Australian Government
Department of Education

24 25 | Annual Report

24 | Annual
25 | Report

Acknowledgment 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 Elders past and present.

The Department of Education acknowledges diversity and respectfully uses both 'First Nations' and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' interchangeably in this document

2981-8966 (Online)
2981-8958 (Print)

Contact us

If you have any questions about this report, please contact:

Planning and Performance
Department of Education
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: ppt@education.gov.au

Online version

Web address of this report: education.gov.au/about-us/corporate-reporting/annual-report

Letter of transmittal

Australian Government
Department of Education

Secretary
Mr Tony Cook PSM

The Hon Jason Clare MP
Minister for Education

Senator the Hon Dr Jess Walsh
Minister for Early Childhood Education
Minister for Youth

The Hon Julian Hill MP
Assistant Minister for International Education

Dear Ministers

I am pleased to present the Department of Education Annual Report 2024–25.

This report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act) for presentation to the Parliament.

The report reflects the matters dealt with and the legislation administered by the department. It includes the department's audited financial statements in accordance with section 43(4) of the PGPA Act and the department's audited annual performance statements in accordance with section 39(1) of the PGPA Act. The report also meets the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (Cth) (PGPA Rule) in relation to annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities.

As required by section 17AG(2)(b) of the PGPA Rule, I certify that:

- fraud and corruption risk assessments and fraud and corruption control plans have been prepared and are in place for the department
- appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud and corruption that meet the specific needs of the department are in place for the department; and
- all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud and corruption relating to the department.

The report appendices also include the following:

- the Tuition Protection Services Annual Report 2024–25, as required under section 170B of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth); and
- information required under section 113 of the *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth) in relation to recoverable payments.

Yours sincerely

Tony Cook

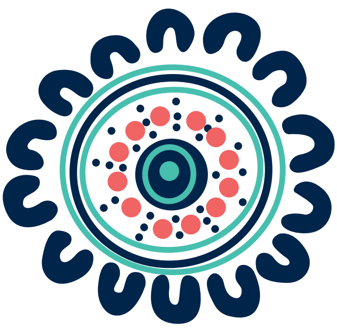
Mr Tony Cook PSM
18 September 2025

PO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601 | Phone 1300 566 046 | education.gov.au | ABN 12 862 898 150

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past and present. We acknowledge all First Nations peoples and their deep and enduring connection to land, waters and community.



01
Overview

Secretary's review

This year, we advanced our role as national leader and steward of Australia's education system – from early childhood to schooling and through to higher education. We delivered the government's policy reform agenda.

We worked in partnership to deliver on the Australian Government's priorities and reform agenda. This included engaging with youth on issues that affect them. We reached agreement with all jurisdictions on the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement. We also implemented a number of recommendations from the Australian Universities Accord.

Our continued efforts support Australians of all ages to thrive through access to high-quality education.

Early childhood

We commenced work to support the Australian Government's vision to build a universal early childhood education and care (ECEC) system.

We are delivering the 3-Day Guarantee. This replaces the Child Care Subsidy activity test. By January 2026, all Child Care Subsidy eligible families will be entitled to at least 3 days of subsidised ECEC each week.

We are planning the Building Early Education Fund, which is designed to build more ECEC centres, including in the outer suburbs and regional Australia, giving more families access to quality ECEC in areas where it is needed most.

We progressed a range of early childhood workforce initiatives to attract, support and retain educators and teachers. These include the ECEC Worker Retention Payment which started in December 2024. This payment is already having a positive impact on the ECEC workforce.

We continued delivering professional development and paid practicum workforce grants. These help qualified staff complete their training and undergo practicums. This will improve staff retention, build a stronger supply of qualified staff, and increase workforce capacity. We also launched a website to connect educators and services for practicum placements and implemented a new living allowance grant for educators doing practicums in rural and remote locations.

We continued working with multiple partners to implement the National Children's Education and Care Workforce Stategy. These partners include states, territories, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, the Australian Education Research Organisation and the early childhood sector. The strategy supports workforce recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality. We have completed 14 actions and 7 more are underway.

We supported Jobs and Skills Australia to develop *The Future of the Early Childhood Education Profession: Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Capacity Study Report*. This report provides critical evidence and insights and deepens our understanding of the sector.

With safety and quality a priority, our focus on delivering the child safety reforms recommended by the 2023 Review of Child Safety Arrangements under the National Quality Framework continued and we fast-tracked new guidance regarding the safe use of digital technologies in advance of regulatory and legislative changes.

Improving outcomes for students

The department finalised negotiations for the Better and Fairer Schools Agreements to put all government schools across Australia on a pathway to full and fair funding. The agreements, negotiated with states and territories, the non-government sector, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and the Coalition of Peaks, are multi-year programs of reforms to ensure every student can access quality education.

The agreements include:

- boosting Australian Government funding to 25% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) for government schools in jurisdictions except the Northern Territory where the Australian Government will contribute 40% of the SRS, putting all public schools on a path to full and fair funding
- tying funding to reforms in equity and excellence, wellbeing for learning and engagement, and a strong and sustainable workforce
- introducing national enabling initiatives to help improve outcomes including the early years numeracy check.

We made significant progress on the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan. We collaborated with states and territories, the non-government sector, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. The plan sets out a clear pathway to attract more people to the profession and retain more teachers in the workforce.

Since establishment of the Plan we are:

- delivering Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships and expanding the High Achieving Teachers Program
- piloting new approaches to reduce teacher and school leader workloads
- co-designing a First Nations Teacher Strategy
- delivering a First Nations Languages Education Program, which now has 26 First Nations-led partnerships.

We support the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children. This includes delivering consent and respectful relationships education in schools. We also delivered the Anti-Bullying Rapid Review to examine how schools can prevent and respond to bullying.

First Nations partnerships and Closing the Gap

The department remains deeply committed to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap). This year we formalised our partnerships with both the NATSIEC, the First Nations education peak, and SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children, the peak bodies for First Nations children, further advancing all priority reforms under Closing the Gap.

These partnership agreements complement core funding for both NATSIEC and SNAICC recognising the vital role of First Nations' cultures in education and our commitment to Closing the Gap.

Connected Beginnings is an important partnership with SNAICC and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. It is a key contributor to the early childhood targets set in Closing the Gap. This year, we celebrated an auspicious milestone – the opening of the 50th Connected Beginnings site in Kununurra, Western Australia. The program now provides wraparound education and health support services to some 24,800 First Nations children nationally.

As part of the government's Central Australia Plan, schools received funding through the On-Country Learning Measure to improve school attendance and education outcomes. Schools in Central Australia received additional funding in 2024 and designed school action plans with their communities that focused on engagement, attendance and learning outcomes.

We are fostering collaboration between remote and metropolitan schools through the City-Country Partnerships Program, with 22 partnerships established to date, supporting student exchanges, educator development, and tailored curriculum initiatives.

Higher education roadmap

We progressed the Australian Universities Accord, the Australian Government's roadmap for higher education, with a strong focus on improving access and support for under-represented students. Implementation has begun on 31 of the Accord's 47 recommendations.

Under the Accord, we began aligning the higher education and vocational education and training (VET) sectors to remove barriers and harmonise regulations, governance and qualifications. We are collaborating with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Jobs and Skills Australia to ensure the tertiary system meets future skills needs.

We developed key changes to student loans. Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt indexation is now capped at the lower of the consumer price index or the wage price index. This change, applied retrospectively to 2023 and 2024, ensures indexation will never outpace wage growth. The department also undertook preparatory work in support of the government's commitment to a one-off 20% HELP debt reduction benefiting more than 3 million Australians with a student loan, and establishing a fairer repayment system.

The department implemented an increase to funding for FEE-FREE Uni Ready courses, which help students build the skills needed to enter and succeed at university. We also expanded eligibility for the $5,000 Tertiary Access Payment to support more regional students with relocation costs for tertiary study.

The National Student Ombudsman began on 1 February 2025, delivering a key commitment under the Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education, endorsed by all state and territory education ministers. The Ombudsman provides an independent avenue for students to escalate complaints about their higher education provider. We are progressing work on a National Higher Education Code to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, including a specialist unit to monitor and enforce compliance.

The department is supporting the government's quadrupling of the Disability Support Fund so that increased payments can begin in 2025–26. The fund provides supplementary funding to eligible universities to help students with disability access, participate and succeed in higher education.

To help students study locally we supported the expansion of the Regional University Study Hubs model to include Suburban University Study Hubs in outer metropolitan and peri-urban areas – a key action from the Australian Universities Accord. This expansion aims to raise aspirations and reduce barriers in communities with historically low university participation. There are now 56 regional and 15 suburban hubs.

Research reform

In 2024–25 the department provided $2.3 billion to universities through the Research Support Program and the Research Training Program to strengthen research and research training. This included $1.2 billion in funding to support the research workforce pipeline, enabling universities to award scholarships to students undertaking higher degrees by research.

We also released the National Digital Research Infrastructure Strategy and began investment planning to shape a modern research ecosystem. In May 2025, the Australian Government committed $77.0 million to address urgent capital needs in high-performance computing.

The department continued working with the Australian Research Council (ARC) on major reforms to strengthen its independence and support for the research sector. Key milestones in 2024–25 included legislative reform to enhance the ARC's independence, and the appointment of a new board and chief executive officer.

Strengthening the international education sector

Strengthening the integrity and sustainability of the international education sector is a priority for the department – supporting the government's commitment to ensuring high-quality education that delivers long-term benefits for students and the economy through sustainable growth. This year, we focused on visa processing priorities and upgrading the Provider Registration and International Student Management System.

We are working on behalf of the government to ensure Australia remains a sought-after, high-quality provider of international education and will continue working with the sector to shape future policy and regulatory reforms that support the integrity of the sector and the quality of the student experience.

Youth engagement

To strengthen youth engagement in policy and program design across government, the department's Office for Youth focused on implementing *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make*. As part of the *Engage!* strategy, the Youth Steering Committee and the Youth Advisory Groups worked alongside government departments and agencies to help shape a range of policies and programs that matter to young people.

The Office for Youth also launched the Digital Youth Hub to help young people navigate government services and share ideas, and established youth engagement grants to support regional, rural and remote and First Nations young people to engage with government. To build the capability of APS staff to engage with young people, the Office for Youth launched a Youth Engagement Toolkit for public servants, comprising a collection of engaging digital resources.

Departmental culture

We continued to strengthen our departmental culture through targeted programs. We launched the enhanced employee experience program, which is designed to embed our values and inspire behaviours that foster a positive, high-performing workplace. The empowerED program also focuses on attracting and onboarding new staff to help them settle in and become part of our departmental community. The program helps our people to realise their potential and supports our purpose by building a culture where everyone feels empowered.

During 2024–25 we participated in the Australian Public Service-wide Capability Review pilot program. This assessed our capability to meet current objectives and future challenges and opportunities. The review report was delivered in June 2025. We developed an action plan in response to the findings and published it in September 2025. This action plan builds on existing and planned work to uplift capability across the department. It focuses on areas of importance such as strategy, partnerships and user experience.

I am proud of the commitment and the professionalism with which these programs have been delivered by my department. For this commitment and professionalism, I thank my staff. I thank them also for their agility in responding to the evolving priorities of government and the education sector.

Tony Cook

Tony Cook PSM
Secretary,
Australian Government
Department of Education

18 September 2025

Our portfolio

Ministers

As at 30 June 2025

The Hon Jason Clare MP

Minister for Education

Senator the Hon Dr Jess Walsh

Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth
(from 13 May 2025)

The Hon Julian Hill MP

Assistant Minister for International Education
(from 13 May 2025)

Former ministers

The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth
(1 July to 13 May 2025)

Senator the Hon Anthony Chisholm

Assistant Minister for Education
(1 July to 13 May 2025)

Department of Education

Purpose

We create a better future for all Australians through education.

Outcomes and programs

In 2024–25 the department achieved its purpose through the delivery of 2 outcomes and 13 programs.

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.

- **Program 1.1** Support for the Child Care System
- **Program 1.2** Child Care Subsidy
- **Program 1.3** Government Schools National Support
- **Program 1.4** Non-Government Schools National Support
- **Program 1.5** Early Learning and Schools Support

Outcome 2

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

- **Program 2.1** Commonwealth Grant Scheme*
- **Program 2.2** Higher Education Superannuation Program
- **Program 2.3** Higher Education Support
- **Program 2.4** Higher Education Loan Program
- **Program 2.5** Investment in Higher Education Research
- **Program 2.6** Research Capacity
- **Program 2.7** International Education Support
- **Program 2.8** Nuclear Powered Submarine Program

* The title of this program was changed to Core Commonwealth Funding for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in the 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements.

Role and functions

As at 30 June 2025, the department was responsible for leading implementation of national policy and programs that help to build a strong future by supporting the ECEC and schooling systems, developing strong frameworks for Australia's young people, and enabling access to higher education, so that Australia can maximise personal, social and economic outcomes. In addition, enhancing Australia's role as a provider of international education and world-class research remained a priority.

We delivered on our purpose by advising our ministers, implementing Australian Government policies and programs and administering legislation. To achieve this, we used research, evidence and data and worked collaboratively with industry, stakeholders, and state and territory governments.

Authority

Table 1.1: Details of the accountable authority during the reporting period, 2024–25

Name	Position title	Date of commencement	Date of cessation
Mr Tony Cook PSM	Secretary	4 April 2023	-

Portfolio entities

As at 30 June 2025

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

Mr Stephen Gniel
Chief Executive Officer

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

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Mr Tim Bullard
Chief Executive Officer

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

Australian Research Council

Professor Ute Roessner
Chief Executive Officer

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

Australian Government
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

Dr Mary Russell
Chief Executive Officer

Outcome: Contribute to a high-quality higher education sector through streamlined and nationally consistent higher education regulatory arrangements; registration of higher education providers; accreditation of higher education courses; and investigation, quality assurance and dissemination of higher education standards and performance.

Australian National University

Australian National University

Professor Genevieve Bell
Vice Chancellor,
President and Chief Executive Officer

The Australian National University (ANU) is a research intensive educational institute, established by the *Australian National University Act 1991* (Cth). The ANU is not part of the general government sector.

Our departmental structure

As at 30 June 2025

Tony Cook PSM, Secretary

Kylie Crane PSM
Deputy Secretary

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

Child Care

Early Learning Programs and Youth

Evidence and Reform

Meg Brighton
Deputy Secretary

SCHOOLS

Funding and Data Collection

Teaching and Learning

Improving Student Outcomes

National Reform

Ben Rimmer
Deputy Secretary

HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL

International

Higher Education Programs and Student Experience

Research

Higher Education Stewardship and Funding

Marcus Markovic
Deputy Secretary

CORPORATE AND ENABLING SERVICES

People, Parliamentary and Communications

Financial Management

Strategy, Data and Measurement

Education Funding System and Digital Services

Corporate and Early Childhood and Youth Legal

Tuition Protection Service

Statutory Office

Highlights

Our people

1,835
People

1,769 Ongoing

66 Non-ongoing

1,546 Full-time

289 Part-time

75 Contractors

Diversity

69.2% Female*

30.5% Male*

2.9% First Nations

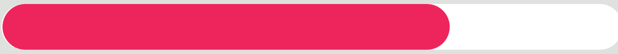
6.5% Disability

22.9% CALD#

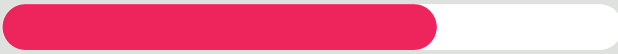
4.6% LGBTQIA+

Women in leadership

69.8% Executive Level



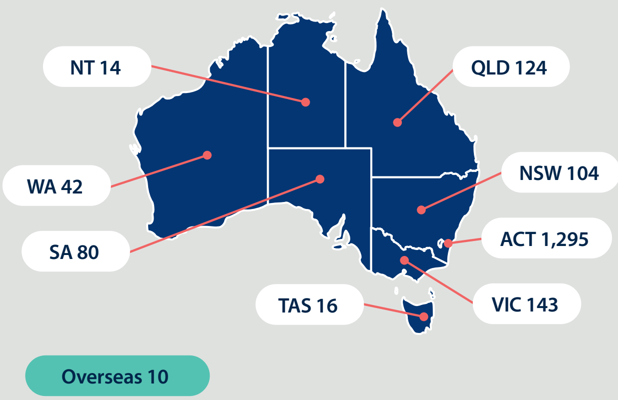
67.6% Senior Executive Service



6 employee-led networks

- Ability and Carers Network
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (Deadly Crew)
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Network
- Gender Equity Network
- Neurodiversity Network
- Pride Network

Across Australia and overseas



* 7 employees use a different term. To protect their identification, they have been added in the total figure only.

\# CALD refers to 'First language not exclusively English' as the measure, used for the purposes of benchmarking and tracking progress towards a target in accordance with the Australian Public Service CALD Employment Strategy.

2025 APS Census highlights

89%
education participation rate

79%
rated immediate supervisor leadership positively

74%
rated SES leadership positively

76%
rated their engagement positively

73%
rated communication and change positively

73%
rated wellbeing policies and support positively

68%
felt willing and able to be innovative

2024–25 Budget highlights

Administered expenses	**$61.5** BILLION	2024–25
	$55.5 BILLION	2023–24
Departmental expenses	**$416.9** MILLION	2024–25
	$367.0 MILLION	2023–24

Our achievements

Provided $3.6 billion in funding to support a
15% wage increase for ECEC workers

Supported the investment of **$1.47 billion to build a universal early education system**

Increased Australian Government funding to 25% of the Schooling Resource Standard for government schools in all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory (where it will be increased to 40%) through the Full and Fair Funding Agreement

Capped indexation for HELP debts which **reduced $3 billion in HELP debts for 3 million people**

Provided **$331.65 per week** for the Commonwealth Prac payment to **73,000 students** of nursing, midwifery, teaching or social work

Supported more than 90,000 Australian researchers and 26 projects through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)

Established the 50th site of the Connected Beginnings program in Kununurra, Western Australia to **provide education and health support services to around 640 First Nations children**

Year in review

Early childhood and youth

In 2024–25, we played a key role in supporting and strengthening early childhood education and care (ECEC). We focused on strengthening the sector's workforce, progressing toward a universal early education, and prioritising children's safety and wellbeing. Our actions helped enable families to participate in work, training, study, or volunteering. We ensured all children have access to high-quality ECEC services. This is particularly important for vulnerable or disadvantaged children. The department also championed youth engagement and actively built genuine, collaborative partnerships with stakeholders to create lasting positive change.

Next steps in building a universal early education system

On 11 December 2024, the Australian Government announced a $1.47 billion investment in a universal early education system. This is the next step towards making a simple, affordable and accessible ECEC system for every family. This investment includes $1.03 billion for establishing the Building Early Education Fund. This fund will see more child care centres built and expanded in areas of need. The government also annnounced $426.7 million for the 3-Day Guarantee (increased to $431.1 million in the 2025–26 Budget). From January 2026, the 3-Day Guarantee will replace the Child Care Subsidy activity test – which uses work-related activity levels to determine eligibility for subsidised early education – with guaranteed eligibility for 3 days a week of subsidised early education for families eligible for the Child Care Subsidy.

As part of this package, the government has committed $10.4 million to deliver the Early Education Service Delivery Price project to better understand the cost of delivering quality ECEC around the country and underpin future reform. These reforms have been informed by work of the Productivity Commission and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission on early education.

Strengthening the ECEC workforce

We work in partnership with multiple organisations to implement the National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy (2022–2031). Our partners include state and territory governments, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), the Australian Education Research Organisation and the broader ECEC sector. The strategy has the 21 actions. As at June 2025 we completed 14 actions. These comprise 12 short-term actions and 2 medium-term actions. A further 7 actions are underway. We developed the strategy to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality of the ECEC sector workforce. It is guided by our shared vision of a sustained, high-quality workforce that is respected and valued by the broader community.

The department supported Jobs and Skills Australia in the development of *The Future of the Early Childhood Education Profession: Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Capacity Study*, published on 3 September 2024. The study provides a detailed analysis of current and future workforce supply and demand across the ECEC sector and identifies the need for sustained, coordinated national action. Its findings and recommendations are informing ongoing policy development and implementation of the National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy.

The Australian Government is also investing $72.4 million over 5 years from 2022–23 to 2026–27 to better support the skills and training of the ECEC workforce. The department administered professional development and paid practicum workforce grant schemes in 2024–25. Support was available for all services, and demand for these grants was high. The professional development grant delivered $17.2 million in subsidised support for over 60,100 educators across more than 5,070 services to undertake professional development. The paid practicum grants delivered $12.5 million in subsidised support to over 2,100 educators in more than 1,340 services to complete early childhood qualifications. Additionally, to support practicum exchanges, a website was launched in October 2024 to connect educators and early childhood services, assisting them to find and coordinate practicum placements. A new grant opportunity was made available from early 2025 in the form of a living allowance to educators undertaking practicums in rural and remote locations.

Funding a wage increase for the early childhood education and care workforce

On 8 August 2024, the Australian Government announced $3.6 billion in funding to support a 15% wage increase over 2 years for eligible ECEC workers through the ECEC Worker Retention Payment (WRP). Administered by the department, the ECEC WRP is paid as a grant to eligible centre-based day care and outside school hours care providers. Funding is conditional on providers limiting fee growth, engaging eligible ECEC workers through a compliant workplace instrument and passing funding to eligible workers through increased wages.

Applications opened on 8 October 2024. As at 30 June 2025, 3,478 WRP applications have been received, representing 58% of all eligible providers. The department has executed 1,605 grant agreements with eligible providers and delivered more than $324.3 million in funding under the program. Internet vacancy data has shown a decrease in vacancies of 22% for ECEC workers yearly from May 2024 to June 2025 and a 2.7% decrease in staffing waivers for centre-based day care services in March 2025 compared to March 2024.

Strengthening the National Quality Framework with a child safety focus

The National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Australia involves shared responsibility between state and territory governments and the Australian Government. The Australian Government works with the ACECQA and all governments on the administration of the NQF, ensuring it remains contemporary and fit for purpose. States and territories are responsible for the administration of the NQF, implementing and enforcing the NQF at the local level, including monitoring and enforcing compliance against National Law and National Regulations and assessing services against the National Quality Standard.

The department continues to work with state and territory governments to implement recommendations from the Review of Child Safety Arrangements under the NQF.

