Youth participants.

A target has been established and the evaluation survey's methodology updated from binary responses to scaled responses, removing potential biases.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
1.5 Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people. [PM078]	Increase from previous year	Australian Public Service employees from the Australian Government departments/ agencies that work with the Office for Youth will be asked in the relevant post-program evaluation survey if they feel they were supported to engage with young people. This will be recorded as a proportion of the total Australian Government departments/ agencies representatives' responses. Data source: Evaluation Survey of Australian Public Service Employees Engaging with the Office for Youth	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

A target has been established and the evaluation survey's methodology updated from binary responses to scaled responses, removing potential biases.

Outcome 2
Key activities, performance measures and delivery strategies

Key activity 9

Enhance the quality of the higher education system

Performance measures

- The proportion of the 25- to 34-year-old population with a tertiary qualification. [PM009]
- The rate of attrition for domestic bachelor students. [PM010]
- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM011]
- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1). [PM014]
- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who identify as First Nations. [PM015]
- Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively. [PM016]
- Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the skills of graduates (overall across all skills). [PM017]

Delivery strategies

- Monitor enrolment patterns and review the impact of funding on choices by students, including on a cohort basis, and higher education providers. [Program 2.1; Program 2.3]
- Implement measures from the Australian Universities Accord, in partnership with universities, staff, unions, business, and students, to deliver accessibility, affordability, quality, certainty, sustainability and prosperity to the higher education sector. [Program 2.1; Program 2.3]
- Implement the National Priorities and Industry Linkages Fund to support enhanced engagement between universities and industry to produce job-ready graduates. [Program 2.3]
- Publish nationally consistent provider performance data through the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT). [Program 2.3]
- Provide grants to support the high-quality teaching of mathematics and science; and fund research-based industry cadetships in STEM fields. [Program 2.3]

Key activity 10

Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment

Performance measures

- The proportion of the 25- to 34-year-old population with a tertiary qualification. [PM009]

- The rate of attrition for domestic bachelor students. [PM010]

- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM011]

- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1). [PM014]

- Proportion of domestic undergraduates who identify as First Nations. [PM015]

- Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively. [PM016]

- Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the skills of graduates (overall across all skills). [PM017]

- The proportion of HELP debt not expected to be repaid on new debt. [PM018]

Delivery strategies

- Provide grants, through the Commonwealth Grant Scheme, to subsidise costs for students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate courses at public universities. This includes demand driven funding that supports all First Nations People undertaking a bachelor or bachelor honours degree at a Table A university and, from 2026, includes medical degrees. [Program 2.1]

- Support student places in priority areas at university and non-university higher education providers. [Program 2.1]

- Provide funding for FEE-FREE Uni Ready courses to help more students prepare for university courses, particularly students from under-represented backgrounds. [Program 2.3]

- Work with the higher education sector and First Nations People towards a reformed approach to increasing the participation and outcomes of under-represented groups in higher education, including through the extension of the Higher Education Continuity Guarantee for 2024 and 2025. [Program 2.3]

- Support students in regional and remote Australia to access higher education through the implementation of identified regional and remote programs, such as Regional University Study Hubs and Tertiary Access Payment. [Program 2.3]

- Provide funding to eligible universities to attract and support students with disability to participate in tertiary education through the Disability Support Program. [Program 2.3]

- Establish education facilities and programs that build links with local industry, address skills needs through innovative learning models and improve student employment outcomes through the Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program. [Program 2.3]

- Provide grants, through the National Priorities Pool Program and Regional Partnerships Pool Program, to undertake research and trial new approaches that will inform equity policy development and practice nationally and at an institutional level, and establish collaborative partnerships that will support students from under-represented backgrounds to aspire to higher education. [Program 2.3]

- Provide grants through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program, National Priorities Pool Program and Regional Partnerships Pool Program to improve access, participation and success for First Nations students, and to undertake research and trial new approaches that will inform First Nations and broader equity policy and practice nationally and at an institutional level. [Program 2.3]

- Provide financial assistance to students through income-contingent loans under the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). [Program 2.4]

Key activity 11

Support eligible current and former university employees for certain superannuation expenses

Performance measures

- Proportion of eligible universities able to meet specified superannuation expenses. [PM012]

Delivery strategies

- Administer the Higher Education Superannuation Program in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022. [Program 2.2]