The National Model Code and Guidelines (www.acecqa.gov.au/national-model-code-taking-images-early-childhood-education-and-care) were released in July 2024. This is a voluntary set of guidelines for taking, sharing, and storing images/videos of children in ECEC settings. It aims to promote a child safe culture and complement existing child safety measures within the ECEC sector.

New materials (www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/early-childhood-education-and-the-teacher-standards) were developed to support early childhood teachers, leaders and employers to apply the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in non-school settings. These standards provide a framework for evaluating the quality of teaching across various educational contexts, including ECEC settings.

In June 2025, education ministers agreed key regulatory amendments (www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/InformationSheet_CS5_2025.pdf) to enhance the safety and wellbeing of children in ECEC. The amendments, part of the Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2025, came into effect in most states and territories on 1 September 2025. Key changes include mandatory 24-hour reporting (down from 7 days) of any allegations, complaints or incidents of physical abuse; a ban on vaping devices and substances in all early education and care services; and stronger protections around digital technology use, including a requirement for services to have policies and procedures for the safe use of digital technologies and online environments.

Two guidance packages were released on 16 June 2025 to support the sector ahead of regulatory changes: the NQF Child Safe Culture Guide and NQF Online Safety Guide. These resources support services to embed a child safe culture and child safe online environments.

Public consultation on policy options to respond to the further recommendations of the Review of Child Safety Arrangements took place between 28 April 2025 and 11 June 2025. Outcomes of this consultation will inform decisions to be made by education ministers on further changes to the NQF.

Implementing the youth engagement strategy

Over the past year the department, through the Office for Youth (OFY), has focused on implementing the *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make (Engage!)* strategy. *Engage!* is designed to strengthen youth engagement in policy and program design across government. Through a range of programs coordinated by OFY, young people have been working alongside government departments and agencies to positively influence the work they are doing.

In 2024–25 OFY worked alongside 11 Australian Government agencies and over 100 young people through the Youth Steering Committee, the Youth Advisory Groups and the 2025 National Youth Forum. Through these programs, young people provided advice directly to policymakers on:

- regional, rural and remote engagement in education, disaster resilience and drought resilience
- climate and water policy
- employment policy and career information
- First Nations education and engagement
- Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031
- civic engagement initiatives
- creative industries
- initiatives for prevention of gender-based violence.

In 2024 the department also launched the Digital Youth Hub; established youth engagement grants to support regional, rural and remote and First Nations young people to engage with government; and published the Youth Engagement Toolkit to build the capability of Australian Public Service staff to engage with young people. The department also recognised the contributions of young people through the 2025 Young Australian of the Year Award.

Schools

In 2024–25 the department continued its role of providing stewardship of Australia's school education system with the objective of supporting all children and young people to thrive. Key activities included:

- reaching agreement with every state and territory to put all government schools in the country on a pathway to full and fair funding
- strengthening the integrity of funding arrangements
- progressing implementation of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and the schools Unique Student Identifier (USI) as part of the National School Reform Agreement
- working in partnership with the Northern Territory Government and community, including First Nations families, staff and students, to implement additional funding for schools in Central Australia to improve student outcomes
- partnering with states, territories and the non-government sector to deliver the Consent and Respectful Relationships Education (CRRE) Budget measure.

Better and Fairer Schools Agreements

During 2024–25, the Australian Government reached agreement with all jurisdictions through the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034* (BFSA) and the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034 — Full and Fair Funding* (Full and Fair Funding Agreement). These agreements put all government schools on a pathway to full and fair funding – 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). Both agreements tie additional Australian Government funding to reforms that will help students catch up, keep up and finish school.

The Full and Fair Funding Agreement increases the Australian Government funding commitment to 25% by 2034 for all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory (NT). For government schools in the NT, the Australian Government will contribute 40% of the SRS by 2029.

Through these agreements, the governments commit to targeted reforms focused on 3 priority areas: equity and excellence, wellbeing for learning and engagement, and a strong and sustainable workforce.

Recurrent funding

In the 2024 calendar year, the department delivered recurrent funding to support school education:

- $11.3 billion to the states and territories for government schools
- $18.3 billion to non-government approved authorities for non-government schools.

Schools are funded through a combination of Australian Government funding, state and territory government funding, and funding from fees, charges and other parental or private contributions. The department employs annual data and capacity to contribute (CTC) scores for all eligible non-government schools to calculate funding for each school year.

Funding integrity

In 2024–25, the department continued expansion of its regulatory assurance and compliance activities designed to prevent, detect and respond to non-compliance and fraud. Through this measure, the department is:

- improving data integrity by increasing the number of schools checked each year through the non-government schools census post-enumeration exercise so there is a clear picture of student enrolments in non-government schools
- increasing use of data analytics to ensure recurrent funding is being appropriately used for school education and to identify if further investigations are needed
- increasing compliance activity by expanding the number of audits of approved authorities representing non-government schools to ensure funding is being spent appropriately on school education.

Capital investment

The department continued delivering the Capital Grants Program in 2024–25, which provided funding of $244.6 million to assist non-government schools to improve capital infrastructure where their school communities may otherwise not have access to sufficient capital resources. Funding is used for a range of infrastructure projects such as for new construction or refurbishment of classrooms, libraries, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) facilities. In 2024, the program supported 254 projects at 224 schools.

National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

The department continues to lead the implementation of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (NTWAP) in collaboration with state and territory education, the non-government sector, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. Of the 27 actions under the plan, 20 actions are complete with implementation ongoing for some such as the Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships and the High Achieving Teachers Program.

Key milestones in 2024–25 were:

- Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships (NTWAP Action 2)
  In 2024–25, the department processed 3,388 applications for Round 2 for people commencing their ITE degree in the 2025 academic year, resulting in a total of 991 scholarships being awarded. Up to 5,000 scholarships worth up to $40,000 are being delivered to initial teacher education (ITE) students each year over the next 5 years as part of the Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships program.
- Expansion of the High Achieving Teachers (HAT) Program (NTWAP Action 3)
  A total of 2,362 HAT places are being delivered (760 from the 2022 election commitment and 1,500 from the government's additional commitment under the NTWAP). As part of Phase 2 of delivering these places, 10 providers are delivering pilots focusing on recruiting people from a diverse range of backgrounds, including STEM specialists, First Nations people, people with disability, teacher aides, and people based in remote locations. Participants are placed in primary and secondary schools that are experiencing teacher shortages. They take on teaching positions in schools for which they receive a high degree of training and support, while they complete an Australian accredited teaching qualification.
- Implementation of Teacher Education Expert Panel recommendations (NTWAP Action 8)
  Following Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) decisions to strengthen initial teacher education in response to recommendations of the Teacher Education Expert Panel, the department implemented the Strong Beginnings (Transition) Fund to support higher education providers to implement improvements to initial teacher education programs.

- Co-design actions to attract and retain more First Nations teachers (NTWAP Action 10)
  The department is consulting First Nations Peak bodies, jurisdictions, and other First Nations and education stakeholders as part of the development of the First Nations Teacher Strategy.
- First Nations Languages Education Program (NTWAP Action 10)
  The Australian Government has invested $14.0 million for the First Nations Languages Education Program, which has been designed and delivered in partnership with First Languages Australia. Through this program, 26 First Nations community-led projects will strengthen First Nations language learning in primary schools through community-led partnerships, while increasing the number and strength of First Nations languages being spoken through intensive language learning activities.
- Workload Reduction Fund (NTWAP Action 12)
  A total of $28.8 million in funding has been provided or committed through the $30.0 million Workload Reduction Fund to pilot new approaches to reducing teacher and school leader workloads. This includes pilot programs such as providing additional support staff in schools, providing extra support to manage complex parent and carer communications, digitising materials to reduce administrative burden, providing access to high-quality curriculum resources, and using generative artificial intelligence to help with lesson planning and learning activities. States and territories provide matched funding for each agreed pilot.

Anti-Bullying Rapid Review

The Anti-Bullying Rapid Review (ABRR) was announced in February 2025, with Dr Charlotte Keating and Dr Jo Robinson AM appointed as co-chairs. The department established the ABRR Taskforce to support the co-chairs. The review has looked at what is working and what needs strengthening before reporting to education ministers on options for the development of a consistent national standard for responding to bullying and its underlying causes in schools.

The department supported an extensive program of stakeholder consultations commencing in March 2025 to inform the review, including receiving more than 1,600 written submissions. The co-chairs consulted with parent groups, school peak bodies, unions, and government agencies, as well as directly with parents, teachers and young people, to ensure their lived experience was considered in the review.

Wellbeing and social cohesion

Students with strong social and emotional wellbeing are more engaged with learning, which supports higher levels of academic achievement and attainment.

In 2024–25 the department continued to deliver the National Student Wellbeing Program, providing states and territories with ongoing funding of $61.5 million per year to give schools more choice in hiring either a student wellbeing officer or a chaplain to support students and school communities.

The department also implemented a voluntary mental health check tool, known as My Mind Check, as part of the Australian Government's $11.7 million Student Wellbeing Boost election commitment. My Mind Check is a free, evidence-based digital mental health and wellbeing check-in that provides early information about students' mental health and wellbeing and enables schools to support at-risk students.

Additionally, $4.0 million was provided to Together for Humanity to increase assistance for schools to address discrimination, in particular antisemitism and Islamophobia. The funding enabled Together for Humanity to expand its reach into under-represented communities and continue its work to empower schools and students to foster interfaith and intercultural understanding and improve social cohesion by bringing communities together. This included holding its 2024 national summit in the Australian Capital Territory, planning for the 2025 national summit in Queensland, and establishing 25 new Intercultural Understanding Partnership Grant agreements with schools to assist them to build intercultural and interfaith understanding and strengthen social cohesion.

Higher education, research and international

The department plays a central role in Australia's higher education system, encompassing funding, policy, and regulation. The department is committed to supporting the development of Australia's skilled workforce of the future through facilitating access to high-quality, equitable higher education and research. The department also supports Australia's sustainable, world-class international higher education system. This year the department's key achievements have included supporting the implementation of the government's response to the Australian Universities Accord Final Report, including actions towards cost-of-living relief, structural reform to the funding of higher education, and supporting student wellbeing:

- Supported the government to deliver reforms to student loans, including reducing indexation to the lower of CPI or WPI
- Undertook work to prepare for a one-off 20% HELP debt reduction benefiting more than 3 million Australians with a student loan, and establishing a fairer repayment system
- Established the new Commonwealth Prac Payment to support eligible students undertaking mandatory placements in nursing, midwifery, teaching, and social work courses, which started on 1 July 2025
- Provided additional funding to increase the number of students studying FEE-FREE Uni Ready courses
- Supported the government's response to the Australian Universities Accord, progressing structural reforms including the establishment of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission, and establishing a needs-based funding system and Managed Growth Funding System that will commence through a transitional year in 2026

- Established the National Student Ombudsman, providing a dedicated service for complaints about higher education providers
- Developed the proposed National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence to be considered by the parliament. The code will set best-practice requirements for higher education providers in preventing and responding to gender-based violence
- Supported the government to quadruple the Disability Support Fund from 2025. This significant increase assists eligible higher education providers to support students with disability to access, participate in and succeed in higher education
- Expanded the number of university study hubs across the country, which will include up to 20 more new Regional University Study Hubs and up to 14 new Suburban University Study Hubs.

Reducing HELP debts and making repayments fairer

The Australian Government announced in the 2024–25 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook a one-off 20% debt reduction measure that will benefit 3 million Australians who have a Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) or other student loan debt. This measure will reduce HELP debts by around $16 billion in HELP debts. The government has also announced changes to make the student loan repayment system even fairer by changing the repayment system and increasing the amount people can earn before they are required to start repaying their loan. The minimum repayment threshold will change from $54,435 in 2024–25 to $67,000 in 2025–26. The government has passed legislation to cap the indexation of HELP debts to the lower of the consumer price index or the wage price index. This change has been applied retrospectively to debts that were indexed on 1 June 2023 and 1 June 2024, reducing around $3 billion in HELP debts for 3 million people.

Commonwealth Prac Payment

The Commonwealth Prac Payment program was developed in 2024–25 and will commence on 1 July 2025. It will help ease the cost-of-living pressures for eligible students undertaking a mandatory placement as part of their bachelor's or master's degree in nursing, midwifery, teaching or social work, or a diploma of nursing.

Eligible students can access up to $331.65 per week (benchmarked to the single Austudy rate and indexed each calendar year) while undertaking a mandatory placement. This initiative represents an investment across the tertiary education system of $427.4 million over 4 years from 2024–25 to 2027–28 to support approximately 68,000 higher education and over 5,000 VET students while they are undertaking mandatory placements.

The new payment is a key element of the government's broader education reform agenda – cutting the cost of education, reducing student debt and delivering a stronger and fairer education system. The payment is being made to higher education providers that offer Commonwealth Supported Places to students studying a relevant bachelor's or master's degree.

For students enrolled in a diploma of nursing at a technical and further education (TAFE) provider or a registered training organisation, the government is administering the payment through the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Implementing FEE-FREE Uni Ready

The department is delivering additional Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding of $350 million over 4 years from 2024 to 2028 to properly fund FEE-FREE Uni Ready (FFUR) courses. FFUR courses are preparatory programs that help students gain the skills, experience and confidence they need to succeed in university without incurring tuition fees. This measure is likely to result in 30,000 students studying in FFUR courses each year by 2030.

Australian Universities Accord

The department continued to support the government's response to the Australian Universities Accord. In addition to supporting a raft of new reforms through the 2024–25 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) and 2025–26 Budget, the department established the Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) to provide expert advice on the implementation and legislation of the government response to the Australian Universities Accord. The IAC engages with and represents the views of the tertiary education system and the wider community on matters of higher education reform.

As part of the 2024–25 MYEFO package, the government announced a series of structural reforms to the tertiary education system, including:

- a commitment to establish the Australian Tertiary Education Commission as a steward of Australia's tertiary education system
- a new managed growth funding system to provide universities with greater certainty about the number of student places they are fully funded for, and to allow them to better meet student demand
- needs-based funding to better support under-represented students to participate and succeed in higher education.

Responding to gender-based violence in higher education

The department played a key role in the design and establishment of the National Student Ombudsman, which began operations on 1 February 2025. The National Student Ombudsman is independent and impartial, and provides an effective, trauma-informed pathway for higher education students to escalate complaints about their higher education provider.

The department continued work to support the establishment of a National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (National Code). The National Code will hold higher education providers to consistently high standards for proactively preventing and responding to gender-based violence, including in student accommodation.

The department is establishing a specialist unit to monitor and enforce compliance with the National Code. The unit will provide guidance, education and advice to support higher education providers to understand and comply with the National Code; share best practice; and gather data on gender-based violence in higher education.

Responding to racism in higher education

The department is supporting the delivery of a landmark $2.5 million study into racism at Australian universities, Racism@Uni: A National Study for Change (the Racism@Uni Study). Led by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), the Racism@Uni Study is examining the prevalence, nature and impact of racism in Australian universities, with a particular focus on incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia and the experience of First Nations peoples. The AHRC presented its preliminary findings in an interim report on 17 December 2024, observing that racism is pervasive and deeply entrenched in Australian universities and profoundly impacts both students and staff. The Racism@Uni Study final report will identify best practice and areas for reform, including recommendations for government and universities to help make universities safer for everyone. The final report is due to be delivered to government by December 2025.

Regional and suburban university study hubs

University study hubs offer infrastructure including computer facilities, high-speed internet and study spaces, as well as staff to deliver support in areas such as academic skills, administrative tasks and wellbeing, to enable students to access and complete their studies in their local community. Study hubs are not education providers themselves but help to support tertiary students by reducing barriers, and to build aspiration by making university visible in areas where there are historically low levels of university attainment.

During 2024–25 the department continued to support the implementation of Priority Action 1 of the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report, which involved establishing additional Regional University Study Hubs and expanding the model to outer metropolitan and peri-urban locations for the first time.

There are now 56 Regional University Study Hubs and 15 Suburban University Study Hubs located across Australia – a total of 71 hubs across both programs. Of these, 53 are open and supporting students, including the first 6 Suburban University Study Hubs. The remainder are expected to open by 31 December 2025.

As of November 2024, 5,270 students were registered with the 42 regional hubs operating at that time, a 32% increase in the past year. Of these students, 75% identified as female, 44% are the first in their family to undertake further study, 7% identified as having a disability, and 12% are First Nations.

National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy

The National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) provides cutting-edge national research infrastructure to support over 90,000 Australian researchers. NCRIS currently supports 26 funded projects and has an international membership that provides capability in environmental monitoring, climate and earth system modelling, nanofabrication, astronomical observatories, health research, imaging and microscopy, and high-performance computing and data.

During 2024–25 the department released the National Digital Research Infrastructure (NDRI) Strategy and undertook investment planning to set out the desired features of Australia’s NDRI ecosystem that are necessary to enable modern research. In May 2025 the Australian Government announced a first stage of $77.0 million in funding to address immediate capital needs for high-performance computing. In 2025–26 the department will undertake a second stage of funding to address remaining elements of the NDRI Strategy: research translation, environment and climate infrastructure, and the national research workforce priorities.

Strengthening the integrity and sustainability of the international education sector

The Australian Government is committed to a high-quality international education sector that delivers benefits for students and for our economy through sustainable, modest growth.

The department began implementation of the 2024–25 MYEFO measure Strengthening the Integrity and Sustainability of the International Education Sector, to support the prioritisation of visa processing and upgrades to the Provider Registration and International Student Management System. The department worked closely with the Department of Home Affairs to provide fairer access to offshore student visa processing through Ministerial Direction 111. This included engaging extensively with the sector by delivering webinars to over 1,500 stakeholders in December 2024 and January 2025.

The government is working to ensure Australia remains a highly sought-after prestige, high-quality, high-integrity provider of international education, delivering on its commitment to provide students the best possible study experience. It expects to continue the conversation with the international education sector about the size and shape of the sector as it determines the policy and regulatory way forward for reform.

First Nations focus

In line with the government's commitment under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap), the department continues to work in partnership with the Coalition of Peaks, NATSIEC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation), SNAICC (National Voice of Our Children), other First Nations partners, and all levels of government to ensure sustained progress over the life of the Closing the Gap Agreement.

In 2024–25 the department collaborated with NATSIEC to develop partnership agreements. One partnership agreement is between NATSIEC and education ministers; the second is a partnership agreement between NATSIEC and the department. Government agencies and the Coalition of Peaks were also consulted in the development of the partnership agreement with education ministers. Both partnership agreements were signed in early 2025.

In March 2025, the department signed formal Partnership Agreements with SNAICC – NATSIEC. These agreements articulate how SNAICC and NATSIEC will work in partnership with the department on matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families. They give effect to Closing the Gap Priority Reforms and will contribute to improved progress against early childhood and education targets, particularly Target 3 (preschool enrolment), Target 4 (developmental readiness) and Target 5 (students achieve their full learning potential).

Governance has been established to give accountability and oversight to the partnership agreement, with the development of terms of reference for 2 quarterly meetings between the department and SNAICC (regular partnership meetings and executive partnership meetings).

Closing the Gap achievements in Early Childhood

In 2024–25 the department completed its expansion of the Connected Beginnings program with the establishment of the 50th site, in Kununurra. This was a significant milestone achieved 6 months ahead of schedule. The Kununurra site will provide wraparound education and health support services to around 640 First Nations children, and up to 24,800 First Nations children will be supported through the program nationally.

Connected Beginnings connects First Nations children from birth to age 5 with support services. These include a range of early childhood education, health and family support services. The program helps meet the learning and development milestones to support a positive transition to school. It is jointly funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and delivered in partnership with SNAICC and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

The program is now in the consolidating phase, with a focus on supporting the 50 sites to implement community-led and culturally safe early childhood projects, delivering the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Leadership Transition Framework and strengthening the program into the future.

The first service to operate under the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Restricted Expansion program began on 23 June 2025. Napranum Early Childhood Centre, located in Napranum, combined its former day care and kindergarten services into one integrated service. The new model provides greater flexibility and access to high-quality early childhood education and care for local families.

The Napranum Early Childhood Centre service is funded as part of the almost $30 million expansion of the Australian Government's CCCF Restricted grants program. This expansion is funding the establishment of sites run by mainly First Nations led organisations. SNAICC is also a community partner for these sites, supporting their establishment and the implementation of community-led and culturally safe ECEC in these communities.

Both programs are key contributors to the early childhood targets set in Closing the Gap and support the priority reforms at the centre of the agreement.

Closing the Gap achievements in schools

NATSIEC and the Coalition of Peaks were involved in developing the Better and Fairer Schools Agreements. They also partcipated in the negotiations. These were the first intergovernmental agreements developed in partnership with First Nations representatives. The agreements recognise the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and knowledge. They honour the Australian Government's commitment to Closing the Gap. The agreements contain tangible reforms to improve education outcomes for First Nations students, targets for Year 12 attainment for First Nations students and initial teacher education, and increased transparency of school funding, including for reform measures.

As part of the A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia plan, the Australian Government invested $40.4 million from 2023–24 to 2024–25 to support the improvement of school attendance and education outcomes for First Nations young people in Central Australia under the On-Country Learning measure. In 2024 all schools in Central Australia received a share of $34.9 million in additional funding to implement activities from their individual school action plans. These plans were designed and endorsed through community engagement, with communities agreeing to activities that they knew would work best for them. The Northern Territory Government, with $4.9 million in Australian Government funding, delivered regionally coordinated services across the region. These services expanded access to allied health professionals and provided additional teaching and learning supports, including programs for intensive literacy and numeracy, Indigenous languages and culture, and English as an additional language or dialect.

The government is investing $26.0 million from 2021–22 to 2025–26 to establish the City-Country Partnerships Program to incentivise and support partnerships between remote schools with a high proportion of First Nations students and high-performing metropolitan schools. The aim of the partnerships is to create sustainable, locally responsive actions to improve school attendance and educational outcomes for students in remote Australia. Since the program began, the department has approved 22 partnerships across the country, including activities such as student exchanges, professional development for educators and specialised curriculum development.

Closing the Gap achievements in higher education

In higher education, the department continued to advance equity for First Nations students through targeted initiatives aligned with the Australian Universities Accord. Preliminary 2024 data show that First Nations students made up 2.3% of domestic undergraduate enrolments, continuing a steady increase from 2.2% in 2023 and 1.8% in 2018. To support this growth, the Australian Government extended demand driven funding from 1 January 2024 to all First Nations undergraduate students (excluding medicine) at Table A universities.

The department's Regional and Suburban University Study Hubs Program is also improving access for students in underrepresented areas with low tertiary participation, including First Nations students. There are 56 Regional University Study Hubs across Australia with 47 operational and supporting 5,270 students – 12% of whom identified as First Nations. Three dedicated local Aboriginal community-controlled hubs in Arnhem Land are supporting First Nations students on Country and 4 other hubs have First Nations Support Officers in place.

Additional initiatives include the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), which funds universities to provide culturally appropriate supports, and the forthcoming demand-driven needs-based funding system from 2026, which will ensure institutions are resourced to support First Nations students. The Regional Partnership Project Pool Program is also enabling targeted outreach and research, including a 2025 initiative led by Flinders University in collaboration with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Indigenous Allied Health Australia to increase awareness, aspiration and readiness for higher education pathways among First Nations youth in regional and remote areas. Furthermore, changes to the Tertiary Access Payment from 1 January 2025 has removed the 12-month post-Year 12 enrolment requirement, enabling more regional students, including First Nations students, access up to $5,000 in relocation support.

These reforms reflect the department's commitment to using data and evidence to improve outcomes and build trust in the way public institutions support First Nations learners.

The department also supported the Racism@Uni Study, led by the Australian Human Rights Commission, which includes a dedicated focus on the experiences of First Nations students and staff in Australian universities. Additionally, the expansion of FEE-FREE Uni Ready courses and the quadrupling of the Disability Support Fund are helping to remove barriers and support intersectional needs, ensuring First Nations students can access, participate in, and thrive in higher education.

Additional Reporting

The department assessed climate risks and opportunities by applying existing governance arrangements, risk systems and reporting, policies, and tools. The department's climate disclosure can be found at Appendix C.

As required under section 170B of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth), the Tuition Protection Service is required to produce an annual report for the reporting period. This can be found at Appendix F.

The department is committed to promoting and maintaining a culture that does not permit or tolerate child abuse, neglect or exploitation. The department's Child Safety Statement can be found at Appendix G.

In line with commitments made under Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality, Australian Government departments have committed to report on their efforts to achieve gender equality and build gender analysis capability in their annual reports. The department has agreed to be part of a pilot to report on a limited scope of requirements in 2024–25. This reporting can be found at Appendix H.

02

Performance

Statement by the accountable authority

I, as the Accountable Authority of the Department of Education, present the Annual Performance Statements 2024–25 as required under section 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, the Annual Performance Statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with section 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

Tony Cook

Mr Tony Cook PSM

2 September 2025

Our performance

Our performance information provides transparency and accountability to the Australian Parliament and the public on how we are delivering on our purpose and performing in line with our agreed objectives.

The department will continue to mature the quality of our performance reporting over time.

Purpose

We create a better future for all Australians through education.

Outcomes and programs

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.

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.

Key activities

1. Provide targeted support to families, children and early childhood education and care centres who need it
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.

Performance measures outlining the department's performance against Outcome 1 are on pages 50 to 88.

Outcome 2

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

Programs

- **2.1** Commonwealth Grant Scheme
- **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

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 university research sector through research training, research funding and national research infrastructure
13. Support a high-quality and sustainable international education sector
14. Support sovereign workforce development through broader access to education pipelines.

Performance measures outlining the department's performance against Outcome 2 are on pages 89 to 128.

Introduction

The department is committed to reporting transparent, accurate, and meaningful performance information. In 2024–25 we focused on enhancing both our performance reporting processes and the analysis of factors that contributed to the department's performance. As part of our assurance processes, we reviewed our performance measures to ensure they remain appropriate for measuring and assessing our performance from early learning years through to higher education and beyond.

In 2024–25 the department's annual performance statements were audited for the fourth year by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO). The audit was supported by dedicated internal resources. Participation in the audit has supported the department to continue to refine our performance measures, processes, and analysis in this year's annual performance statements and inform preparation for future performance cycles.

The number and composition of the department's performance measures has changed this year and may change in future years because of changes to government priorities and programs, as well as part of the continual improvement in performance reporting outlined above.

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 does not have a significant regulatory role, with most regulatory functions in the early childhood education and care, school, and higher education systems undertaken by states and territories or independent statutory agencies. The small number of regulatory functions for which the department is responsible for focus on safety, quality and financial integrity. As part of this regulatory work, the department works closely with state and territory governments, portfolio entities such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, and other education bodies such as the Tuition Protection Service and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

The Minister for Education's Statement of Expectations signed on 5 July 2024 and the department's Regulator 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 of regulation. Figure 2.1 outlines each of these principles represented by an icon and these icons are used in this chapter to indicate performance measures to which they apply.

The department continues to examine its regulatory performance to ensure its approach is fit for purpose and reflects our regulatory nature as it changes.

Figure 2.1: Regulator best practice principles

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 • PM070 • PM071
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
3. **Collaboration and engagement:** regulators are transparent and responsive communicators, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way.	• PM002 • PM012 • PM070 • PM071

Analysis of our performance

Table 2.1 outlines the classification system used to assess performance outcomes for the 2024–25 period.

When assessing performance, the department considered the current operating environment, the methodology and data sources, and classified the results according to the result ratings in Table 2.1. This assessment occurred as part of our processes to develop information for the Portfolio Budget Statements, for the corporate plan and/or annual performance statements included in this annual report. This has allowed a result rating to be applied to each performance measure and supported analysis of our achievement.

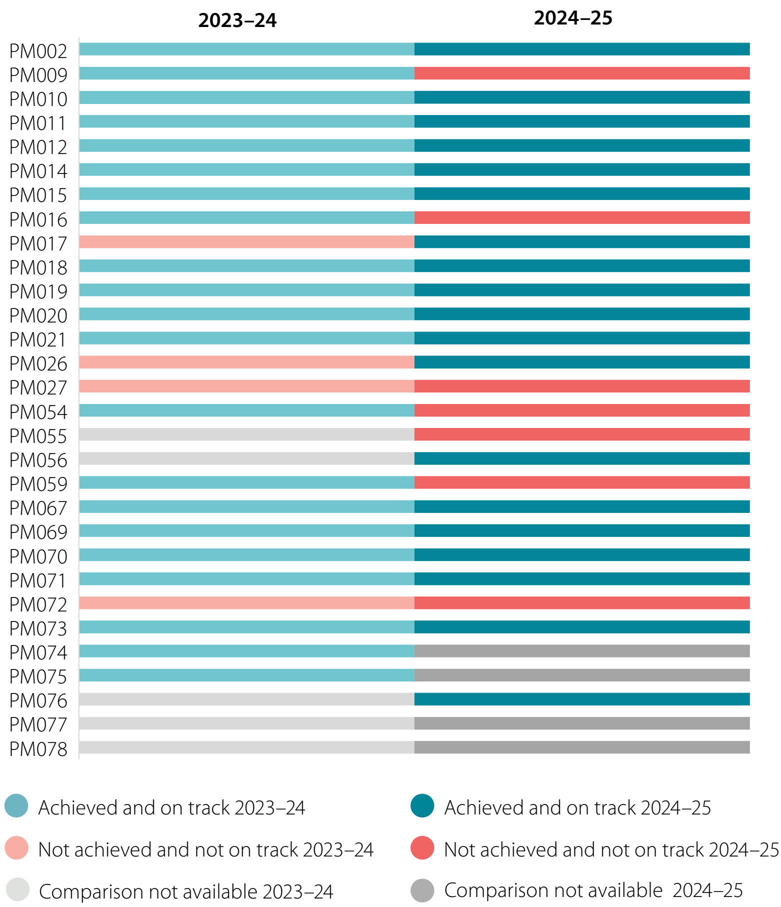
Table 2.1: Result rating for 2024–25

Achieved	The target was met or exceeded
On track	The target is on track to be achieved against future year targets
Not achieved	The target was not met during 2024–25
Not on track	Based on current information the performance measure is not on track to meet future year targets
n/a	Result not available or not measured in 2024–25

The department's 2024–25 Annual Performance Statements comprise 28 performance measures, of which 2 performance measures (PM077 and PM078) do not have 2024–25 results as they are new measures establishing baseline data for reporting in 2025–26. Performance measures show an overall decline in results for 2024–25, with 19 out of 26 (73%) reportable performance measures rated as 'achieved' or 'on track', compared to results published in the 2023–24 Annual Report where 21 out of 25 (84%) reportable performance measures were rated as 'achieved' or 'on track' (with 2 measures having no result).

There are 23 performance measures unchanged between the 2023–24 and 2024–25 Annual Reports. Based on the actual result values for these performance measures, 8 showed improved results, 9 results declined, and 6 results were unchanged from 2023–24. Figure 2.2 summarises how result ratings have changed in 2024–25 compared with 2023–24.

Figure 2.2: 2023–24 result ratings compared to 2024–25 result ratings[1]



1 Performance measures PM076, PM077 and PM078 could not be compared with 2023–24 results as they are new measures. PM055 and PM056 were revised in 2023–24 to account for the implementation of new NAPLAN proficiency levels at the national level.

Overarching analysis

Early childhood and youth

The department has direct responsibility for implementing the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), which is Australia's primary funding mechanism for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), reducing costs for families by paying subsidies directly to service providers (PM002 refers). It operates in conjunction with the Child Care Safety Net, which includes the Additional Child Care Subsidy to provide extra help with the costs of care to families in difficulty (PM067 refers), Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) to support disadvantaged communities and the Inclusion Support Program to help services accommodate children with additional needs (PM054 refers).

The department also works collaboratively with states and territories to co-fund preschool programs (PM069 refers) and facilitates the ACECQA in maintaining national standards.

In 2024–25, $15.2 billion in expenditure was made via the CCS System to support 1.2 million families with the cost of early childhood education and care. To ensure this funding is getting to families as intended, the department conducts compliance checks, investigates reports of non-compliance in coordination with state and territory regulators and offers guidance and resources to help providers and services understand their obligations (PM002 refers). The department's approach to maintaining the financial integrity of the CCS is publicly available on its website (www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-subsidy-financial-integrity-strategy).

The department continues to support access to quality ECEC through the CCCF, which aims to support families that face structural barriers and disadvantage. Among other projects, the department provides funding to ACECQA to deliver a project to support quality and safety in CCCF restricted services.

The department implemented a range of ECEC workforce initiatives in 2024–25, addressing nation-wide shortages, to support access to quality ECEC across Australia.

Administering the worker retention payment was a significant undertaking in 2024–25. The worker retention payment is a grant currently running for 2 years (2 December 2024 to 2 November 2026) to fund an uplift in wages for ECEC workers in services who agree to pass on wage increases to eligible ECEC workers. From October 2024 to 30 June 2025, 3,478 applications were received, and the department executed 1,605 grant agreements for the worker retention payment which provides a grant equivalent to a 15% wage increase for ECEC workers over 2 years from December 2024 to 30 November 2026. Data from December 2024 to June 2025 indicates 58% of eligible providers, representing 71.6% of eligible services have applied for grants and agreed to sign a workplace instrument that guarantees the funding will pass to workers in the form of higher wages.

The department delivers ECEC workforce measures intended to support families and their children access quality ECEC. In 2024–25 $17.2 million in grants was provided to support professional development opportunities for 60,144 early childhood staff by enabling services to backfill staff undertaking training activities. Additionally, $12.5 million supported 2,117 existing educators to complete current studies or undertake practicum placements.

The department collaborates with state and territory governments, ACECQA, and the ECEC sector to progress the 21 actions under the National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy 2022–2031 (publicly available at www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/providers/workforce/support/national-workforce-strategy); 6 were completed in 2024–25.

Schools

The delivery of schooling in Australia is a shared responsibility. The Australian Government has a key role in the provision of national leadership and funding, while state and territory government and non-government education authorities are responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of schools and the teaching workforce. The department collaborates with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority before (ACARA) on key areas such as data collection and reporting to monitor student progress and report on school performance.

The department's leadership on collaborative reforms and its significant investment ($11.7 billion in 2024–25 for government schools, $19.4 billion for non-government schools) to put the Commonwealth, states and territories on a pathway of full and fair funding for schools, builds upon existing efforts to ensure the national investment in schools facilitates a healthy schooling system. The schools performance measures work together to track overall progress toward this goal.

In December 2023, all education ministers affirmed their commitment to three key outcomes – equity and excellence, wellbeing for learning and engagement, and a strong and sustainable workforce. These reflect the core outcomes that the education system must strive for so that all young Australians can access an education that facilitates them to reach their potential. In 2024–25 this joint vision for the national education system was operationalised through *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034* (BFSA) and the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034* (Full and Fair Funding Agreement). The agreements will see public schools on a pathway to 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard and progress reforms to improve student outcomes, which will be reported on annually.

The department's strategic and supportive role in national education includes funding for nationally coordinated reforms which include improving student outcomes through initiatives including Year 1 phonics checks, early years of schooling numeracy checks, evidence-based teaching, early interventions, and targeted interventions, such as small-group or catch-up tutoring. The department's national leadership is supported by our portfolio entities including ACARA and Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

Although not statistically significant, school attendance rates in 2024 are down compared to 2023 (PM059 refers) and remain below pre-COVID levels. The department will continue to lead work with the states and territories and the non-government sector on initiatives to improve student attendance and performance, and support schools to provide engaging and safe places of learning for students. It is too early to see the impact of these initiatives in 2024–25, however the department expects the impact to be captured across the department's performance measure results in future years.

Academic achievement enhances outcomes for all students and evidence indicates that investing early in a student's education has the most significant long-term impact. The NAPLAN assessment in Year 3 is the first major assessment to compare the progress of students at a nationally comparable level in key foundational literacy and numeracy skills (PM055 and PM056 refer). The results in Year 3 are critical to identify the students most needing support and will be complemented by initiatives under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement to ensure students can catch up, keep up and finish school.

There is a clear link between finishing school and improved social and economic outcomes for young people, such as better labour market outcomes and access to further educational opportunities. In 2024, the proportion of 20- to 24-year-olds who have attained at least Year 12, or an equivalent vocational education and training qualification has held steady (PM072 refers).

Higher education, research and international

The department facilitates Australia's higher education institutions' delivery of world class education and research. Together with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, the Australian Research Council, and the Tuition Protection Service, the department is responsible for developing and implementing policy, as well as regulation in higher education and research. Access to and participation in quality higher education enables Australians to achieve their full personal, social, and economic potential, while also supporting Australia's future skills and workforce needs.

The higher education sector has undergone significant change over the past 5 years, with many external factors influencing student study choices. Domestic and international student demand has fluctuated in response to the Australian Government's emergency response to the pandemic (PM026 and PM027 refer). In addition, the strong domestic labour market and growing cost-of-living pressures have influenced prospective and current student decision-making about higher education (PM011 and PM20 refer). Increasingly, students are studying part-time, and universities are supporting the delivery of off-campus or online study (PM016 and PM017 refer).

In 2024–25, the department implemented various broad and targeted programs to alleviate financial barriers to higher education and improve student outcomes. This included around $7.7 billion to subsidise Commonwealth-supported students' tuition costs for over 800,000 domestic students through the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) and providing $7.9 billion via the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) to remove up-front cost barriers for over 950,000 domestic students through the income contingent loan scheme. Legislation was passed in November 2024 to cap indexation applied to HELP debt to the lower of the Consumer Price Index or Wage Price Index, effective from 1 June 2023. The lower indexation rates in 2023 and 2024 reduced the total HELP debt by around $3 billion (PM018 refers).

The department administers programs to support the participation, attendance and success of domestic higher education students from under-represented groups. In 2024–25 the department's $291 million Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund allocated funding to universities to support underrepresented students from pre-access (aspiration and outreach) through to completion via programs such as the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program, the National Priorities Pool Program and the Regional Partnerships Project Pool Program. In 2024, demand-driven funding was extended to all First Nations students, allowing students to attend the university of their choice for any non-medical bachelor course of study. Also in 2024–25, the government announced increased support by quadrupling funding for the Disability Support Fund and the establishment of 25 new Regional and Suburban University Study Hubs (RUSH and SUSH). While preliminary 2024 data indicate access and participation rates have improved slightly from 2023 to 2024 for First Nations students (PM015 refers), students with disability and students from low socio-economic status (low-SES) areas (PM014 refers), evidence of the impact of these programs are expected to become available in subsequent years.

In parallel, the department's investment in university research and research commercialisation programs is essential to Australia's ability to create new industries and jobs, improve our productivity and living standards and bolster our capacity to solve key national challenges. In 2024–25, the department provided $2.3 billion in research block grant funding through the Research Support Program ($1.1 billion) and Research Training Program ($1.2 billion). This funding also helps support a broad range of research activities, which over time is expected to contribute to fostering innovation and entrepreneurial culture critical to Australia's economic growth and prosperity (PM019 refers).

Summary of our performance measure results

Outcome 1					
Performance Measure	PM#	Program	2023–24 result	2024–25 result	Page reference
Proportion of accurate Child Care Subsidy payments to all services.	PM002	1.2	Achieved	Achieved	55
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	1.1	Achieved	Not achieved	57
Lower the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally).	PM055	1.3 1.4 1.5	n/a – a new baseline was established in 2023	Not achieved	61
Lower the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support proficiency level in NAPLAN for Numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally).	PM056	1.3 1.4 1.5	n/a – a new baseline was established in 2023	Achieved	64
Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time.	PM059	1.3 1.4 1.5	Achieved	Not achieved	67

Outcome 1					
Performance Measure	PM#	Program	2023–24 result	2024–25 result	Page reference
Average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Additional Child Care Subsidy.	PM067	1.2	Achieved	Achieved	70
Proportion of children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year.	PM069	1.5	Achieved	Achieved	72
Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.	PM070	1.3	Achieved	Achieved	75
Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for non-government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.	PM071	1.4	Achieved	Achieved	77
Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.	PM072	1.5	Not on track	Not on track	79

Outcome 1					
Performance Measure	PM#	Program	2023–24 result	2024–25 result	Page reference
The Australian Government will work to deliver the 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	1.5	On track	Achieved	82
Percentage of Office for Youth program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program.	PM077	1.5	n/a – this is a new measure for 2024–25	n/a	84
Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people.	PM078	1.5	n/a – this is a new measure for 2024–25	n/a	86

Outcome 2					
Performance Measure	PM#	Program	2023–24 result	2024–25 result	Page reference
The proportion of the 25- to 34-year-old population with a tertiary qualification.	PM009	2.1	Achieved	Not achieved	94
The rate of attrition for domestic bachelor students.	PM010	2.1	Achieved	Achieved	96
Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree.	PM011	2.1	Achieved	Achieved	98
Proportion of eligible universities able to meet specified superannuation expenses.	PM012	2.2	Achieved	Achieved	100
Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1).	PM014	2.3	Achieved	Achieved	102
Proportion of higher education students who are First Nations.	PM015	2.3	Achieved	Achieved	105
Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively.	PM016	2.3	Achieved	Not achieved	108
Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the skills of graduates (overall across all skills).	PM017	2.3	Not achieved	Achieved	110

Outcome 2					
Performance Measure	PM#	Program	2023–24 result	2024–25 result	Page reference
The proportion of HELP debt not expected to be repaid on new debt.	PM018	2.4	Achieved	Achieved	112
The proportion of research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals that are Australian research publications.	PM019	2.5 2.6	Achieved	Achieved	114
Proportion of domestic research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree.	PM020	2.5	Achieved	Achieved	119
First Nations higher degree by research (HDR) completions.	PM021	2.5	Achieved	Achieved	121
Proportion of international students employed after graduation.	PM026	2.7	Not achieved	Achieved	123
Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training delivered by Australian providers.	PM027	2.7	Not achieved	Not achieved	125
Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth supported places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements.	PM076	2.8	n/a – this is a new measure for 2024–25	Achieved	127

Outcome 1 performance measures

Changes to our Outcome 1 performance measures

Amendments to the department's performance measures published in the 2024–25 Corporate Plan are summarised below (changes in bold).

Performance measure PM070	Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.
The methodology was updated to add the specific place of payment to clarify the exact entity that takes the payments, confirming it is not directly distributed to schools by the Department of Education.	
Published methodology	The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid. If the date paid is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.
Amended methodology	The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid to the **Australian Government Treasury**. If the date paid to the **Australian Government Treasury** is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.

Performance measure PM071	Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for non-government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.
The methodology was updated to add the specific place of payment to clarify the exact entity that takes the payments, confirming it is not directly distributed to schools by the Department of Education.	
Published methodology	The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid. If the date paid is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.
Amended methodology	The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid to the **Australian Government Treasury**. If the date paid to the **Australian Government Treasury** is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.

Performance measure PM072	Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.
Title and methodology updated to clarify what certification / qualification are being measured.	
Published performance measure	Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.
Amended performance measure	Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 **certification**, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.

Performance measure PM072	Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.
Published methodology	a) Number of people aged 20–24 who have attained a school qualification of Year 12, 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. b) Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 who have attained a school qualification of Year 12, 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.
Amended methodology	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. 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.
Published data source	a) ABS, Survey of Education and Work. b) Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Dashboard, with underlying data from ABS Census of Population and Housing.
Amended data source	a) ABS, Survey of Education and Work. **Please note that this is a sample survey.** b) Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Dashboard, with underlying data from ABS Census of Population and Housing.

Performance measure PM077	Percentage of Office for Youth program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program.
The title of this measure has changed to provide more clarity around the role of 'program participants' and to more accurately represent the scope of the Office for Youth programs. The methodology was revised from binary responses to a scaled response to ensure data reliability and remove potential positive bias from responses.	
Published performance measure	Percentage of program participants who felt they directly influenced a government policy or program.
Amended performance measure	Percentage of **Office for Youth** program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program.
Published methodology	The program participants will be asked if they feel they were able to directly influence a government policy or program in the relevant evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a binary response.
Amended methodology	**Office for Youth** program participants will be asked if they feel they were able to influence a government policy or program in the relevant **post program** evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a **proportion of the total Office for Youth program participants responses**.
Published data source	Evaluation Survey of Office for Youth Program Participants.
Amended data source	**Office for Youth, Department of Education Survey Data**.