Key activity 12

Support the research system through investment in research, research training and national research infrastructure[9]

Performance measures

- The proportion of research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals that are Australian research publications. [PM019]
- Proportion of domestic research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree. [PM020]
- First Nations higher degree by research (HDR) completions. [PM021]

Delivery strategies

- Provide funding to deliver programs that support research infrastructure, industry collaboration, commercialisation, and the systemic costs of research. [Program 2.5; Program 2.6]
- Funding is provided to deliver programs that support research quality and increase the production, use and awareness of research knowledge. [Program 2.5; Program 2.6]
- Support the success of, and graduate opportunities for, higher degree by research (HDR) students, including support for increased industry engagement and representation of First Nations HDR students. [Program 2.5; Program 2.6]

9 This key activity has been revised since the 2024–25 Corporate Plan to better reflect Program 2.5 and Program 2.6 activities. This change was reported in the 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements.

Key activity 13

Support a high-quality and sustainable international education sector

Performance measures

- Proportion of international students employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM026]
- Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training delivered by Australian providers. [PM027]

Delivery strategies

- Support sustainable growth, quality, integrity and diversification of the international education sector. [Program 2.7]
- Build offshore market access by working with the sector to expand education offerings and innovate in delivery. [Program 2.7]
- Strengthen the integrity of Australia's education and research efforts by working with the sector to implement the Guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector. [Program 2.7]
- Strengthen strategic partnerships and promote qualifications recognition through bilateral and multilateral engagement with foreign governments and organisations. [Program 2.7]

Key activity 14

Support sovereign workforce development through broader access to education pipelines

Performance measures

- Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements. [PM076]

Delivery strategies

- Provide grants through the Commonwealth Grant Scheme to subsidise costs for students enrolled in STEM undergraduate courses at public universities. [Program 2.8]
- Support measures promoting educational offerings supporting sovereign workforce development. [Program 2.8]

Outcome 2
Changes to performance measures

Changes to Outcome 2 performance measures from previous financial year

2024–25 published performance measure	Change	Rationale
Proportion of undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM011]	Proportion of **domestic** undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM011]	The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic undergraduates and to align with the methodology.
Proportion of higher education students who are First Nations. [PM015] **Target** 2% or higher	Proportion of **domestic undergraduates** who **identify as** First Nations. [PM015] **Target** **2.2% or higher**	The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic undergraduates who identify as First Nations. The performance measure target has been raised to reflect the Australian Universities Accord and Closing the Gap targets.
Proportion of research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree. [PM020]	Proportion of **domestic** research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree. [PM020]	The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic postgraduates and to align with the methodology.
Proportion of international students employed after graduation. [PM026]	Proportion of international students employed **within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree**. [PM026]	The performance measure title has been revised for clarity and consistency with other measures that use the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Graduate Outcomes Survey.

2024–25 published performance measure	Change	Rationale
Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements. [PM076] **Target** Allocations under the Nuclear Powered Submarine Program are accurately reflected in providers' Commonwealth funding agreements, and at least 90% of payments which are included in the broader Commonwealth Grant Scheme Higher Education Course Advance payments through the UniPay system are made on time.	Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements. [PM076] **Target** **100% of** allocations under the Nuclear Powered Submarine Program are accurately reflected in providers' Commonwealth funding agreements, and at least 90% of payments which are included in the broader Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) Higher Education Course Advance payments through the UniPay system are made on time.	Performance measure target and data sources updated to provide further detail on the process by which the department will assess the accuracy and timeliness of Nuclear Powered Submarine Program allocations.

Outcome 2
Performance measures

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.1 The proportion of the 25- to 34-year-old population with a tertiary qualification. [PM009]	Increase from previous year	The number of Australian residents aged 25 to 34 years old with a tertiary (non-school) qualification over the total number of 25 to 34 year old residents in Australia is compared to the previous year. Data source: ABS, Education and Work, Australia, Table 24	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29
2.1 The rate of attrition for domestic bachelor students. [PM010]	Lower than 15%	Number of commencing domestic students in year (x) who neither complete in year (x) or year (x+1) nor return to study in year (x+1), over the total number of commencing domestic students enrolled in year (x). Data source: Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 15.1	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29
2.1 Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM011]	85% or higher	Number of domestic undergraduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing their degree over the total number of domestic undergraduates available for work 4 to 6 months after completing their degree. Data source: Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Graduate Outcomes Survey	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic undergraduates and to align with the methodology.