Performance measure PM078	Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people.
The methodology was revised from binary responses to a scaled response to ensure data reliability and remove potential positive bias from responses.	
Published methodology	The individual Australian Public Service employees who work with the Office for Youth will be asked how supported they felt to engage with young people through an evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a binary response.
Amended methodology	Australian Public Service employees from the Australian Government departments/agencies that work with the Office for Youth will be asked if they feel they were supported to engage with young people in the relevant post program evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a proportion of the total Australian Government departments/agencies representatives' responses.
Published data source	Evaluation Survey of Australian Public Service Employees Engaging with the Office for Youth.
Amended data source	Department of Education, Office for Youth Survey Data.

Outcome 1 performance measure results

Performance measure PM002

Proportion of accurate Child Care Subsidy payments to all services.

Target: 90% or higher

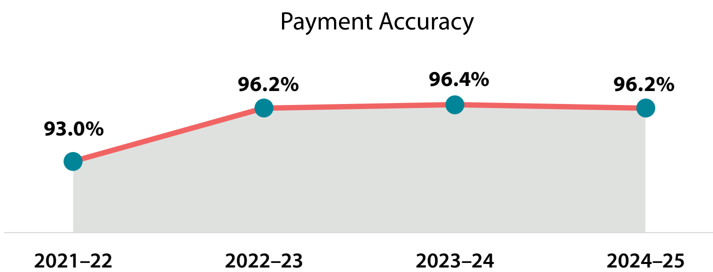
Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 96.2%

Analysis:

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) payment accuracy result was 96.2% in 2024–25. This represents continued and sustained improvement in payment accuracy since 2021–22 with now three consecutive years of accuracy over 96%.

The below graph shows annual payment accuracy results from 2021–22 to 2024–25.



This result is the outcome of CCS payment integrity measures that were announced in the October 2022–23, the 2023–24 and the 2024–25 Budgets to safeguard the CCS program from fraud and non-compliance.

The CCS is administered by approved child care providers under Family Assistance Law (FAL), who operate services including Centre Based Day Care (CBDC), Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), and Family Day Care (FDC). These providers are responsible for managing CCS payments to families and must comply with requirements to maintain their approval under the FAL.

The Department of Education is responsible for overseeing the integrity of the CCS program, ensuring that payments are accurate and compliant with legislative requirements. This includes administering regulatory functions such as provider approvals, compliance monitoring, audits, sanctions, and fraud prevention in collaboration with other government agencies.

The CCS payment accuracy result is used to assess the department's performance in delivering these integrity functions. A high accuracy rate reflects the effectiveness of the department's regulatory activities and its commitment to safeguarding public funds.

Payment integrity measures include bolstering education, audit and compliance activities, legislative change to close loopholes, improved detection and intelligence capabilities, monitoring, sanctions, applying approval conditions, criminal investigations and working with other government agencies to reduce and respond to fraud. Each of these activities play a role in driving high levels of payment accuracy and sustaining that level over multiple years.

In 2024–25, the department working with the Australian Taxation Office, implemented a new integrity measure, the Statement of Tax Record (STR) (www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/providers/howto/who-can-administer/fit-and-proper/statement-tax-record-child-care-subsidy) requirement for new CCS provider approval applications. The STR demonstrates the provider's engagement with the Australian Taxation system and is used to support a provider's fit and proper assessment.

During 2024–25, the department is also partnering with AUSTRAC (www.austrac.gov.au/partners/fintel-alliance) to identify potential instances of provider fraud and non-compliance and take appropriate action.

Methodology:

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 CCS payments and Additional Child Care Subsidy payments) are correct/incorrect.

Source:

The RSPC Checking Tool is a purpose built excel based analysis tool developed by ORIMA Research Pty Ltd to assess the accuracy of CCS payments.

The Tool integrates administrative data from the CCS system, including randomly selected service and family records for the survey period, and RSPC survey responses to generate a robust and comprehensive accuracy assessment. It supports streamlined quality assurance processes and enables the production of reliable, evidence based results for performance reporting.

Contributing program: 1.2 – Child Care Subsidy.

Key activity:

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

Regulatory principles:

Performance measure PM054

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

Target: Increase on previous year

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: 20.6%

Analysis:

For the purposes of this measure, the most 'vulnerable and disadvantaged communities' are defined as the areas of Australia that have been attributed Decile 1 or 2 under the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio–economic Disadvantage (IRSD). The below provides analysis of the combined outcome for the measure, and for each program separately.

The department administers grants under the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) and Inclusion Support Program (ISP) programs that fund ECEC providers. While separately, both the CCCF and ISP programs saw an increase in the proportion of services funded in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, when combined for this measure, there was an overall decrease compared with the previous year.

The combined proportion of CCCF and ISP funded services that were located in these areas and received program funding during the 2024–25 financial year is 20.6% of the overall number of services funded by these programs in 2024–25. Compared to the 2023–24 proportion figure (21.6%) the combined CCCF and ISP proportion percentage has decreased by 1.0% in 2024–25.

Although the measure was not achieved, analysis shows this was the result of the reduction in CCCF funded services being more significant proportionately than the increase in ISP funded services, leading to the overall number of services in lowest 2 decile having a slight reduction between years.

Importantly, both programs saw an increase in the proportion of services funded in the most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities when viewed by individual program.

The government is considering the findings and recommendations from recent inquiries (www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/childhood#report; www.accc.gov.au/inquiries-and-consultations/finalised-inquiries/childcare-inquiry-2023), including how these align with the goal of providing universally accessible and affordable early childhood education and care (ECEC).

Table 1 – Services in lowest 2 SEIFA deciles – proportion

Program	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
CCCF	45.9%	44.8%	44.7%	46.6%
ISP	17.0%	18.8%	19.1%	19.3%
Combined	19.6%	20.8%	21.6%	20.6%

Table 2 – Count of services funded*

Program	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
CCCF	857	810	749	584
ISP	5,748	6,077	6,649	7,100
Combined**	6,347	6,638	7,161	7,498

Table 3 – Services in lowest 2 SEIFA deciles*

Program	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
CCCF	393	365	335	272
ISP	980	1,144	1,271	1,369
Combined**	1,243	1,384	1,546	1,546

* Services in scope for measure PM054.

** Some services received both CCCF and ISP funding. Combined service total reflects a count of unique services funded under both programs, rather than the sum of CCCF and ISP funded services.

Inclusion Support Program (ISP)

The number of ISP funded services in scope for PM054 increased by around 7% in 2024–25 compared to the 2023–24 measure (Table 2 above). The proportion of services in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged areas (lowest 2 SEIFA deciles) increased from 2023–24 to 2024–25 (Table 1). For this measure, services in scope would be in receipt of the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) subsidy, or Innovative Solutions (IS) funding streams.

The ISP has increased the number of funded services in scope of the measure every financial year since 2021–22 (Table 2). The number of services funded under the ISP in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged areas grew by 98 in the 2024–25 period, compared to 2023–24. Overall, the ISP funded 451 more services in 2024–25 than 2023–24. The increase demonstrates an increased need for support in these areas, as the program is needs-based and demand driven.

The ISP provides tailored support and funding to ECEC services to help address barriers to participation of children with additional needs in ECEC alongside their peers. ECEC services can apply for funding support at any time, with some funding streams offering 12 months of support. ISP funding is needs-based and applications have been increasing annually. From 2022–23 to 2023–24 IDF Subsidy applications grew by 9.2%, then a further 8.4% from 2023–24 to 2024–25. The increase in services funded in disadvantaged areas over the past 3 reporting periods is indicative of increased needs of families and children in these areas.

Since 2021–22, the number of ISP funded services in the lowest 2 SEIFA deciles has increased from 980 (17.0% of funded services) to 1369 (19.3%) (Tables 1 and 3).

In addition, the ISP provides over $37 million in annual funding to Inclusion Agencies, that are available to support inclusion for all services, regardless of whether they receive IDF Subsidy funding.

Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Program

The number of CCCF funded services in scope for PM054 decreased by 22% in 2024–25 compared to the 2023–24 measure (Table 2). At the same time, the proportion of services in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged areas (lowest 2 SEIFA deciles) increased from 44.7% in 2023–24 to 46.6% in 2024–25 (Table 1). The number of services funded under the CCCF can fluctuate year by year, depending on the timing of CCCF Open Competitive grant opportunities and the number of applications for funding received/approved under each funding round. For example, grant agreements from 2 previous grant opportunities were finalised, with grant agreements under one grant opportunity commencing.

While there were less services funded in 2024–25 compared to 2023–24, the proportion of funded services located in the lowest 2 SEIFA deciles increased by almost 2%, reaching the highest level since 2021–22 (45.9%).

The CCCF provides targeted grants to support the continuation of ECEC services and improve access to early childhood education for children and families, particularly in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities. Part of the Child Care Safety net, the CCCF grants supplement the Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy for eligible services. There are a number of grant types under the CCCF, most notably:

- the 'Restricted' grant–supporting around 150 ECEC services since 2018, primarily in remote areas, and
- the 'Disadvantaged and vulnerable communities' grant – a competitive grant opportunity held every 2–3 years, with a general aim of supporting services in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, with varying focus and eligibility in each grant round. The number of services supported varies between rounds (400+ to 700+).

In 2024, the fourth round of this competitive grant opportunity was completed. The 435 services that were successful in receiving funding through this round are included in this measure for the first time in 2024–25. For this round, the department identified 350 priority areas experiencing particularly high levels of disadvantage compared to most other communities (www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/providers/extra-support/community-child-care-fund/disadvantaged-and-vulnerable-communities-grant/priority-areas).

In line with previous funding rounds, the priority areas were one of multiple eligibility criteria to apply for funding under Round 4. Priority areas were determined using the Australian Statistical Geography Standard Statistical Area 2 (SA2) level mesh block, with 2021 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) results and ABS 2021 child population data (aged 0–4 years) and SEIFA. The increase in the proportion of services funded under the CCCF program in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged areas in 2024–25 is consistent with the intent of the program and reflects its targeted funding approach.

Methodology:

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 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.

Source:

- ABS, SEIFA, Table 2 SA2 Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, 2021
- Department of Education, CCCF administrative data report
- Department of Education, ISP administrative data report
- Department of Education, Child Care Subsidy Approved Services Report.

Contributing program: 1.1 – Support for the Child Care System.

Key activity:

- Provide targeted support to families, children and early childhood education and care centres who need it.

Performance measure PM055

Lower the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support proficiency level in NAPLAN for reading for Year 3 students (nationally).

Target: Decrease on previous year

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: 11.3%

Analysis:

Nationally, the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support (NAS) proficiency level in NAPLAN Reading for Year 3 students increased to 11.3% in 2024 from 9.1% in 2023 (a 2.2 percentage point increase). This small increase in the NAS cohort should be interpreted with caution as this is only the second cycle where proficiency levels have been used to measure student achievement in NAPLAN making the data insufficient to provide any indication of longer-term trends.

The data shows that while there were small increases and decreases across domains and year levels, overall the results were broadly stable.

The average proportion of students who achieved at the NAS proficiency level in Reading in 2024 was 10.3%, decreasing from Year 3 (11.3%) to Year 5 (8.7%), and increasing in Year 7 (10.2%) and Year 9 (11.1%). The average proportion of students who achieved at "Exceeding" and "Strong" levels in 2024 was 67.0%, increasing from Year 3 (66.3%) to Year 5 (71.4%), then dropping in Year 7 (67.3%) and in Year 9 (63.0%).

National data rarely shows any significant change over a single year. As noted by ACARA in 2024, it is too early to interpret any clear trends given we have 2 years of data and, this year, was a new cohort of students (www.acara.edu.au/docs/default-source/media-releases/media-release-2024-naplan-national-results-release-14-8-24.pdf).

The Australian Government continues to work with all state and territory governments to reduce the proportion of students in the NAS proficiency level. In addition to jurisdiction and school specific initiatives to support literacy learning, the Australian Government is supporting literacy learning by funding several early year and school literacy initiatives.

These include the Year 1 Phonics Check and Literacy Hub which aim to ensure that students struggling with learning to read are identified early using evidence-based assessment tools and resources and teachers have the resources they need to act on results. More information about the initiatives is available on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/australian-curriculum/year-1-phonics-check).

The Australian Government also funded the creation of a microcredential by the University of Adelaide in the teaching of phonics, to provide teachers with training to support them in the implementation of these proven strategies in Australian classrooms. More information can be found on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/national-teacher-workforce-action-plan/announcements/free-online-short-course-teaching-phonics-now-available-teachers).

The Needs Additional Support (NAS) proficiency level is set at a level that indicates students at or below this level are not achieving the learning outcomes expected and are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily based on the typical skills and understandings for students at their year level (www.nap.edu.au/naplan/results-and-reports/proficiency-level-descriptions).

In August 2023, Australian Education Research Organisation's (AERO) research found that Year 3 students who perform below learning expectations are at a high risk of continuing to perform at that level throughout their schooling. This is why the measure reports on Year 3 outcomes to enable early intervention. AERO's research also noted that catching up and staying caught up is not easy to achieve, with only 17% of students who did not meet Year 3 expectations, catch up and stay caught to until Year 9.

More information is available at www.edresearch.edu.au/research/analytical-insights-papers/learning-outcomes-students-early-low-naplan-performance.

The national participation rate in NAPLAN for Year 3 has been above 90% for all assessments since 2008, which is consistent with the general attendance pattern.

Aggregated NAPLAN data at a national level does not separately report on government (program 1.3) and non-government (program 1.4) achievements with sector-specific data. The large-scale, rigorous and robust nature of NAPLAN dataset means that national data provides a thorough understanding of the performance of all schools and systems supported by the needs-based funding model in these key foundational learning areas.

NAPLAN results are not publicly reported by school sector under the nationally agreed *Principles and protocols for reporting in Australia* (dataandreporting.blob.core.windows.net/anrdataportal/Data-Access-Program/principles-and-protocols-for-reporting-on-schooling-in-australia.pdf). This highlights that NAPLAN data disaggregation by sector does not allow nuanced interpretation and fair comparisons nor take into account the vastly different levels of socio-educational advantage between sectors, so carries a significant risk of misinterpretation and misuse of information without this important context.

Methodology:

The percentage of students identified as 'Needs additional support' in NAPLAN reading at the Year 3 level, nationally, in the NAPLAN National Report. This percentage is based on the number of students participating in the NAPLAN Year 3 reading assessment (excluding exempt students) rather than the entire Year 3 population.

Source:

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) NAPLAN National Results (www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/naplan-national-results).

Contributing program:

1.3 – Government Schools National Support

1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support

1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to government schools
- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to non-government schools
- Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM056

Lower the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support proficiency level in NAPLAN for Numeracy for Year 3 students (nationally).

Target: Decrease on previous year

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 9.7%

Analysis:

Nationally, the proportion of students in the Needs Additional Support (NAS) proficiency level in NAPLAN numeracy for Year 3 students decreased to 9.7% in 2024 from 10% in 2023 which is a small improvement. The small decrease in the NAS cohort should be interpreted with caution as this is only the second cycle where proficiency levels have been used to measure student achievement in NAPLAN making the data insufficient to provide any indication of longer-term trends.

The data shows that while there were small increases and decreases across domains and year levels, overall, the results were broadly stable.

The average proportion of students who achieved at the NAS proficiency level in Numeracy in 2024 was 9.5%, decreasing from Year 3 (9.7%) to Year 5 (8.6%), increasing again in Year 7 (9.4%) and Year 9 (10.4%). The average proportion of students who achieved at "Exceeding" and "Strong" levels in 2024 was 65.5%, increasing from Year 3 (63.5%) to Year 5 (67.8%), remaining relatively stable in Year 7 (67.2%) and then dropping in Year 9 (63.4%).

National data rarely shows any significant change over a single year. As noted by ACARA in 2024, it is too early to interpret any clear trends given we have 2 years of data and, this year, was a new cohort of students (www.acara.edu.au/docs/default-source/media-releases/media-release-2024-naplan-national-results-release-14-8-24.pdf).

Recognising the importance of focusing on building numeracy skills in young people to build the skills they will need to make useful contributions to Australia's future, the Australian Government works closely with state and territory governments to support numeracy learning and funds a range of initiatives for schools, teachers, students, carers and families, from early years to schooling, including:

- The Mathematics Hub, Mathematics Massive Open Online Courses and Year 1 Number Check provide free, Australian Curriculum–aligned resources, professional development and assessment tools for teachers, school leaders, carers and students.
- The Let's Count program is designed for children aged 3 to 5 years and aims to improve the mathematical capabilities of preschool children and support a successful transition to school.

- The reSolve program provides online teaching and professional learning materials, linked to the Australian Curriculum, that support teaching mathematics from Foundation to Year 10. It is designed to develop the fluency, understanding, problem solving, and reasoning needed by students for the 21st century.

More information about the initiatives is available on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/australian-curriculum/support-science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics-stem/school-and-early-learning-stem-initiatives).

The Needs Additional Support (NAS) proficiency level is set at a level that indicates students who are at or below this level are not achieving the learning outcomes expected and are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily based on the typical skills and understandings for students at their year level.

In August 2023, Australian Education Research Organisation's (AERO) research found that Year 3 students who perform below learning expectations are at a high risk of continuing to perform at that level throughout their schooling. This is why the measure reports on Year 3 outcomes to enable early intervention. AERO's research also noted that catching up and staying caught up is not easy to achieve, with only 17% of students who did not meet Year 3 expectations, catch up and stay caught up until Year 9. More information is available at www.edresearch.edu.au/research/analytical-insights-papers/learning-outcomes-students-early-low-naplan-performance.

The national participation rate in NAPLAN for Year 3 has been above 90% for all assessments since 2008, which is consistent with the general attendance pattern.

Aggregated NAPLAN data at a national level does not separately report on Government (program 1.3) and non-Government (program 1.4) achievements with sector-specific data. The large-scale, rigorous and robust nature of the NAPLAN dataset means that national data provides a thorough understanding of the performance of all schools and systems supported by the needs-based funding model in these key foundational learning areas.

NAPLAN results are not publicly reported by school sector under the nationally agreed *Principles and protocols for reporting in Australia* (dataandreporting.blob.core.windows.net/anrdataportal/Data-Access-Program/principles-and-protocols-for-reporting-on-schooling-in-australia.pdf). This highlights that NAPLAN data disaggregation by sector does not allow nuanced interpretation and fair comparisons nor take into account the vastly different levels of socio-educational advantage between sectors, so carries a significant risk of misinterpretation and misuse of information without this important context.

Methodology:

The percentage of students identified as 'Needs Additional Support' in NAPLAN numeracy at the Year 3 level, nationally, in the NAPLAN National Report. This percentage is based on the number of students participating in the NAPLAN Year 3 numeracy assessment (excluding exempt students) rather than the entire Year 3 population.

Source:

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) NAPLAN National Results (www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/naplan-national-results).

Contributing program:

1.3 – Government Schools National Support

1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support

1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to government schools
- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to non-government schools
- Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM059

Increase the proportion of students attending school 90% or more of the time.

Target: Increase on previous year

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: 59.8% (2024 all schools, Years 1–10)

Analysis:

Students attending school 90% or more of the time decreased in 2024 to 59.8% (down from 61.6% in 2023). This decrease in result should be interpreted with caution as it was not statistically significant from a data perspective.

The attendance level also decreased across all school sectors – government from 58.6% (2023) to 56.3% (2024); and non-government from 67.3% (2023) to 66.1% (2024).

The decline in attendance levels follows a significant increase in 2023, after a substantial drop in 2022. Attendance levels have been trending downwards since 2018 with a marked decrease in 2022 due to the impact of the COVID-19 Omicron variant and high Influenza season outbreaks and floods in certain regions across Australia at that time. While the student attendance level increased in 2023, it did not return to the pre-COVID levels and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) 2024 data suggests a return to the historic steadily declining trend. More information is available on ACARA's website (www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/student-attendance).

Regular attendance at school is critical for learning and development which will provide better opportunities for students to engage in further education and training or work after compulsory schooling. The clear benefits between regular school attendance and improved outcomes for students are reflected in the broader outcomes the Australian Government is working towards through national coordination to provide engaging and safe places of learning for students to support young Australians to become successful lifelong learners, and active, informed and productive members of the community.

In January 2025, the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) published the *School Attendance: new insights from AERO* report, which discusses the findings of an investigation AERO conducted into student attendance in Australian schools for education ministers. The report found that reasons for absence from school are complex, interrelated and often specific to the student, family and broader community, and noted the impact of COVID-19 on school attendance. The report is available at www.edresearch.edu.au/summaries-explainers/explainers/school-attendance-new-insights-aero.

The Australian Government continues to work with state and territory governments to identify and implement measures to address school attendance at the national, jurisdictional, school and community levels. Through the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034 (BFSA)* and the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034* (Full and Fair Funding Agreement), jurisdictions have committed to undertaking collective work to advise education ministers on student attendance, its impact on schools and student learning and mechanisms to advance an evidence-based approach to addressing non-attendance, including school refusal and also to develop a new measure of student engagement.

The causes of non-attendance are complex and multi-faceted, relating to a student's sense of safety at school, their individual sense of wellbeing, and their family circumstances and background. How absences are recorded and reported will be considered as part of the department's work with ACARA and states and territories on the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia. The measure of non-attendance will need to consider factors making some students more vulnerable to non-attendance, such as poor mental health and wellbeing, neurodiversity and disability, bullying, family background or socio-economic disadvantage.

Work is underway as part of the Australian Government response to the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment's report for the *Inquiry into the national trend of school refusal and related matters*. The Australian Government response is publicly available at www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/SchoolRefusal/Government_Response.

While reporting schools performance measures at the national level provides an overview of the performance of Australia's education system, aggregated data at a national level does not directly provide insight on achievements of government (program 1.3) and non-government (program 1.4) sectors so results of this performance measure will be reported at a national level and by school sector from 2025–26.

Methodology:

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 calculated as 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.

Source:

ACARA National report on Schooling in Australia data portal (www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/student-attendance).

Contributing program:

1.3 – Government Schools National Support

1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support

1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to government schools
- Provide consistent, transparent and needs-based funding to non-government schools
- Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM067

Average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Additional Child Care Subsidy.

Target: Equal to or higher than the average early childhood education and care hours attended by children that are supported by Child Care Subsidy

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 20.1 hours per week compared to 17.0 hours per week

Analysis:

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) provides additional fee assistance to families facing barriers to early childhood education and care services for vulnerable or at-risk children. The ACCS is made up of 4 categories:

- ACCS (child wellbeing) – for families who need practical help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
- ACCS (grandparent) – for grandparents on income support who are the primary carers of their grandchild/ren
- ACCS (temporary financial hardship) – for families experiencing temporary financial hardship
- ACCS (transition to work) – for families transitioning from income support to work.

The ACCS has been designed to eliminate or minimise attendance barriers for ACCS eligible children. Compared to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), the ACCS covers a greater proportion of fees and provides access to more subsidised hours.

The Department of Education has policy responsibility and provides policy and operational guidance to Services Australia and early childhood education and care providers, to enable effective administration of the CCS and ACCS programs. Services Australia administers the payments according to legislative entitlements. Further information on ACCS and CCS is available at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy.

In the December 2024 quarter, 29,400 families with 41,490 children were supported by the ACCS, with most of them being under the 'Child Wellbeing' – ACCS category (22,350 families and 31,760 children). This is consistent with other quarters in 2024. Further information is available at www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/about/data-and-reports/quarterly-reports.

The data shows that children supported by ACCS have a higher average weekly attendance than children receiving CCS. In 2024 children supported by the ACCS attended early childhood education and care for an average of 20.1 hours per week compared to 17.0 hours for children supported by the CCS. Compared to 2023, the ACCS attendance was unchanged and the CCS attendance increased slightly from 16.8 to 17.0 hours per week.

The result reflects the ACCS policy settings to ensure that children who receive ACCS have the same opportunity to access and participate in early education and care as children who do not receive ACCS.

Evidence shows that access to, and participation in, early childhood education and care is important to children facing barriers. ACCS families can face complex circumstances that make regular early childhood education and care attendance challenging.

Methodology:

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.

Source: Services Australia – CCS System, program administrative data.

Contributing program: 1.2 – Child Care Subsidy.

Key activity:

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

Performance measure PM069

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

Target:

a) Overall – 95% or higher

b) First Nations children – 95% or higher

c) Disadvantaged children – 95% or higher

Result rating:

a) Achieved

b) Achieved

c) Achieved

Result value:

a) 97.0%

b) 97.5%

c) 97.0%

Analysis:

a) The proportion of all children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who were enrolled for 600 hours per year remained relatively stable in 2024 at 97.0%, compared to 97.3% in 2023.

b) The proportion of First Nations children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year remained relatively stable in 2024 at 97.5%, compared to 97.2% in 2023.

c) The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school who are enrolled for 600 hours per year remained relatively stable in 2024 at 97.0% in 2024, compared to 96.8% in 2023.

Attending a high quality 600-hour preschool program helps children develop and is especially important for disadvantaged and First Nations children. Children who attend preschool are more likely to start school developmentally on track.

Through the Preschool Reform Agreement (the Agreement), the Australian Government provides a funding contribution to states and territories to ensure all children have access to 600 hours of preschool in the year before full-time school.

The Agreement commits the Australian and state and territory governments to a collaborative reform agenda. The aim of the reform agenda is to improve preschool participation and outcomes.

A key reform under the Agreement is the implementation of new national preschool enrolment and attendance measures, with payment tied to the provision of baseline data in 2024 and bilateral targets from 2025.

The Preschool Outcomes Measure is another key reform under the Agreement. It's a joint initiative of the Australian and state and territory governments and will be designed to support everyday teacher and educator practice and to give insights into children's learning and capability. It is being trialled nationally in 2025.

Australian Government funding provided under the Agreement is subject to states and territories implementing the agreed reform agenda. States and territories are required to provide annual implementation plans and meet performance milestones to receive their funding. Once submitted, implementation plans are assessed by the department for accuracy and then approved by the Minister for Early Childhood Education to enable payments to be made.

Implementation plans are available on the Federal Financial Relations website (federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/agreements/preschool-reform-agreement) and further information on the Agreement and its reforms is available on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/about/preschool/preschool-reform-agreement).

The Australian Government has also committed funding under the Preschool Data Framework to support implementation of reforms in the Agreement, including to improve preschool data collection and performance measurement.

Methodology:

The result is calculated using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Preschool Education, Australia publication.

Tables 1 to 4 from the Summary Release provide the data on the number of 4- and 5-year-old children, number of 4- and 5-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and number of 4- and 5-year-old disadvantaged children enrolled and enrolled for 600 hours in preschool programs.

The actual calculations are as follows: 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, 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) to arrive at each result for (a), (b), (c).

Note: Disadvantage is measured by the ABS's Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index, which looks at relative advantage and disadvantage according to geographic location, based on the most recent Census data. In this context, children are counted as disadvantaged if they reside in an area for which the SEIFA score is in the bottom quintile (i.e. bottom 20% of scores across Australia). This does not reflect the actual socio-economic status, vulnerability and disadvantage of individual children and their families. Depending on state contexts, other measures of vulnerability may provide a better representation of disadvantage. As such, the states and territories can provide supplementary data, which is assessed by the department and, if considered acceptable, is included in the performance results.

For example, due to its small population size and a mixture of socio-economic status within all suburbs, the ABS's SEIFA measure is not appropriate for measuring vulnerability and disadvantage in the ACT. Accordingly, the ACT provides supplementary data, which is allowed under the Preschool Reform Agreement.

Source:

National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection, published by the ABS as Preschool Education, Australia 2024 (www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/preschool-education/latest-release).

Contributing program: 1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Support children to have access to quality early learning, particularly in the year before reaching school
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM070

Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.

Target: 100%

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 100%

Analysis:

The target of 100% of payments made in a timely manner was achieved for the 2024 calendar year.

Approved authorities for government schools received recurrent funding payments in the 2024 school year as planned, supporting government schools to deliver quality teaching and learning environments and supporting their ongoing financial viability.

In 2024, $11.3 billion was paid to government schools. The department makes payments to the Australian Government Treasury who in turn pass the payments on to the treasury of the relevant state or territory for their government schools.

Approved authorities for schools are regulated under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). The department seeks to continually improve its regulatory practice and is currently building a new payment IT system. The new IT system will improve the security and stability of the payment process and make it easier for approved authorities to meet their obligations under the Act, such as reporting enrolment data, financial acquittals and address collection. Information on the new IT system is available here: www.education.gov.au/education-funding-system-project.

The department also provides reports (census data, payment advices/funding determinations) and funding estimation tools to approved authorities to be transparent about funding arrangements and help them check their entitlements and payments.

A report to parliament is tabled each year on all payments made to approved authorities. The 2023 report (most recent available) can be found here: www.education.gov.au/other-commonwealth-funding-schools/reports-financial-assistance-schools.

Note: This performance measure has been removed for 2025–26 as it is administrative in nature. A new performance measure is being developed.

Methodology:

The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid to the Australian Government Treasury. If the date paid to the Australian Government Treasury is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.

Source:

Departmental administrative data, School Education Management Information System (SEMIS) Planned Payments Report.

Contributing program: 1.3 – Government Schools National Support.

Key activity:

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

Regulatory principles:

Performance measure PM071

Recurrent funding payments to approved authorities for non-government schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* are made in a timely manner.

Target: 100%

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 100%

Analysis:

The target of 100% of payments made in a timely manner was achieved for the 2024 calendar year.

Approved authorities for non-government schools received recurrent funding payments in the 2024 school year as planned, supporting non-government schools to deliver quality teaching and learning environments and supporting their ongoing financial viability.

In 2024, $18.3 billion was paid to non-government schools. The department makes payments to the Australian Government Treasury who in turn pass the payments on to the treasury in the relevant state or territory and they pass the funds on to the approved authorities for non-government schools.

Approved authorities for schools are regulated under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). The department seeks to continually improve its regulatory practice and is currently building a new payment IT system. The new IT system will improve the security and stability of the payment process and make it easier for approved authorities to meet their obligations under the Act, such as reporting enrolment data, financial acquittals and address collection. Information on the new IT system is available here: www.education.gov.au/education-funding-system-project.

The department also provides reports (census data, payment advices/funding determinations) and funding estimation tools to approved authorities to be transparent about funding arrangements and help them check their entitlements and payments.

A report to parliament is tabled each year on all payments made to approved authorities. The 2023 report (most recent available) can be found here: www.education.gov.au/other-commonwealth-funding-schools/reports-financial-assistance-schools.

Note: This performance measure has been removed for 2025–26 as it is administrative in nature. A new performance measure is being developed.

Methodology:

The date each payment was planned is compared with the date each payment was actually paid to the Australian Government Treasury. If the date paid to the Australian Government Treasury is in the same month as the planned date, the payment is considered to have been paid in a timely manner.

Source:

Departmental administrative data, School Education Management Information System (SEMIS) Planned Payments Report.

Contributing program: 1.4 – Non-Government Schools National Support.

Key activity:

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

Regulatory principles: 

Performance measure PM072

Increase the proportion of people (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 certification, or equivalent, or gaining a qualification at Certificate III or above.

Target:

a) 96% of all people in Australia by 2031

b) 96% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by 2031

Result rating:

a) Not on track

b) Not on track

Result value:

a) 90% in 2024

b) 68.1% in 2021, updated data available every 5 years

Analysis:

This performance measure has 2 targets. Target (a) covers the full cohort of people aged 20–24 with data for this target available every year through the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Education and Work. Target (b) covers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 to 24 with data for this target only available every 5 years through the ABS Census of Population and Housing.

For Target (a), in 2024, 90% of young people aged 20–24 in Australia attained a qualification at Year 12 certification or equivalent or at Certificate III or higher. These rates have remained steady over the past 5 years and are not on track to meet the 96% target by 2031. A graphical illustration of the attainment trend of young people is available at www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/student-attainment.

For Target (b), the most recent result is from the 2021 ABS Census of Population and Housing, which showed that over two-thirds (68.1%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 20–24 completed a qualification at Year 12 certification or equivalent or Certificate III or higher. This is a substantial improvement since the 2016 baseline result (63.2%); however, it is not on track to meet the target of 96% by 2031. More information on attainment trend of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth is available at www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap data/dashboard/se/outcome-area5.

Data for Target (b) is not available in between Census results with the next Census due in 2026. The annually published attainment rate of the general population does not disaggregate the data and report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. The attainment rate for all young people has remained quite steady since 2018, whereas the attainment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth improved by 4.9 percentage points between 2016 and 2021. This upward trend in the attainment rate suggests continued improvement in the academic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.

There are clear benefits in completing Year 12 or its equivalent qualification. Improved social and economic outcomes for young people are reflected in the broader outcomes the Australian Government is working towards to improve students' educational outcomes and post-school transitions. More information on the opportunities available for life after school can be found on the website: www.yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support.

Recognising that schools play an essential role in supporting students to complete both in-school senior secondary qualification and non-school VET qualifications, education ministers have committed to work together to achieve the attainment targets for all young people aged 20–24 and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth through the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034 (BFSA)* and the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034* (Full and Fair Funding Agreement). These Agreements align with the objectives of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and were developed in partnership with First Nations representatives and peak bodies, including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and the Coalition of Peaks.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the Australian Government committed to the development of a new First Nations Education Policy in partnership with key First Nations education stakeholders. Development of the policy is funded to 2026–27. The policy will aim to accelerate progress towards achieving the Closing the Gap Targets and complement the BFSA and Full and Fair Funding Agreement as well as state and territory First Nations education strategies.

The Australian Government invests in First Nations education outcomes in a range of ways which collectively contribute to supporting attainment (including target (b)). This includes recurrent needs-based schools funding, partnering with the NATSIEC, and targeted measures such as the City-Country Partnerships Program, Aurora Education Foundation's Redefining Indigenous Success in Education (RISE) and GO Foundation scholarships.

The *Commonwealth Closing the Gap 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Implementation Plan* (available at www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/commonwealth-closing-gap-2024-annual-report-and-2025-implementation-plan) assesses the Commonwealth's delivery against actions outlined in the 2024 Closing the Gap Implementation Plan, with the next progress report scheduled to be published in February 2026. The report includes progress of activities undertaken in 2024 including the On-Country Learning measure through which every operating school in Central Australia received additional government funding in 2024 with their place-based activities guided by School Action Plans.

These plans were underpinned by more than 150 consultation sessions held with communities to discuss their vision, aspirations and activities to be funded, and schools have implemented a range of activities, including supporting additional employment, community and student engagement, teacher professional development, flexible learning and wellbeing supports, and improved literacy and numeracy initiatives.

In recognition of the interdependence between student wellbeing and academic achievement, the Australian Government also funds a range of initiatives to support student and school community wellbeing, including the National Student Wellbeing Program (NSWP). More information can be found on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/national-student-wellbeing-program-nswp).

Methodology:

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.

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.

Source:

a) Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Work (SEW). Please note that this is a sample survey.

b) Productivity Commission, Closing the Gap Information Repository, Dashboard, with underlying data from ABS Census of Population and Housing.

Contributing program: 1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM073

The Australian Government will work to deliver the 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.

Target: The Better and Fairer Schools Agreement will be developed throughout the 2024 calendar year in consultation with states and territories, so that the Agreement is operational by January 2025

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: n/a

Analysis:

The Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (2025–2034) (BFSA) became operational on 1 January 2025, as per clause 23 of the Agreement. The Northern Territory Government was the first jurisdiction to sign the Heads of Agreement on 31 July 2024[2]. In 2024, the Western Australian, Tasmanian, and the Australian Capital Territory governments also signed the Heads of Agreement for the BFSA and individual bilateral agreements[3].

The BFSA, and a subsequent Heads of Agreement[4], were informed by The Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System (www.education.gov.au/review-inform-better-and-fairer-education-system).

The priority for the Australian Government has been to secure a funding agreement to put all government schools on a pathway to full and fair funding. The BFSA will ensure all government schools in jurisdictions party to the agreement are on a pathway to 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by 2034[5]. Students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds are one of the priority equity cohorts under the Agreement.

2 Heads of Agreement outline the key terms and conditions that apply at a national level, with jurisdiction specific details outlined in related bilateral agreements. Not all jurisdictions are required to be party to the Heads of Agreement for it to be operational.

3 In January 2025, the Australian Government provided a revised offer, the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034* (Full and Fair Funding). The revised offer was presented to all jurisdictions.

4 The Full and Fair Funding Agreement and the BFSA share the same objectives and outcomes and focus on the 3 priority areas agreed by education ministers in December 2023. Both Heads of Agreement were informed by The Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System.

5 The SRS is an estimate of how much total public funding a school needs to meet its students' educational needs. For further detail: www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/schooling-resource-standard.

We shaped agreements through negotiations with multiple stakeholders, including jurisdiction and peak body representatives. This involved First Nations representatives and peak bodies, such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation and the Coalition of Peaks and the peak bodies of the National Catholic Education Commission and Independent Schools Australia. Additionally, the department supported the Minister for Education in meetings with education ministers from each state and territory.

Further information:

- www.ministers.education.gov.au/clare/better-and-fairer-schools-agreement
- www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/national-school-reform-agreement/better-and-fairer-schools-agreement-20252034.

2024–25 is the final reporting period for this performance measure as the BFSA is operational. Payments to states and territories for school funding will be reported in the 2025–26 Budget papers through a National Agreement. Outcomes will be monitored and reported through a set of national Improvement Measures, and implementing the National Reform Directions and the agreed National Enabling Initiatives.

Methodology:

Reporting against this measure will be based on the creation of the Agreement that is operational by January 2025. To make payments to states and territories for Australian Government funding for schools, states and territories are required under the *Australian Education Act 2013* to be party to a national agreement relating to school education reform.

The Agreement will be the primary mechanism for enabling the Australian Government's schooling reform agenda. The reform agenda will be informed by negotiations with states and territories and the final report from the Expert Panel Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System.

Source:

The Agreement was published on the Federal Financial Relation website (www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/agreements/better-and-fairer-schools-agreement) and the Department of Education website (www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/resources/heads-agreement).

Contributing program: 1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

- Provide support for a range of curriculum, assessment, teaching and wellbeing programs
- Provide national leadership and work with states on national policy reform.

Performance measure PM077

Percentage of Office for Youth program participants who felt they influenced a government policy or program.

Target: No target

Result rating: N/a – data for the 2024 calendar year is not available. Data from 2025 will establish a baseline in 2025–26

Result value: N/a – data for the 2024 calendar year is not available. Data from 2025 will establish a baseline in 2025–26

Analysis:

The department's 2024–25 Corporate Plan stated the department's intention was to use data collected from 2024–25 to form a baseline for future reporting. To better align with the Office for Youth's annual monitoring and evaluation report, as well as the nature of its programs, the data reference period has been changed to reflect the calendar year. As a result, a baseline will instead be established in the 2025–26 reporting period based on data collected in 2025. The department's analysis covers youth engagement activities undertaken in 2024 and early insights from 2025.

In 2024 the Office for Youth, within the Department of Education, published *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make*. The *Engage!* strategy includes the Australian Government's Youth Engagement Model which aims to coordinate across government and ensure young Australians are involved in developing policies that matter to them. Performance Measure 075 reported on the successful release of a new youth engagement strategy in the 2023–24 Annual Report (www.youth.gov.au/office-youth/resources/engage-our-new-strategy-include-young-people-decisions-we-make).

During 2024, the Office for Youth established a National Youth Week which recognised young people's contributions to their communities in Australia and launched the Office for Youth website to support the Australian Government's Youth Engagement Model. The Office for Youth directly supports 3 activities for young people (12–25 years) to engage with government:

- National Youth Forum: where each year approximately 100 young people are hosted by the Office for Youth to meet, build skills and contribute to Australian Government decision-making. Attendees are made up of young people from the Youth Advisory Group program, the Youth Steering Committee and external youth representatives working with non-government organisations.
- Youth Advisory Groups: where usually 5 groups of approximately 40 young people of diverse backgrounds work with the Office for Youth and specific Australian Government departments or agencies to provide policy and program advice.

- Youth Steering Committee: where a group of 14 young people work with the Office for Youth to provide advice about the implementation of *Engage!*, and other Australian Government policies or programs.

This performance measure was introduced in 2024–25 and aligns with *Engage!* Priority 1 – We will recognise and listen to young people, Action 1.1. Collaborating with young people.

Following these activities, the Office for Youth will ask participants, using a survey, to assess if they felt they were able to influence a government program or policy. Responses from these surveys will provide the data to calculate the performance measure's result.

The National Youth Forum and Youth Advisory Groups were hosted by the Office for Youth in February 2025. These activities provide an early look at results from the 2025 calendar year:

- The National Youth Forum survey: 94 young people (12–25 years) participated in the 2025 National Youth Forum in February 2025 and were invited to respond to the post program evaluation survey. Of these, 35 participants responded, 54% of which felt they influenced a government policy or program.
- Youth Advisory Groups survey: of the 6 Youth Advisory Groups and 47 members, there were 28 outgoing members who finished their participation in the program in February 2025. These outgoing members were invited to respond to the post program evaluation survey. Of these, 10 participants responded, 70% of which felt they influenced a government policy or program.

The Office for Youth plans to publish its first annual monitoring and evaluation report for the Youth Engagement Model by late 2025 on the Digital Youth Hub (www.youth.gov.au). This report will assess progress of the *Engage!* strategy to empower people to contribute to government decision-making. The report will be a broad assessment of progress, which covers the 2025 calendar year Office for Youth activities and priorities, including those that align with this performance measures. The Office for Youth will report on its 2025 performance result in the 2025–26 performance statements, informed by the first annual monitoring and evaluation report.

Methodology:

Office for Youth program participants will be asked if they feel they were able to influence a government policy or program in the relevant post program evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a proportion of the total Office for Youth program participants responses.

Source: Office for Youth, Department of Education Survey Data.

Contributing program: 1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

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

Performance measure PM078

Percentage of Australian Government departments and agencies that worked with the Office for Youth and felt supported to engage with young people.

Target: No target

Result rating: N/a – data for the 2024 calendar year is not available. Data from 2025 will establish a baseline in 2025–26

Result value: N/a – data for the 2024 calendar year is not available. Data from 2025 will establish a baseline in 2025–26

Analysis:

The department's 2024–25 Corporate Plan stated the department's intention was to use data collected from 2024–25 to form a baseline for future reporting. To better align with the Office for Youth's annual monitoring and evaluation report, as well as the nature of its programs, the data reference period has been changed to reflect the calendar year. As a result, a baseline will instead be established in the 2025–26 reporting period based on data collected in 2025. The department's analysis covers youth engagement activities undertaken in 2024 and early insights from 2025.

In 2024 the Office for Youth, within the Department of Education, published *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make*. The *Engage!* strategy includes the Australian Government's Youth Engagement Model which aims to coordinate across government and ensure young Australians are involved in developing policies that matter to them. Performance Measure 075 reported on the successful release of a new youth engagement strategy in the 2023–24 Annual Report. (www.youth.gov.au/office-youth/resources/engage-our-new-strategy-include-young-people-decisions-we-make).

During 2024, the Office for Youth established a National Youth Week which recognised young people's contributions to their communities in Australia and launched the Office for Youth website to support the Australian Government's Youth Engagement Model. The Office for Youth directly supports 3 activities for young people (12–25 years) to engage with government:

- National Youth Forum: where each year approximately 100 young people are hosted by the Office for Youth to meet, build skills and contribute to Australian Government decision-making. Attendees are made up of young people from the Youth Advisory Group program, the Youth Steering Committee and external youth representatives working with non-government organisations.

- Youth Advisory Groups: where usually 5 groups of approximately 40 young people of diverse backgrounds work with the Office for Youth and specific Australian Government departments or agencies to provide policy and program advice.
- Youth Steering Committee: where a group of 14 young people work with the Office for Youth to provide advice about the implementation of *Engage!*, and other Australian Government policies or programs.

This performance measure was introduced in 2024–25 and aligns with *Engage!* Priority 3 – We will support government to work with young people; Action 3.2. Building government capacity.

Following these activities, the Office for Youth will ask individual Australian Public Service employees who worked with the Office for Youth, using a survey, to assess if they felt they were supported to meaningfully engage with young people (12–25 years). Responses from these surveys will provide the data to calculate the performance measure's result.

The National Youth Forum and Youth Advisory Groups were hosted by the Office for Youth in February 2025. These activities provide an early look at results from the 2025 calendar year:

- The National Youth Forum survey: 3 Australian Government departments/agencies participated in the 2025 National Youth Forum. All Australian Public Service departments/agencies involved in the National Youth Forum were invited to respond to the post-program evaluation survey. The Office for Youth received 4 responses across the 3 agencies and all of those who completed the survey (100%) felt supported by the Office for Youth to engage with young people.
- Youth Advisory Groups survey: there were 4 Australian Government departments/agencies who finished their involvement with a Youth Advisory group in February 2025 (across 3 groups – one Youth Advisory Group worked with 2 agencies).
- All Australian Public Service agencies that were involved with Youth Advisory Groups were invited to respond to the post-program evaluation survey.
- The Office for Youth received 5 responses across the 4 agencies and 60% of those who completed the survey felt supported by the Office for Youth to engage with young people.