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.2	Proportion of eligible universities able to meet specified superannuation expenses. [PM012]	100%	Number of universities that can meet their expenses based on the funding provided by the Commonwealth over the number of universities eligible for funding, as per the Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022. Data source: – Department of Education program documentation – Annual program claim forms or cashflow funding documents from NSW State Super	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Collaboration and engagement

2.3	Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1). [PM014]	16% or higher	Number of domestic undergraduate enrolments with a permanent home residence in a low socio-economic area (based on Statistical Area 1 and latest SEIFA) over the total domestic undergraduate student enrolments. Scope: Domestic undergraduate student enrolments with a current permanent home residence in Australia as collected through the department's Tertiary Collection of Student Information system at the Statistical Area 1 level. This relates to domestic undergraduate students at providers registered under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. Data source: Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 11.2	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.3 Proportion of domestic undergraduates who identify as First Nations. [PM015]	2.2% or higher	Number of domestic undergraduate students who identify as First Nations over the total of domestic undergraduate students. Data source: Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 11.2	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Regulatory performance reporting

Best practice principle(s)

Continuous improvement and building trust

Risk based and data driven

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic undergraduates who identify as First Nations. The performance measure target has been raised to reflect the Australian Universities Accord and Closing the Gap targets.

2.3 Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively. [PM016]	80% or higher	Number of students who rated the teaching they received positively as measured by the 'Teaching Quality Scale' of the Student Experience Survey over the total number of students with a valid response to the 'Teaching Quality Scale' of the Student Experience Survey. Data source: QILT, Student Experience Survey	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29
2.3 Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the skills of graduates (overall across all skills). [PM017]	85% or higher	Number of supervisors of employed graduates satisfied with the skills of the graduate over the number of supervisors with valid survey responses. Data source: QILT, Employer Satisfaction Survey	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.4 The proportion of HELP debt not expected to be repaid on new debt. [PM018]	Equal to or lower than previous year	The proportion of debt not expected to be repaid on new debt is modelled by the Australian Government Actuary (AGA) using historical and projected repayment data in its longitudinal data on HELP debtors. AGA's modelling of debt not expected to be repaid (DNER) incorporates the expected impacts from any HELP policy changes. Data source: Australian Government Actuary	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29
2.5 Proportion of domestic research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree. [PM020]	90% or higher	Number of research postgraduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing their degree over the total number of research postgraduates available for work 4 to 6 months after completing their degree. Data source: QILT, Graduate Outcomes Survey	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised to clarify that the measure relates to domestic postgraduates and to align with the methodology.

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.5 First Nations higher degree by research (HDR) completions. [PM021]	Increase from previous year	Number of First Nations HDR completions compared to the previous year. Data source: Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 14.14	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Program number and performance measure		Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.5 **2.6**	The proportion of research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals that are Australian research publications. [PM019]	Above the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average	Number of Australian research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals divided by the total number of publications in the world's top 10% most cited journals, compared to the average for all OECD countries when applying the same calculation method. Data source: SciVal	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29
2.7	Proportion of international students employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree. [PM026]	70% or higher	Number of international graduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing their degree over the total number of international graduates available to work 4 to 6 months after completing their degree. Data source: QILT, Graduate Outcomes Survey	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure title has been revised for clarity and consistency with other measures that use the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Graduate Outcomes Survey.

2.7	Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training delivered by Australian providers. [PM027]	Increase from previous year	Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training courses delivered by Australian providers compared to the previous year. Note: These students are identified as those who have reported a citizen residence status of 'other overseas student who resides outside of Australia', collected through the department's Tertiary Collection of Student Information system. Providers are defined under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. This definition changed from the 2024–25 reporting process. Data source: Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 7.5	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Program number and performance measure	Target	Methodology	To be reported in
2.8 Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements. [PM076]	100% of allocations under the Nuclear Powered Submarine Program are accurately reflected in providers' Commonwealth funding agreements, and at least 90% of payments which are included in the broader Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) Higher Education Course Advance payments through the UniPay system are made on time	Reporting against this measure is based on data regarding the allocation outcomes which is entered into the UniPay system each program year, and payments which are made on a monthly basis in line with a published payment schedule. Note: Commonwealth funding agreements as published on the department's website are updated regularly to accurately reflect funding amounts and to provide transparency and accessibility to the Australian public. UniPay payment dates are published for universities each year. Data source: 2024–2025 Commonwealth Grant Scheme Funding Agreements, published funding cluster rates, UniPay payment schedule, and Higher Education Courses Advance UniPay Determination	• 2025–26 • 2026–27 • 2027–28 • 2028–29