The Office for Youth plans to publish its first annual monitoring and evaluation report for the Youth Engagement Model by late 2025 on the Digital Youth Hub (www.youth.gov.au). This report will assess progress of the *Engage!* strategy to empower people to contribute to government decision-making. The report will be a broad assessment of progress, which covers the 2025 calendar year Office for Youth activities and priorities, including those that align with this performance measures. The Office for Youth will report on its 2025 performance result in the 2025–26 performance statements, informed by the first annual monitoring and evaluation report.

Methodology:

Australian Public Service employees from the Australian Government departments/agencies that work with the Office for Youth will be asked if they feel they were supported to engage with young people in the relevant post-program evaluation survey. This will be recorded as a proportion of the total Australian Government departments/agencies representatives' responses.

Source: Department of Education, Office for Youth Survey Data.

Contributing program: 1.5 – Early Learning and Schools Support.

Key activity:

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

Outcome 2 performance measures

Changes to our Outcome 2 performance measures

Amendments to the department's performance measures published in the 2024–25 Corporate Plan are summarised below (changes in bold).

Performance measure PM016	Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively
The measure's methodology is unchanged, its wording has been updated for clarity.	
Published methodology	Methodology: 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. Scope: Domestic undergraduate-level commencing and later-year students at higher education institutions as listed under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.
Amended methodology	Methodology: Number of **domestic undergraduate** 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 **domestic undergraduate** students with a valid 'Teaching Quality Scale' **score in** the Student Experience Survey. Scope: Domestic undergraduate-level commencing and later-year students at higher education institutions as listed under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

Performance measure PM019	The proportion of research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals that are Australian research publications
The methodology wording was updated for clarity and to more closely align with the methodology published in the 2023–24 Annual Report and 2025–26 Corporate Plan. No material changes were made to the methodology.	
Published methodology	Number of Australian research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals over the total number of publications in the world's top 10% most cited journals, compared to the average share of OECD countries.
Amended methodology	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.

Performance measure PM020	Proportion of domestic research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree
The performance measure title and methodology wording has been clarified to reflect that this measure relates to domestic research postgraduates.	
Published performance measure	Proportion of research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree.
Amended performance measure	Proportion of **domestic** research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree.
Published methodology	Number of research postgraduates employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree over the total number available for work in those 4 to 6 months.
Amended methodology	Number of **domestic** research postgraduates employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree over the total number of **domestic research postgraduates** available for work in those 4 to 6 months.

Performance measure PM026	Proportion of international students employed after graduation
The previous measure included international students who were employed after graduation as well as those students who enrolled in further study. This change reflects a focus on building a more nuanced understanding of the pathways international students take after graduation.	
Published performance measure	Proportion of international students employed or enrolled in further study after graduation.
Amended performance measure	Proportion of international students employed after graduation.
Published methodology	Number of international graduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing a degree over the total number of international graduates available to work, excluding those international graduates who enrol in further study.
Amended methodology	Number of international higher education graduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing a degree over the total number of international higher education graduates available to work in those 4 to 6 months.

Performance measure PM027	Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training delivered by Australian providers
The methodology for calculating the PM027 results has been amended. The new methodology measures the number of students enrolled in offshore education and training courses delivered by Australian providers, with these students identified as those who have reported a citizen residence status of 'other overseas student who resides outside of Australia'. This amended methodology utilises data that more accurately reflects Australia's offshore education and training landscape.	
Published methodology	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 term of residence outside Australia, collected through the department's Tertiary Collection of Student Information system. Providers are defined under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.
Amended methodology	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*.

Performance measure PM076	Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth supported places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements.
Minor changes have been made to the target and sources to provide further detail on the process by which the department will assess the accuracy and timeliness of Nuclear Powered Submarine Program allocations.	
Published 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.
Amended 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 Higher Education Course Advance payments through the UniPay system, are made on time.
Published data source	Assessment Tracker – NPS Places.
Amended data source	2024–2025 Commonwealth Grant Scheme Funding Agreements, Published funding cluster rates, UniPay payment schedule, and Higher Education Courses Advance UniPay Determination.

Outcome 2 performance measure results

Performance measure PM009

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

Target: Increase from previous year

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: 77%

Analysis:

The proportion of the 25- to 34-year-old population with a tertiary qualification was 77% in 2024, the same as in 2023.

While the result value for 2024 is unchanged, there has been a trend towards higher educational attainment in Australia in response to the increased skill levels required in the economy.

Tertiary attainment is influenced by a range of factors, such as government programs that encourage participation in vocational and higher education as well as skilled migration programs which favour settlement by migrants with tertiary qualifications.

The department's Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) makes a direct contribution to the cost of educating Commonwealth-supported higher education students, supporting access and participation. This contributes to tertiary attainment.

Noting tertiary attainment includes higher education and other non-school qualifications, in 2024, 61.3% of 25- to 34-year-olds with a non-school qualification had attained a Bachelor Degree level or higher qualification compared with 58.7% in 2023.

This equates to 47.2% of all 25- to 34-year-olds holding a Bachelor degree or higher qualification in 2024, higher than the 45% reported in 2023. (www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/education-and-work-australia/may-2024).

Methodology:

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.

Source:

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Education and Work Australia, Table 24, 2024 (www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/education-and-work-australia).

Contributing program: 2.1 – Commonwealth Grant Scheme.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Performance measure PM010

The rate of attrition for domestic bachelor students.

Target: Lower than 15%

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 12.2%

Analysis:

The attrition rate of domestic students who commenced a bachelor degree in 2023 was 12.2% (based on 2024 preliminary data), lower than the 14.7% attrition rate for domestic students who commenced in 2022 (based on 2023 finalised data).

The department's Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) aids students to undertake and complete higher education degrees by making a direct contribution to the cost of the study. This contribution also supports higher education providers, who are required to meet eligibility criteria to receive CGS funding, to deliver high-quality teaching and support to students that facilitates positive experiences and graduate outcomes.

A low attrition rate is an indicator that bachelor degree students are receiving quality higher education that meets their expectations and that students are supported to continue their studies. Student attrition can also be influenced by other factors, including student characteristics and economic conditions.

Since 2013 attrition rates of domestic commencing bachelor students have been reasonably steady, with only small changes between 14.3% and 15.0% year on year over the period. Notable exceptions were the lower attrition rates for students commencing in 2019 and 2020 due to weak labour market conditions associated with the COVID pandemic.

The 12.2% attrition rate for 2023 domestic commencing bachelor students is the lowest since 2013. This may have been driven by a range of factors, including:

- changes in the profile of the 2023 commencing student cohort towards those less likely to discontinue study
- changes to the student profile may have been influenced by other government programs, such as Fee-Free TAFE, potentially incentivising prospective 2023 students to pursue vocational education and training pathways as an alternative to higher education
- the relative easing of cost-of-living pressures and labour market conditions which may have influenced students' decision to pursue or continue higher education.

Note: Preliminary 2024 data are not expected to differ materially from final 2024 data. However, it should be noted that the preliminary data are impacted by data quality issues due to a cyber incident at one university. The potential impact of data quality issues on this performance measure has been assessed based on historical reporting and are not expected to exceed a variance of 0.04 percentage points.

The final result for 2024 will be published on the Department of Education website. The version of the 2024–25 Annual Report tabled in parliament and available on transparency.gov.au will remain unchanged.

The 2023 result on the Department of Education website aligns with the 2023–24 Department of Education Annual Report result, which used preliminary data.

Methodology:

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).

Source:

Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 15.1.

Contributing program: 2.1 – Commonwealth Grant Scheme.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Performance measure PM011

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

Target: 85% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 86.9% (result based on 2024 pre-release data)

Analysis:

The proportion of domestic undergraduates who were employed 4 to 6 months after completing their degree decreased from 88.9% in 2023 to 86.9% in 2024 (based on 2024 pre-release data).

Graduate employment outcomes are related to the economic and labour market conditions that existed at the time of the survey. The tight labour market conditions experienced in 2022 and 2023 in Australia continued to ease in 2024 but remained generally elevated.

As the proportion of jobs requiring tertiary qualification grows, programs that support student access and participation in higher education, can support their transition to employment. The department's Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) makes a direct contribution to the cost of educating Commonwealth supported higher education students. The CGS delivery strategies aim to enhance the quality of the higher education system and contribute to a high skilled workforce and educated community.

Methodology:

Number of domestic undergraduates employed within 4 to 6 months of completing a degree over the total number of domestic undergraduates available for work in those 4 to 6 months.

Note: 'Employed' is informed by the ABS Labour Force Survey concepts and definitions in measuring graduate employment outcomes. Accordingly, this considers graduates 'employed' if they work at least one hour in the survey reference week (in any profession or occupation, which may or may not align to an undergraduate's field of study). Information about the survey methodology, data representativeness and response rate is available in the Graduate Outcomes Survey National Report (link below).

Source:

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Graduate Outcomes Survey, (www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey-(gos)).

Note: Pre-released data had passed the department's quality assurance processes and were not available (i.e. published) via the QILT website at the time of result preparation.

Contributing program: 2.1 – Commonwealth Grant Scheme.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Performance measure PM012

Proportion of eligible universities able to meet specified superannuation expenses.

Target: 100%

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 100%

Analysis:

The department's Higher Education Superannuation Program is demand-driven. The department provides funding to eligible universities in line with reported reconciled amounts, giving the department assurance the target is measured accurately.

Eligibility is outlined in the Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022. Section 55 lists the 27 universities that can be eligible (www.legislation.gov.au/F2022L00347/latest/text).

The department provided funding directly to universities, based on information reported from eligible universities with superannuation expenses from eligible funds. Universities then discharge their superannuation obligations with the relevant superannuation fund. Since 2013–14 when reporting on this measure began, this funding has continued to allow 100% of eligible universities to meet their specified superannuation expenses from 2014 to 2025.

For more information visit the department's website (www.education.gov.au/higher-education-funding/higher-education-superannuation-program).

Payments are made using determinations based on calendar years. Therefore, payments are spread across determinations for 2024 and 2025 calendar years.

Methodology:

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.

Source:

- Department of Education program documentation.
- Annual program claim forms or cashflow funding documents from NSW State Super.

Contributing program: 2.2 – Higher Education Superannuation Program.

Key activity:

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

Regulatory principles:

Performance measure PM014

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

Target: 16% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 16.6%

Analysis:

Preliminary data for 2024 shows that the proportion of domestic undergraduates who were from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1) increased slightly to 16.6% (from 16.0% in 2023).

The decision to undertake university study is influenced by general economic and labour market conditions. Australia's current high cost of living and low unemployment rates may be contributing factors driving those from a low-SES background to seek employment over study. Key funding reforms will support an increased focus on the benefits of higher education, both in terms of increased employment and earning potential and benefits to the national economy by meeting future skills needs. Equity of participation in higher education was highlighted in the Australian Universities Accord (the Accord) and is a key focus of government. Ensuring more people from underrepresented backgrounds access, participate in and complete higher education will be critical to meeting the Australian Government's target of 80% of the working age population (aged 15 to 64) attaining a tertiary qualification by 2050.

To support this focus, the department has a range of programs targeted at reducing barriers to higher education, including the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP), the Commonwealth Grant Scheme and FEE-FREE Uni Ready courses. More information regarding these initiatives is available at www.education.gov.au/higher-education-funding. Currently, the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) provides dedicated funding to universities to support people from underrepresented cohorts to access, participate in and complete their studies. The HEPPP funds activities such as outreach and aspiration building, academic and wellbeing support and financial assistance programs.

At the 2024–25 MYEFO, the government announced key reforms to be delivered by the department in 2026 which will see significant investment in equity support to drive greater participation from underrepresented cohorts, replacing the current HEPPP. These reforms include:

- Managed Growth Funding – expected to deliver an additional 82,000 fully-funded Commonwealth supported university places compared to current settings in 2035. This will ensure there are sufficient Commonwealth supported places for students from underrepresented backgrounds to go to university.
- Demand-driven Needs-based Funding – will provide increased funding to ensure students from low-SES backgrounds, First Nations students, and students studying at regional campuses are supported to participate and succeed in their studies.
- Dedicated Outreach Funding – will provide targeted funding to support outreach and aspiration building activities which will help increase the number of underrepresented people accessing tertiary education.

Key reforms will be supported by the establishment of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC), an independent steward for the higher education system with a focus on making sure universities do their part to deliver on the Government's commitment to lift tertiary attainment and raising equity participation and attainment. These reforms demonstrate the department's commitment to using data and evidence to support continuous improvement of our programs and policies, and will build public trust in the way our public institutions are funded to support underrepresented students.

These reforms are supported by further investments in broader equity initiatives, including expansion of University Study Hubs, increased eligibility for the Tertiary Access Payment, quadrupling the Disability Support Fund. This suite of measures are expected to continue driving growth in representation of underrepresented cohorts in higher education, including those from low-SES backgrounds.

Note: Preliminary 2024 data are not expected to differ materially from final 2024 data. However, it should be noted that the preliminary data are impacted by data quality issues due to a cyber incident at one university. The potential impact of data quality issues on this performance measure has been assessed based on historical reporting and are not expected to exceed a variance of 0.08 percentage points.

The final result for 2024 will be published on the Department of Education website. The version of the 2024–25 Annual Report tabled in parliament and available on transparency.gov.au will remain unchanged.

The 2023 result on the Department of Education website aligns with the 2023–24 Department of Education Annual Report result, which used preliminary data.

Methodology:

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*.

Source:

Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 11.2.

Contributing program: 2.3 – Higher Education Support.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Regulatory principles:

Performance measure PM015

Proportion of higher education students who are First Nations.

Target: 2% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 2.3%

Analysis:

Preliminary data for 2024 indicate that the proportion of domestic undergraduate students who are First Nations increased to 2.3%, an increase of 0.1% from 2.2% in 2023 (based on final data).

This continues the gradual increase in participation of First Nations students in higher education. For example, in 2018, 1.8% of domestic higher education students were First Nations students.

The government has provided extra funding to support First Nations people undertaking higher education through a number of programs including extending demand driven funding to all First Nations undergraduate students (bachelor and honours-level courses – excluding courses of study in medicine) from 1 January 2024 to all Table A universities.

University study hubs

The department's Regional and Suburban University Study Hubs Program improves access to tertiary education for students in regional, remote areas and outer metropolitan areas with low tertiary education participation, including First Nations people.

There are 56 Regional University Study Hubs across Australia (except ACT), and 47 of these are open and supporting students, while the remaining 9 regional hubs are expected to be operational later in 2025.

In 2024–25, 15 Suburban University Study Hubs were announced for 17 outer suburban locations across Australia's major cities. Of these, 6 are open and supporting students, with the remaining hubs expected to open by the end of 2025. Suburban University Study Hubs aim to reduce barriers for under-represented students, including First Nations students, by bringing more tertiary education opportunities to outer metropolitan areas.

As at November 2024 (latest program data), Regional University Study Hubs were supporting 5,270 students (based on students registered with the hubs to access facilities and support at that time), of whom 12% identified as First Nations. As the Suburban University Study Hubs are a new program in 2024–25, the data collection is yet to commence.

Three of the regional study hubs focus on supporting First Nations students on country in Arnhem Land. These include the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation, the Wuyagiba Study Hubs and the Garrthalala Bush University Study Hub.

A further 4 regional study hubs have First Nations Support Officer positions to provide dedicated support for First Nations students, including CUC Cape York (Cooktown), CUC Balonne (St George and Dirranbandi), Geraldton University Centre, and Cassowary Coast University Centre (Innisfail).

Other initiatives

Targeted higher education programs contribute to improving outcomes for First Nations students. This includes the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), which funds Table A universities to support First Nations students to access, participate in and complete their studies, including through the provision of cultural supports and adjustments.

The current HEPPP is set to cease at the end of 2025, with the government announcing a new Demand-Driven Needs-based Funding system from 1 January 2026, which will provide public universities additional core funding to ensure First Nations students, students from low-SES backgrounds and students studying at regional campuses are supported to participate and succeed in their studies.

Settings for Needs-based Funding will recognise the unique barriers faced by First Nations students, and ensure institutions have resources to deliver tailored and culturally appropriate supports.

More information on HEPPP and Needs Based Funding is available on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/heppp).

Regional Partnership Project Pool Program (RPPPP)

The RPPPP funds university and Regional University Study Hubs-led consortia to deliver collaborative outreach initiatives to enable the higher education aspirations of students in regional and remote areas.

The program is using a 2-phase process to co-design (Phase 1) and deliver (Phase 2) targeted outreach initiatives. This approach is to support initial engagement with communities who may be underserviced by existing initiatives, and subsequent delivery of outreach projects.

In 2025, under Phase 2 (deliver), Flinders University will lead a collaborative initiative with a range of partners including Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Indigenous Allied Health Australia, to increase awareness, aspiration and readiness for a higher education allied health pathway among First Nations youth in regional and remote areas.

In addition, the department is responsible for the Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) program policy. TAP is a one-off payment of up to $5,000 to help students with the cost of moving from regional or remote areas for tertiary study.

For the MYEFO 2024–25, the Australian Government announced that from 1 January 2025, the TAP eligibility setting which required students to commence tertiary studies within 12 months of completing Year 12, would be removed. This change was made to enable more students to access this payment, following feedback from regional stakeholders and the Australian Universities

Accord Panel. Removing the access limit period will ensure more regional students, including regional First Nations students, can pursue a tertiary education and benefit from this cost-of-living support. All other criteria remain in place, including that students must be up to 22 years of age at the time of commencement of the course.

These reforms demonstrate the department's commitment to using data and evidence to support continues improvement of our programs and policies, and will build trust in the way our public institutions are funded to support First Nations students.

Note: Preliminary 2024 data are not expected to differ materially from final 2024 data. However, it should be noted that the preliminary data are impacted by data quality issues due to a cyber incident at one university. The potential impact of data quality issues on this performance measure has been assessed based on historical reporting and is not expected to exceed a variance of 0.01 percentage points.

The final result for 2024 will be published on the Department of Education website. The version of the 2024–25 Annual Report tabled in parliament and available on transparency.gov.au will remain unchanged.

The 2023 result on the Department of Education website aligns with the 2023–24 Department of Education Annual Report result, which used preliminary data.

Methodology:

Number of domestic undergraduate students who identify as First Nations over the total of domestic undergraduate students.

Source:

Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 11.2.

Contributing program: 2.3 – Higher Education Support.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Regulatory principles:

Performance measure PM016

Proportion of domestic undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively.

Target: 80% or higher

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: 79.9% (result based on 2024 pre-release data)

Analysis:

The department regularly measures student satisfaction through a range of indicators found in the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Student Experience Survey.

In 2024, 79.9% of domestic undergraduate students rated the quality of teaching at their institution positively (based on 2024 pre-release data), a decrease from 80.4% in 2023.

The decrease has been driven by lower satisfaction ratings from domestic undergraduate students commencing in 2024, and in particular, commencing students in the 4 study areas of Engineering; Business and management; Teacher education; and Humanities, culture and social sciences.

Despite the slight decline in 2024, students' satisfaction with their teaching quality remains high, including for later-year students (completing or middle-year students), which remained stable between 2023 and 2024. Satisfaction rates are higher than 2020 levels, which were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but remain lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Year	2022	2023	2024
Teaching quality %	80.1	80.4	79.9

More information on student satisfaction is available in the 2024 SES National Report (to be released through the QILT website www.qilt.edu.au).

The department continues to support teaching and learning through its ongoing management of the Commonwealth Grant Scheme, which subsidises eligible domestic students with the cost of their higher education study.

Maximising the proportion of domestic higher education students who are satisfied with the teaching quality at their institution is important to encourage more domestic students to access higher education and thereby promote growth in Australia's economic productivity.

The department works to optimise collaboration and engagement with higher education providers on matters relating to teaching and learning by maintaining open, transparent and consistent engagement. This includes the department's involvement in Mission Based Compacts negotiations and seeking opportunities for genuine consultation where there are significant changes to policies or processes (for example, the Australian Universities Accord process).

The department also maintains transparency, including around providers' responsibilities, through publication of relevant information through various websites, including the department's and StudyAssist websites (www.education.gov.au and www.studyassist.gov.au). This in turn allows providers to better assist students where they need it, which facilitates increased student satisfaction. It can be argued that provision of effective support for students is an important component of high-quality teaching.

The sector is continuing to experience significant change with ongoing implementation of reforms arising from the Australian Universities Accord process. The introduction of Needs-based Funding from 2026 and transition to the Managed Growth Funding System are likely to positively impact student satisfaction with by ensuring more students can access, participate and succeed in higher education.

Methodology:

Number of domestic undergraduate 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 domestic undergraduate students with a valid 'Teaching Quality Scale' score in the Student Experience Survey.

Scope: Domestic undergraduate-level commencing and later-year students at higher education providers as listed under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

Note: Information about the survey methodology, data representativeness and response rate is available in the Student Experience Survey National Report (link below).

Source:

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Student Experience Survey, (www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/student-experience-survey-(ses)).

Note: Pre-released data had passed the department's quality assurance processes and were not available (i.e. published) via the QILT website at the time of result preparation.

Contributing program: 2.3 – Higher Education Support.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Performance measure PM017

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

Target: 85% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 85.5% (result based on 2024 pre-release data)

Analysis:

Employers have high levels of overall satisfaction with graduates produced by the Australian higher education system, as reported through the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS).

In 2024, 85.5% of supervisors expressed overall satisfaction with their graduate employees (based on 2024 pre-release data). This was an increase from 83.7% in 2023.

Over the period 2016 to 2024, the proportion of employers satisfied has ranged between 83.6% and 85.5%. This stable nature of employers' views of recent graduates provides assurance of the quality of the Australian higher education system.

This aligns with the department's Higher Education Support Program, which aims to maintain or improve the quality of the higher education system. As the primary framework for funding universities and supporting student access, the program includes funding streams and policy levers that encourage universities to align courses with industry needs and produce graduates with employable skills.

More information on employers' view of recent graduates is available in the 2024 ESS National Report (www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/employer-satisfaction-survey-(ess)).

Methodology:

Number of supervisors of employed graduates satisfied with the skills of the graduate over the number of supervisors with valid survey responses.

Note: Information about the survey methodology, data representativeness and response rate is available in the ESS National Report (link below).

Source:

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Employer Satisfaction Survey, (www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/employer-satisfaction-survey-(ess)).

Note: Pre-released data had passed the department's quality assurance processes and were not available (i.e. published) via the QILT website at the time of result preparation.

Contributing program: 2.3 – Higher Education Support.

Key activity:

- Enhance the quality of the higher education system
- Support students' access to higher education and transition to employment.

Performance measure PM018

The proportion of HELP debt not expected to be repaid on new debt.

Target: Equal to or lower than the previous year

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 11.94%

Analysis:

The proportion of Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt not expected to be repaid on new debt was 11.94% for 2024–25, lower than the 2023–24 result of 13.0%.

The reduction in debt not expected to be repaid (DNER) in 2024–25 has been partly driven by legislative changes to the indexation method for HELP loans, outlined in detail below. These changes have reduced the total amount of outstanding debt and hence have an impact on the quantum of HELP debt which is not expected to be repaid.

In 2025 the Australian Government Actuary has refined its actuarial HELP models to incorporate field of education into its projection methodology for graduate incomes; this enhancement in methodology has allowed for more precise modelling of long-term incomes at the FOE level.

This methodology change means that overall income projections for graduates will be more reflective of actual outcomes leading to better expected estimates of DNER. This model enhancement also contributed to the reduction in the proportion of DNER on new debts in 2025.

The department has responsibility for the HELP program, including setting policy parameters, legislation, managing relationships and payments to universities, and working with the Australian Taxation Office (who manages repayments of HELP loans).

The HELP program supports access to a greater number of students in higher education, while maintaining the sustainability of higher education funding.

The department supports the ongoing performance of the HELP system by providing policy advice to government, preparing legislation and implementing reforms to support the strategic objectives of government.

The HELP is an income contingent loan program whereby students repay their loans when their income exceeds the minimum repayment threshold for the year, in 2024–25 the minimum repayment threshold was $54,435.

Income contingency is an important feature of the HELP system which has been in place since the commencement of the Highter Education Contribution Scheme in 1989 (the precursor to the HELP). Income contingency ensures that repayment of HELP loans does not cause financial detriment to HELP debtors.

The proportion of new debt not expected to repaid is projected each year by the Australian Government Actuary (AGA) use the latest available administrative data from the ATO and the Department of Education.

The income-contingency feature in the HELP means that there will always be an amount of HELP debt not repaid, primarily due to individuals who do not earn sufficient income to fully repay their HELP debt.

Therefore, each year wage growth will affect the amount of debt not repaid and the performance result. In 2024–25, improved wage growth in the Australian economy contributed to a reduction in DNER. However, the impact of recent indexation policy changes and modelling enhancements have had the greater impact.

Following the release of the Australian Universities Accord final report in 2024 (www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/final-report), the government has made changes to the HELP system, addressing the Accord's recommendations by implementing legislation to:

- change the way that HELP debts are indexed to the lower of the consumer price index and the wage price index; and
- making the repayment system fairer by raising the minimum repayment threshold from 1 July 2025, lowering repayments and basing compulsory repayment on the income above the new repayment thresholds, rather than compulsory repayments being based on total annual repayment income.
- the government has also passed legislation to reduce all HELP and other student debts incurred on or before 1 June 2025 by 20%.

AGA has adjusted its HELP modelling to account for the lowering of the indexation rates that impacted HELP in 2024–25, following the implementation of the Universities Accord (Student Support and Other Measures) Bill 2024.

The 20% reduction in HELP and the changes to the repayment system in the Universities Accord (cutting Student Debts by 20%) Bill 2025 were passed by the parliament on 31 July 2025 and will be reflected in the 2025–26 annual report. For more information refer to page 211.

Methodology:

The proportion of debt not expected to be repaid on new debt is modelled by the Australian Government Actuary using historical and projected repayment data in its longitudinal data on HELP debtors.

Source: Australian Government Actuary 2025 HELP Receivable Advice.

Contributing program: 2.4 – Higher Education Loan Program.

Key activity:

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

Performance measure PM019

The proportion of research publications in the world's top 10% most highly cited journals that are Australian research publications

Target: Above the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 4.47%

Analysis:

This measure reflects the influence Australian research has on the world and the quality of research being conducted and supported by **Program 2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research** and **Program 2.6 Research Capacity** which are administered by the department. Both programs enable the department's key activity to support the university research sector through research training, research funding and national research infrastructure and successfully underpin the delivery of world-class research and Australia's research performance. The department uses a single performance measure to assess performance for the activity and its research aligned programs.

In 2024 the average share of the world's top 10% most highly cited research publications among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries was 2.24%. Australia's share was above this average at 4.47%, which ranks Australia fourth behind the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany. Australia's ranking has continued to remain relatively stable over the past 5 years.

While Australia's 2024 result for the proportion of research publications in Australia that are among the world's top 10% most highly cited journals has slightly declined from 4.68% in 2023, this is consistent with 2024 results across the top 10 OECD countries. Despite this, Australia's number of research publications in the top 10% most highly cited journals has trended upwards over the past 5 years.

Through **Program 2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research** and **Program 2.6 Research Capacity** the department has continued to provide foundational support for Australia to achieve world-class research outcomes by investing in research, research training, national research infrastructure and capacity of the research workforce. The department coordinates and leverages these investments by promoting university research collaboration with industry and research institutions to generate new knowledge.

Research block grants

In 2024–25 the department provided funding to universities through the Research Support Program and the Research Training Program (sub-programs of Program 2.5) to support research and research training, with funding drivers incentivising universities to attract research and development income, including through partnerships for the conduct of world-leading research and innovation. Funding also supported the successful completion of postgraduate research degree students who subsequently enter and participate in the research workforce.

National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)

The department invests in research infrastructure through NCRIS, which is developed on a collaborative, national, and nonexclusive basis. Research infrastructure investment is in areas of national significance, which meets national priorities such as the National Reconstruction Fund, and Australia's National Science and Research priorities, and solves key challenges that have significant impact for Australia and around the world. NCRIS serves the research and innovation system broadly, not just the host institution, and in 2023–24 across the NCRIS Projects, as reported in their 2023–24 Annual Reports, there were 91,569 users of physical and digital infrastructure situated around the country.

Australian Government expenditure on NCRIS since its inception has allowed past investments to be leveraged to deliver ongoing economic and scientific benefit. In 2023–24 NCRIS Projects reported a total of cash and in-kind co-investments of $392.4 million. For every dollar invested in NCRIS projects by the government, an additional $0.98 has been co-invested.

NCRIS research infrastructure is geographically dispersed across Australia. This encompasses research infrastructure located in universities, publicly funded research agencies, in the field such as in rural and environmental observation sites, and in areas such as coastal and marine monitoring facilities. Key achievements for 2023–24 include:

- at a minimum in 2023, 4,743 Australian research publications that have attributed the use of National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy-funded NRI. (These figures are likely to be underestimated, as research infrastructure use is often not credited in research publications.)
- a significant number of jobs and roles funded as a result of NCRIS funding, with NCRIS projects directly employing 2,871 staff across the country, in administrative, technical, managerial and governance roles, with 72% being technical experts.

Examples of 2023–24 key achievements for NCRIS Projects have been published on the following websites:

- Australian National Fabrication Facility Casebook 2024 anff.org.au/resources/
- Integrated Marine Observing System publication imos.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/IMOS-Highlights-2024_WEB.pdf
- Microscopy Australia publication micro.org.au/documents/2024/.

Increase Workforce Mobility & Increase Workforce Mobility (Training Program) 'National Industry PhD Program' (NIPP)

The NIPP comprises 2 distinctive streams:

- Industry Linked PhDs: for outstanding PhD candidates to undertake research projects co-designed by university and industry with opportunities to be embedded in an industry setting.
- Industry Researcher PhDs: for highly capable industry professionals, supported by their employers to undertake PhD projects in partnership with a university, while retaining industry employment and salary benefits.

Since NIPP's inception in 2023, the department has provided policy oversight, monitored program outcomes, contributed to evaluation and continuous improvement, and managed a service provider which is assisting with program delivery, to ensure NIPP aligns with national priorities in research, innovation, and workforce skills development. In 2024–25 the government invested $6.7 million in the program, leveraging additional co-investments of a minimum of $10,000 from each industry partner for each awarded Industry Linked Stream project.

The fifth funding round was held in the first half of 2025, and successful applications were announced in July 2025. Including this round the NIPP has funded 265 PhD projects and progress includes:

- Industry engagement: 246 industry partners participating in the program.
- University engagement: 35 universities participating in the program.
- Project alignment: 94% of PhD projects associated with NRF in total.

The NIPP has seen 246 university–industry partnerships, with 75 new partnerships created with projects aligning with National Reconstruction Fund Priorities. Successful projects include reducing methane gas emissions in dairy cows, use artificial intelligence in defence decision-making, supporting tools to maintain steady loads in power lines with battery storage, and exploring the durability of cement made with recycled fly ash.

Trailblazer Universities Program

Through the Trailblazer Universities Program, the department increases the commercialisation of research in priority areas through strong engagement with industry investors and end-users as part of the Australian Government's Research Commercialisation Action Plan.

The program provides $370.3 million over 4 years (2022–23 to 2025–26) which includes $45 million allocated to CSIRO to enable access to specialist equipment and facilities for prototyping and testing technologies at scale. Six lead universities were selected in 2022 to receive an indexed grant of $50 million each following a competitive application process. The universities were required to double the grant with matching contributions from universities and industry. Each lead university has established a Trailblazer business unit which coordinates activities across several universities to support an industry sector. Each Trailblazer has a website which details its activities.

Achievements reported during 2024–25 included:

- The program attracted a total of $1.02 billion in cash and in-kind co-investments from industry and university partners directed towards research commercialisation and institutional reform projects, based on reporting to 31 December 2024. For every dollar invested by the government, an additional $2.76 was co-invested, highlighting strong leverage and an effective use of public funding to boost university and industry investment in research commercialisation.
- Over 300 research commercialisation projects with industry partners are underway or about to commence, with examples including:
  - Guardware and the Defence Trailblazer are developing an encryption software suite that can protect sensitive information across the Defence supply chain.
  - Mining and Process Solutions and the Resources Technology for Critical Minerals Trailblazer are developing new technologies to extract and recover metals from ores, mine tailings and other materials.
  - DeCarice and the Trailblazer for Recycling and Clean Energy are developing a one-stop service that retrofits existing diesel engines to hydrogen-diesel hybrid engines for immediate CO_2 reduction.
  - The Trailblazer for Space is partnering with Optus to lead innovation in optical satellite communications technology to give Australians faster and more affordable access to data.

More than 350 academic researchers and students participated in industry placements and training programs to develop their skills and experience in areas of technology transfer, commercialisation and entrepreneurship.

Launch Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA)

The department administers grants through the AEA program to higher education providers to partner with industry and end-users of research for research translation and commercialisation activities that demonstrate proof-of-concept and proof-of-scale in government priority areas.

In the initial phase, the AEA Seed pilot was delivered in 3 tranches, awarding over $26.5 million to university-led research commercialisation projects. Achievements include:

- 76 research commercialisation projects currently in progress
- 20 projects from Seed Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 have been successfully completed
- Completed projects have reported progressing their technology to a state of increased maturity increasing the likelihood of future industry or private capital investment (increased Technology Readiness Level (TRL)). For example:
  - The University of South Australia focused on developing a new style of olive using a patented and novel process to remove bitterness from olives quickly and effectively whilst maintaining high quality. During the project, the technology increased from TRL 4 to TRL 6 and attracted further investment from the industry partners for the 2025 harvest. The Australian Olive Association has endorsed the successful completion of the project.

- Monash University aimed to design and build solar-powered direct air capture (DAC) units capable of capturing CO_2, supporting Australia's climate commitments. Project outputs have attracted interest from venture capital firms and end-users with an interest in integrating the technology with their existing processes. The research team have been awarded an AEA Ignite grant to advance further development.

The full AEA program was launched in 2024–25 and inaugural rounds have awarded $59.6 million in Ignite (proof-of-concept) and $93.1 million in Innovate (proof-of-scale) grants, commencing late 2024–25 and 2025–26. It is too early in the development process to report outcomes of these projects.

More information is available at www.aea.gov.au/resources/aea-ignite-round-1-projects, and www.aea.gov.au/resources/aea-innovate-round-1-projects.

Higher Education Research Promotion (HERP)

Through the HERP, the department aims to increase the production, use and awareness of research knowledge and to improve collaboration between government, industry, and the research sector in the production of research knowledge. Funded organisations contribute to the performance measure by creating opportunities and a supportive framework to advance researcher output.

Methodology:

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.

Source: SciVal.

Contributing program:

2.5 – Investment in Higher Education Research

2.6 – Research Capacity.

Key activity:

- Support the university research sector through research training, research funding and national research infrastructure.

Performance measure PM020

Proportion of domestic research postgraduates who are employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree.

Target: 90% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 90.5% (result based on 2024 pre-release data)

Analysis:

The proportion of domestic research postgraduates employed within 4 to 6 months of course completion was 90.5% in 2024 (based on 2024 pre-release data). While the target has been achieved, this is a slight decrease from the 2023 result of 91.4% which is not considered to be a significant fluctuation for research postgraduate employment outcomes.

Graduate employment outcomes are related to the economic and labour market conditions that existed at the time of the survey. The tight labour market conditions experienced in 2022 and 2023 in Australia continued to ease in 2024 but remained generally elevated.

The sustained high result despite labour market pressures indicates the positive impact undertaking a higher degree by research has on employment outcomes. The department supports strong employment outcomes for research postgraduates through providing research and research training funding to higher education providers to support the successful completion of postgraduate research degrees by their students.

The sustained high result indicates the positive influence postgraduate research qualifications have on employment outcomes, which extends to higher domestic postgraduate research median annual full-time salaries.

Further information on Program 2.5 programs, the Research Support Program and the Research Training Program can be found at www.education.gov.au/research-block-grants.

Methodology:

Number of domestic research postgraduates employed within 4 to 6 months of completing their degree over the total number of domestic research postgraduates available for work in those 4 to 6 months.

Note: 'Employed' is informed by the ABS Labour Force Survey concepts and definitions in measuring graduate employment outcomes. Accordingly, this considers graduates 'employed' if they work at least one hour in the survey reference week (in any profession or occupation, which may or may not align to a graduate's field of study). Information about the survey methodology, data representativeness and response rate is available in the Graduate Outcomes Survey National Report (link below). Employment outcomes for research postgraduates is a useful indicator of the success of Program 2.5 programs.

Source:

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) (qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey-(gos)).

Note: Pre-released data had passed the department's quality assurance processes and were not available (i.e. published) via the QILT website at the time of result preparation.

Contributing program: 2.5 – Investment in Higher Education Research.

Key activity:

- Support the university research sector through research training, research funding and national research infrastructure.

Performance measure PM021

First Nations higher degree by research (HDR) completions.

Target: Increase from previous year

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 108

Analysis:

The number of First Nations HDR completions reported in 2024 is 108 (based on preliminary data), 20 completions more than the 88 First Nations HDR completions reported in 2023.

The number of annual First Nations HDR completions is small, which can lead to some fluctuation from year to year. However, the number of First Nations HDR completions is trending upwards over the longer term. In 2016, the 3-year average was 47 completions, and this has increased to 93 in 2024 (based on 2024 preliminary data).

The Department of Education's Research Training Program (RTP) provides approximately $1.2 billion annually to eligible higher education providers to support their students undertaking research doctorate and research masters degrees, known as HDRs.

The RTP calculation includes a weighting that incentivises higher education providers to support First Nations students through to completion of their HDR. Further information on the RTP is available on the department's website (www.education.gov.au/research-block-grants/research-training-program).

The number of First Nations HDR completions can be impacted by various factors including students self-identifying as Indigenous, participation in secondary and tertiary studies, yearly HDR commencements and enrolments, the time taken to complete study and other individual circumstances. Furthermore, completions are dependent on many factors and are often correlated with the wider higher education and economic environment. For example, if more First Nations students study part-time, the number of completions may decrease in a reference period.

Note: Preliminary 2024 data are not expected to differ materially from final 2024 data. However, it should be noted that the preliminary data are impacted by data quality issues due to a cyber incident at one university. The potential impact of data quality issues on this performance measure has been assessed based on historical reporting and is not expected to exceed a variance of one completion.

The final result for 2024 will be published on the Department of Education website. The version of the 2024–25 Annual Report tabled in parliament and available on transparency.gov.au will remain unchanged.

The 2023 result on the Department of Education website aligns with the 2023–24 Department of Education Annual Report result, which used preliminary data.

Methodology:

Number of First Nations HDR completions compared to the previous year.

Source:

Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 14.14.

Contributing program: 2.5 – Investment in Higher Education Research.

Key activity:

- Support the university research sector through research training, research funding and national research infrastructure.

Performance measure PM026

Proportion of international students employed after graduation.

Target: 70% or higher

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 70.5% (result based on 2024 pre-release data)

Analysis:

The proportion of international higher education graduates who were employed 4 to 6 months after completing their degree decreased from 74.2% in 2023 to 70.5% in 2024 (based on 2024 pre-release data). In previous years this measure included international students who were employed after graduation as well as those students who enrolled in further study.

Graduate employment outcomes are related to the economic and labour market conditions that existed at the time of the survey. The tight labour market conditions experienced in 2022 and 2023 in Australia, and many other countries, continued to ease in 2024 but remained generally elevated.

Domestic graduates report higher employment rates shortly after graduation, partly reflecting their higher average age and a lower propensity to take up further full-time study compared to international graduates. Older graduates are more likely to have established themselves in the workforce, and with this prior labour market experience, are typically more competitive than younger graduates.

The Department of Education has major policy responsibility for this measure, and has contributed to the achievement of the target through supporting the sustainable growth, as well as improving the quality and integrity of the international education system. Robust integrity and quality in the sector have positive flow-on effects for the employability of international graduates, with employers able to trust that international graduates have received high quality education and training to an Australian standard.

Graduate outcomes are also influenced by the Department of Home Affairs, through post-graduate study work rights visa settings, Austrade which has some policy responsibility for marketing employment opportunities to international students, and higher education providers themselves.

The target for this measure was reduced from 85% in 2023–24 to 70% for 2024–25, in line with removing those enrolled in further study from the measure.

This target is based on historical assessment of performance including data for the revised measure. It is lower than the target for the previous measure because it removes those who enrol in further study.

More information on international higher education employment outcomes is available in the 2024 GOS International Report (link below).

Methodology:

Number of international higher education graduates employed 4 to 6 months after completing a degree over the total number of international higher education graduates available to work in those 4 to 6 months.

Note: 'Employed' is informed by the ABS Labour Force Survey concepts and definitions in measuring graduate employment outcomes. Accordingly, this considers graduates 'employed' if they work at least one hour in the survey reference week (in any profession or occupation, which may or may not align to a graduate's field of study). Information about the survey methodology, data representativeness and response rate is available in the Graduate Outcomes Survey International Report (link below).

Source:

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), Graduate Outcomes Survey, (www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey-(gos)).

Note: Pre-released data had passed the department's quality assurance processes and were not available (i.e. published) via the QILT website at the time of result preparation.

Contributing program: 2.7 – International Education Support.

Key activity:

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

Performance measure PM027

Number of students enrolled in offshore education and training delivered by Australian providers.

Target: Increase from previous year

Result rating: Not achieved

Result value: -7%

Analysis:

Preliminary data show that in 2024 there were 107,442 students enrolled in offshore education and training courses delivered by Australian providers. This is a 7% decrease on the 115,265 students reported in final, published 2023 Higher Education Student data.

This decrease is based on an updated result for 2023 (not published in the 2023–24 Annual Report), owing to a change in the methodology for determining offshore students that was implemented in 2024 after the 2023–24 performance reporting had been completed. The change in methodology does not affect the overall result ratings of this performance measure in previous years.

Analysis shows the decrease between 2023 and 2024 was driven almost entirely by a large decrease in the total offshore enrolments reported by one higher education provider. This decrease is due to the provider incorrectly reporting residence status for students in their 2023 data. This issue has been corrected in the provider's 2024 data. As a result, the decrease observed for this performance measure is unlikely to reflect substantive changes within that one provider or the sector as a whole.

In further support of this assessment, analysis using corrected (but unpublished) data for 2023 from the affected provider shows a 1% decline between 2023 and 2024 for this performance measure and hence that the target remains unmet. This minor decrease likely reflects ongoing, residual residency status changes of international students following the lifting of pandemic-related border restrictions both in Australia and overseas.

The department continues to support the high-quality and sustainable growth of Australia's offshore education and training delivery through government-to-government engagement and broadening opportunities for Australian providers to deliver high-quality education and training offshore. The department expects to see increased diversification of offshore education and training delivery which is likely to result in increased student enrolments offshore in the future.

Note: Preliminary 2024 data are not expected to differ materially from final 2024 data. However, it should be noted that the preliminary data are impacted by data quality issues due to a cyber incident at another higher education provider. The potential impact of the data quality issues on this performance measure has been assessed based on historical reporting and the percentage change in this performance measure is not expected to exceed a variance of 0.01 percentage points.

The final result for 2024 will be published on the Department of Education website. The version of the 2024–25 Annual Report tabled in parliament and available on transparency.gov.au will remain unchanged.

Methodology:

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 has changed from the 2024–25 PBS and Corporate Plan owing to a revision to the calculation methodology to improve the accuracy of these data.

Source:

Department of Education, Higher Education Statistics Collection, Table 2.10.

Contributing program: 2.7 – International Education Support.

Key activity:

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

Performance measure PM076

Accurate and timely allocation of Commonwealth supported places (CSP) funding, as set out within university Commonwealth funding agreements.

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 Higher Education Course Advance payments through the UniPay system, are made on time

Result rating: Achieved

Result value: 100% of allocations were accurately reflected and 100% of payments were made on time

Analysis:

100% of allocations under the Nuclear Powered Submarine Program for 2024 are accurately reflected in providers' Commonwealth funding agreements.