Changes from previous year

The performance measure target and data sources have been updated to provide further detail on the process by which the department will assess the accuracy and timeliness of Nuclear Powered Submarine Program allocations.

Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AGA	Australian Government Actuary
AI	Artificial intelligence
APS	Australian Public Service
ATEC	Australian Tertiary Education Commission
CCCF	Community Child Care Fund
CRO	Chief Risk Officer
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
EWRs	Enterprise-wide risks
HDR	Higher degree by research
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program
ICT	Information and communications technology
ISP	Inclusion Support Program
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NATSIEC	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
PGPA Act	*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
PGPA Rule	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014
PM	Performance measure
QILT	Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RSPC	Random Sample Parent Check
SA1/SA2	Statistical Area level 1 / Statistical Area level 2
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SNAICC	SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and maths

Compliance

This corporate plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in section 35(2) of the PGPA Act. The table below details the matters included to comply with section 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule.

PGPA Rule requirements

Source	Matters to be included	Page
Introduction		
PGPA Rule 16E(1)	The corporate plan for a Commonwealth entity must cover a period of at least 4 reporting periods for the entity.	1
PGPA Rule 16E(2)1(a)	The corporate plan must include a statement that the plan is prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the PGPA Act.	2
PGPA Rule 16E(2)1(b)	The corporate plan must specify the reporting period for which the plan is prepared.	2
PGPA Rule 16E(2)1(c)	The corporate plan must specify the reporting periods covered by the plan.	1
Purpose		
PGPA Rule 16E(2)2	The corporate plan must state the purposes of the entity.	3
Key activities		
PGPA Rule 16E(2)3	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must outline the key activities that the entity will undertake in order to achieve its purposes.	37
Operating context		
PGPA Rule 16E(2)4(a)	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must state the environment in which the entity will operate.	4–6
PGPA Rule 16E(2)4(b)	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include the strategies and plans the entity will implement to have the capability it needs to undertake its key activities and achieve its purposes.	24–33
PGPA Rule 16E(2)4(c)	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include a summary of the risk oversight and management systems of the entity, and the key risks that the entity will manage and how those risks will be managed.	16–23

Source	Matters to be included	Page
Operating context *continued*		
PGPA Rule 16E(2)4(d)	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include details of any organisation or body that will make a significant contribution towards achieving the entity's purposes through cooperation with the entity, including how that cooperation will help achieve those purposes.	8–13
PGPA Rule 16E(2)4(e)	For the entire period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include how any subsidiary of the entity will contribute to achieving the entity's purposes.	N/A
Performance		
PGPA Rule 16E(2)5(a)	For each reporting period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include details of how the entity's performance in achieving the purposes will be measured and assessed through specified performance measures of the entity that meet the requirements of section 16EA of the PGPA Rule.	Outcome 1 – pages 38–51 Outcome 2 – pages 52–63
PGPA Rule 16E(2)5(b)	For each reporting period covered by the plan, the corporate plan must include details of how the entity's performance in achieving the purposes will be measured and assessed through specified targets for each of those performance measures for which it is reasonably practicable to set a target.	Outcome 1 – pages 38–51 Outcome 2 – pages 52–63
Publication		
PGPA Rule 16E(3)	The corporate plan must be published on the entity's website by the last day of the second month of the reporting period for which the plan is prepared (i.e. 31 August 2023).	This corporate plan was published as soon as practicable after the plan was prepared.
Distribution		
PGPA Rule 16E(5)	The corporate plan must be given to the responsible Ministers and the Finance Minister as soon a practicable after the plan is prepared, and before the plan is published on the entity's website.	This corporate plan was given to the responsible Ministers, and the Finance Minister prior to publication.