The Australian Government is supporting 4,001 commencing Commonwealth support places (CSPs) from 2024 to 2027 to develop a pipeline of highly skilled science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates.

These allocations reflect funding for additional CSPs above the standard funding levels provided under Maximum Basic Grant Amount (MBGA). Funding is provisioned for these extra places to support the nuclear workforce, but is not available to providers until existing MBGA funding has been exhausted.

100% of 2024 payments, administered by the Department of Education, which are included in the broader Commonwealth Grant Scheme Higher Education Course Advance, were made on time.

Funding was paid as a percentage of the total value each month in accordance with approved payment determinations published on the department's Higher Education Information Management System. Government funding contributions are based on cluster rates published on the department's website: www.education.gov.au/higher-education-loan-program/resources/2024-allocation-units-study-funding-clusters.

While funding provided is paid monthly under this measure, it can be recouped through a retrospective reconciliation process in situations where a provider does not first exhaust its MBGA allocation under the Commonwealth Grant Scheme or is unable to deliver additional places funded under this measure.

This performance measure supersedes PM074 which reported on the accurate and timely final allocation of funding in the Department of Education 2023–24 Annual Report (www.education.gov.au/about-department/resources/department-education-202324-annual-report).

Methodology:

Reporting against this measure will be 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.

Source:

- 2024–2025 Commonwealth Grant Scheme Funding Agreements (www.education.gov.au/collections/higher-education-providers-2024-2025-commonwealth-grant-scheme-funding-agreements).
- Published funding cluster rates (www.education.gov.au/higher-education-loan-program/approved-hep-information/funding-clusters-and-indexed-rates).
- Department of Education, UniPay payment schedule, HEIMS online.
- Department of Education, Higher Education Courses Advance UniPay Determinations.

Contributing program: 2.8 – Nuclear Powered Submarine Program.

Key activity:

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

03

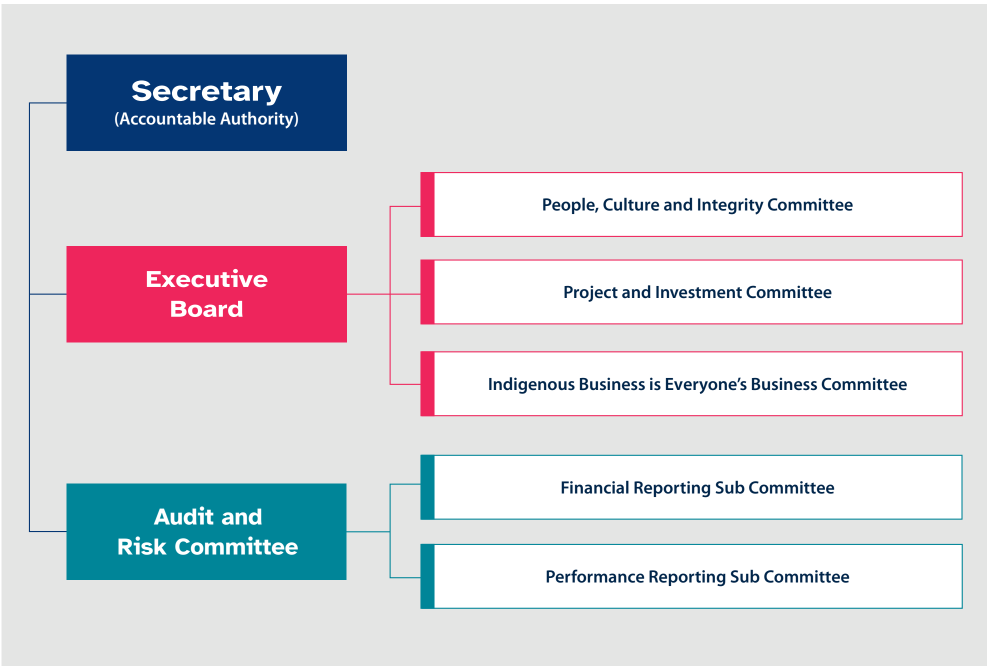
Management and accountability

Corporate governance

The department's governance arrangements (Figure 3.1) assisted the department in delivering on its purpose consistent with the department's legal, accountability and policy obligations.

The department's committees and working groups provided advice, oversight and direction on the department's work as required.

Figure 3.1: The department's governance structure as at 30 June 2025



Executive Board and committees

The **Executive Board**, chaired by the Secretary, was the department's key decision-making body, responsible for setting the department's strategic direction, meeting the Australian Government's objectives and ensuring compliance with the department's obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act). The Executive Board membership is the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries, with the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief People Officer as advisers.

The **People, Culture and Integrity Committee** advised the Executive Board on a range of strategic culture, engagement, integrity, workforce planning and leadership matters. It provided oversight on the development and ongoing implementation of the department's *People Strategy 2023–25*, the *Enterprise Workforce Plan 2024–26* and the *Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024–25* and monitored the implementation of culture and engagement strategies in response to the Australian Public Service (APS) Employee Census results.

The **Project and Investment Committee** provided oversight and assurance over the department's project portfolio, particularly projects of high strategic importance. It supported senior responsible officers to uphold all obligations and accountabilities, ensuring projects met the department's strategic objectives and government policy and had appropriate financial approvals. The committee allocated the capital budget, ensuring investment decisions made the best use of available funding. It oversaw the strategic, efficient and effective management of the *ICT Strategy 2023–26*, implemented policies and tools, and was the escalation point for project and IT related issues which required cross-portfolio or cross departmental consideration.

The **Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee** provided oversight and advice to the Executive Board on key First Nations matters, including First Nations related policy reforms, Closing the Gap Priority Reforms and the department's forward approach and actions on reconciliation.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee provided advice on the appropriateness of financial and performance reporting, systems of risk (including fraud and corruption; physical, personnel, cyber and security; ICT; business continuity; climate-related risks; and privacy risks) and systems of internal control. The committee's roles and responsibilities are clearly set out in section 45 of the PGPA Act and section 17 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (Cth) (PGPA Rule). The Audit and Risk Committee Charter is at www.education.gov.au/about-department/resources/audit-and-risk-committee-charter.

Table 3.1: Audit and Risk Committee member details

Member name, role and tenure during 2024–25	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (formal and informal)	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings held during the period of membership in 2024–25	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.) during 2024–25
Mr Darren Box Chair, Audit and Risk Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)	Mr Box is an experienced senior executive with over 30 years' experience spanning national social service and national security across the Commonwealth and United Kingdom. He also has extensive financial management and organisational reform experience. Mr Box has held senior leadership roles within federal agencies such as the Australian Federal Police, Department of Defence and Department of Human Services. Mr Box holds a Bachelor of Business (Acc), qualifications in professional coaching and is a Fellow of CPA Australia.	6/6	$70,000

Member name, role and tenure during 2024–25	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (formal and informal)	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings held during the period of membership in 2024–25	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.) during 2024–25
Mr Richard Eccles Member, Audit and Risk Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025) Observer, Project Investment Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)	Mr Eccles is a former deputy secretary (2010–2020) of several federal portfolios, including the Department of Health and Aged Care, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Department of Communications and the Arts. He is Chair of the Canberra Health Services Strategic Governance Committee and a company director for the Copyright Agency Ltd, Bangarra Dance Theatre Pty Ltd and the Public Interest Journalism Initiative Ltd. He provides advisory services to organisations including the National Gallery of Australia. In October 2024 the government appointed him to lead the independent statutory review of the National Self-Exclusion Register (BetStop) under the *Interactive Gambling Act 2021*. Mr Eccles holds a Bachelor of Arts (ANU) and Master of Arts (UNSW).	6/6	$34,000

Member name, role and tenure during 2024–25	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (formal and informal)	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings held during the period of membership in 2024–25	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.) during 2024–25
Ms Cath Ingram Member, Audit and Risk Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025) Chair, Financial Statements Sub Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)	Ms Ingram is a specialist in the domains of governance, risk and assurance in both the public and the private sector. She has extensive experience in assurance over public sector reform programs with significant IT implementation. Ms Ingram is a former KPMG Partner and Chair of KPMG Canberra. She is the chair of several Commonwealth audit and risk committees and financial statement subcommittees and a member of the International Monetary Fund's External Audit Committee. Ms Ingram is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (FCA) and a Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia. Ms Ingram holds a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting and Certificate IV – Commonwealth Fraud Control (Investigations).	5/6	$40,000

Member name, role and tenure during 2024–25	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (formal and informal)	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings held during the period of membership in 2024–25	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.) during 2024–25
Ms Anne O'Donnell Member, Audit and Risk Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025) Chair, Performance Reporting Sub Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)	Ms O'Donnell has experience as a finance sector executive and non-executive director and committee member in the listed, not-for-profit, mutual and government sectors. Her current roles include Chair of the ACT Long Serve Leave Authority, Member of the National Capital Authority Audit Committee and external member of the Compliance Committee UBS Global Asset Management (Aust) Ltd. Ms O'Donnell is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds a Bachelor of Banking and Finance and a Master of Business Administration.	6/6	$40,000

Member name, role and tenure during 2024–25	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (formal and informal)	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings held during the period of membership in 2024–25	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.) during 2024–25
Mr Michael Manthorpe PSM Member, Audit and Risk Committee (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)	Mr Manthorpe served in the Australian Public Service for 37 years, including as Commonwealth Ombudsman from 2017 to 2021. He worked in the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations portfolios for many years, including as a deputy secretary, and led service delivery and organisational reforms in the then Department of Immigration and Border Protection. As well as audit committee and executive coaching roles, Mr Manthorpe is the Interim Commissioner of the Defence and Veterans' Services Commission, which is being established in response to a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.	5/6	$31,000

Audit and risk sub committees

The **Financial Statements Sub Committee** supported and advised the Audit and Risk Committee on its accountabilities and responsibilities in matters to do with the preparation of the financial statements and the appropriateness of information in the supplementary reporting pack provided to the Department of Finance. It also considered other financial matters referred to it by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The **Performance Reporting Sub Committee** supported the Audit and Risk Committee in performing its functions and meeting requirements in accordance with section 45 of the PGPA Act. It assisted the Audit and Risk Committee by reviewing the documents and processes that comprised the department's Performance Framework throughout the performance cycle.

Risk management

The department's approach to identifying, managing, and communicating risk is guided by the department's Enterprise Risk Management Policy Framework and the Accountable Authority Instructions which are underpinned by requirements of the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and the PGPA Act. These documents outline the approach to be followed to ensure risks are addressed in alignment with our defined risk appetite, tolerance thresholds, and governance arrangements.

The Secretary and the department's Executive Board had overarching responsibility for the enterprise risk management arrangements, supported by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Deputy Secretaries assisted in defining our risk appetite and tolerance limits and supported First Assistant Secretaries to provide stewardship of enterprise-wide risks and their associated mitigation strategies. The department's Chief Risk Officer supported these governance arrangements and was responsible for embedding the enterprise risk management arrangements that foster a positive risk culture.

During 2024–25 the department continued to improve its enterprise risk management arrangements to ensure obligations under section 16 of the PGPA Act were met.

Fraud and corruption control

The department's governance framework and arrangements provided assurance to the accountable authority that public resources were used appropriately to achieve its purpose and promote financial sustainability.

In 2024–25 the department continued to implement the new Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework (CFCC Framework) that came into effect on 1 July 2024, including additional requirements set by the CFCC Framework, which complements other arrangements in place to prevent, detect, investigate and report fraud against the department's programs and other interests.

The department continued to work collaboratively with other Australian Government agencies to develop and apply better practices to effectively manage fraud and corruption risk and incidents of fraud and/or corruption. The department used a range of reporting channels for fraud and corruption tip-offs, including a dedicated phone line, email address and Whispli – an anonymous fraud reporting tool.

The department continues to deliver against the Child Care Subsidy Financial Integrity Strategy, which contains measures to combat Child Care Subsidy (CCS) fraud and non-compliance.

Two investigation teams were responsible for investigating incidents of fraud and/or corruption during the year:

- The Child Care Fraud Investigations and Tactical Operations Team, in the Early Childhood and Youth Group, conducted criminal investigations into allegations of CCS fraud. The team also contributed to multi-agency collaboration with other Australian Government agencies to prevent fraud and non-compliance including the Fraud Fusion Taskforce. The team referred multiple briefs of evidence to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions during the year.
- The Integrity and Fraud Team in the Corporate and Enabling Services Group was responsible for fraud and corruption investigations across the department's activities. As well as fraud and corruption investigation activities, the Integrity and Fraud Team:
  - coordinated the department's Enterprise Fraud and Corruption Risk Assessment and Divisional Fraud and Corruption risk assessments
  - updated policies, processes and delegations and implemented an internal communications campaign to prepare for the implementation of the CFCC Framework
  - using targeted communication and mandatory training, promoted awareness of individuals' roles and responsibilities to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and/or corruption
  - provided advice to business areas on fraud and corruption risks when designing, implementing and managing new policies and programs
  - completed annual reporting against the CFCC Framework and coordinated the department's response to the annual Institute of Criminology Fraud Census for the last financial year.

In addition to the department's centralised fraud and corruption functions, there were assurance and compliance frameworks across the department's programs. Where assurance and compliance activities led to the suspicion of fraud and corruption, this was referred to the relevant investigations team.

Shared services arrangements

Throughout 2024–25, the department had Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) in place with several shared service providers.

- The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) provided property, technology and other corporate services, including accommodation and fit-out, security, mail and telecommunications, application development and hosting, network access, end-user computing, service desk support, records management, learning and development application support.
- The Department of Finance Service Delivery Office provided transactional services such as payroll and payroll system administration, accounts payable and accounts receivable processing.
- The Department of Social Services' Community Grants Hub provided grants administration services.
- Services Australia was responsible for the delivery of payments and services in early childhood education and care, and higher education programs. The department also had a joint initiative arrangement with Services Australia to improve the collection of data and to manage data exchange in relation to the Tertiary Collection of Student Information system.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics provided statistical, research and analysis services across several education-related programs covering early childhood, schools and higher education.

Significant non-compliance with the Finance Law

During the 2024–25 reporting period, one instance of significant non-compliance was reported to the responsible minister. This related to the Inclusion Support Program's Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) Subsidy Grants not being published on GrantConnect, as required under the *Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles 2024*.

Since the program's commencement in 2016, IDF Subsidy Grants had been reported in aggregate against the contracted Inclusion development fund manager, rather than on an individual basis. In January 2025, the Minister for Finance approved an exemption permitting the department to publish the aggregated funding awarded to each provider on a quarterly basis, in arrears.

The department has since completed the publication of all past grants and implemented a process to ensure appropriate reporting of new grants.

Ministerial advice and correspondence

The department provides advice to our portfolio ministers though the Parliamentary Document Management System (PDMS). The department initiates ministerial submissions to provide policy advice or information to our portfolio ministers. The department responds to requests for information or advice from our ministers using ministerial briefs, which are initiated in ministers' offices.

Ministerial correspondence records assist the department in drafting replies, on behalf of portfolio ministers or their offices, in response to external correspondence on portfolio-related matters.

Table 3.2: Number of departmental briefs, submissions and correspondence to portfolio ministers, 2024–25

Ministers	Records
Minister for Education	1,731
Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth[1]	597
Assistant Minister for Education[2]	32
Assistant Minister for International Education[3]	28

The department provided 79.8% of briefs and 73.3% of correspondence to our portfolio ministers' offices on or before the due date.

1 The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP served as minister until 12 May 2025. Senator the Hon Dr Jess Walsh has served as minister since 13 May 2025.

2 Senator the Hon Anthony Chisholm served as Assistant Minister for Education from 1 June 2022 to 13 May 2025.

3 The Hon Julian Hill MP has served as Minister for International Education since 13 May 2025.

People management

Integrity

Over 2024–25 the department continued to embed a pro-integrity culture as part of the Australian Public Service Reform agenda. This priority emphasises the importance of acting with integrity and fairness and being accountable and transparent in all activities. The department recognises that integrity is fundamental to public service and essential for earning and maintaining public trust.

As part of our commitment to this priority, in 2024–25 the department:

- conducted the Commonwealth Integrity Maturity Assessment to evaluate the department's integrity maturity
- developed an Integrity Action Plan to address key risks and opportunities identified in the Integrity Maturity Assessment and promote best-practice integrity processes
- launched the department's Integrity Framework to equip staff with the necessary information and guidance to make sound, integrity-focused decisions
- implemented the Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Framework 2024
- reviewed key departmental frameworks and policies, including conflict of interest, gifts and benefits and contract management, to ensure best-practice application
- supported the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) by participating in the Commonwealth Integrity Survey and embedding NACC processes, requirements and legislation
- maintained focus on the Public Interest Disclosure function to better protect whistleblowers, aligning processes with NACC requirements
- continued implementation of the APS Integrity Taskforce report Louder than words: an APS Integrity Action Plan
- continued delivery of mandatory Senior Executive Service (SES) Integrity Masterclass training to enhance executive understanding of integrity and ethical decision-making
- rolled out Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) integrity training for all new staff
- continued educating staff on recognising and reporting alleged wrongdoing – for example, by providing tailored training and guidance on the reporting tools that are available across the department
- maintained an Integrity Hub on the department's intranet to provide accessible information and guidance on integrity practices and internal policies.

Model employer

Our commitment to being a model employer aligns with key pillars of the APS Reform agenda. Building and sustaining a positive, inclusive workplace culture is central to the *People Strategy 2023–25*, the *Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024–25* and the *Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–25*.

The Department of Education Enterprise Agreement 2024–27 (EA) came into effect on 26 January 2024. The new enterprise agreement provides a range of entitlements for all non-SES employees, including a 3.8% salary increase, which was applied in March 2025. The Consultative Committee, established under the EA, serves as the key mechanism for consultation between the department, employees and employee representatives. The committee convened 6 times during 2024–25.

Throughout the year, the department continued to foster inclusion and celebrate achievements through our employee networks, our performance management processes and both informal and formal recognition arrangements, including the Secretary Awards and activities coordinated by the Social Club.

Our people

In 2024–25 the department employed 1,835 staff in locations around Australia and at overseas posts. The department continued to promote excellence by focusing on building capability through recruitment activities, staff mobility, succession planning, leadership development, and training.

The department applied an integrated approach to the annual planning cycle, aligning workforce requirements with organisational priorities. Operational workforce planning focused on identifying critical roles, assessing capacity and skills, and ensuring alignment with business plans. This approach also considered future business priorities and corresponding workforce needs and responded to insights from the annual APS Employee Census, with a strong emphasis on managing psychosocial safety of the staff.

In October 2023 the APSC released the Strategic Commissioning Framework, which sets out the APS-wide requirement to reduce reliance on outsourcing and ensure that core APS work is delivered by APS staff. In response, the department identified 9 immediate and 4 future capabilities and functions as core departmental work and a target to reduce outsourcing expenditure by $30,000 in 2024–25. The identified immediate and future capabilities and functions were incorporated into the Enterprise Workforce Plan.

An assessment of our progress towards the Strategic Commissioning Framework in April 2025 confirmed that none of the 9 immediate core functions were outsourced at the time of the review and that the department had successfully met its outsourcing reduction target for 2024–25.

Looking ahead, the department will continue to build internal capability, with a focus on delivering core work in-house and recruiting relevant expertise. Responsible outsourcing, supported by robust framework implementation and monitoring practices, will be used to meet business demands, providing short-term surge capacity or specialist skills when required.

Enterprise Workforce Plan 2024–26

The department's *Enterprise Workforce Plan 2024–26* supports the department to manage workforce risks by outlining the capabilities and skills required to deliver our current and future priorities.

An annual review of the Enterprise Workforce Plan conducted in 2024 indicated 8 of the 17 priority initiatives outlined in the plan were complete, with the remaining 9 initiatives actively underway.

Diversity and inclusion

The department recognises that, to achieve its purpose, it requires a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. The department is committed to fostering an accessible and inclusive workplace for all employees.

The *Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024–25* sets out the department's commitment to improving workforce representation and creating positive employment experiences. The strategy's core focus areas – engagement and representation, capability and connection, and alignment and reporting – are aligned to deliverable outcomes under APS-wide diversity strategies.

Progress against APS-wide diversity and inclusion targets is monitored by the:

- Executive Board
- People, Culture and Integrity Committee
- Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee.

Our employee networks play a vital role in promoting diversity and inclusion initiatives, celebrating days of significance and improving employment outcomes and the lived experience of our people. Each network is supported by 2 SES-level champions.

In 2024–25 the department supported 6 employee networks:

- Ability and Carers Network
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (the Deadly Crew)
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Network
- Gender Equity Network
- Neurodiversity Network
- Pride Network.

The Neurodiversity Network, initially informal, was established in October 2024. Its inaugural Day of Significance was celebrated in March 2025.

We maintained our memberships of peak diversity organisations, including the:

- Australian Disability Network
- Diversity Council Australia
- Pride in Diversity.

The department also continued its participation in the Australian Disability Network's Internship Program, offering paid work experience opportunities for university students with disability.

Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business

The department's commitment to reconciliation is reflected in the ongoing implementation of its *Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–25* (RAP). The RAP outlines genuine, measurable actions that advance reconciliation and foster meaningful opportunities for First Nations people within the department and the broader community. Over the past year, we have made significant progress in embedding reconciliation principles into our culture, policies and everyday practices.

The department developed and delivered its policies and programs with the Closing the Gap reform priorities in mind. We have policies and programs on working with First Nations peoples, respecting First Nations cultures and building our own cultural capability. Our employees were encouraged to embrace and value the important contribution First Nations peoples make to the department and wider Australian society. We supported opportunities and employment for First Nations people through recruitment activities, including SES recruitment, and maintained our compliance with the Australian Government's Indigenous Procurement Policy.

Cultural responsiveness was further strengthened through a range of reconciliation-focused initiatives. More than 350 staff participated in conversations about obligations under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, with engagement spanning key networks and policy areas.
Key activities included:

- delivery of online and face-to-face cultural awareness training
- support for participation in the Jawun secondment program.

In March 2025 the Executive Board endorsed the transformation of the Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee into a refreshed governance body. This repositioning enables the committee to provide strategic oversight and advice on First Nations related policy reforms, Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, and the department's broader reconciliation journey.
In April 2025 the committee endorsed a revised terms of reference and a forward work plan aligned with Closing the Gap priorities.

Our people participated in NAIDOC Week (July 2024) and National Reconciliation Week (May 2025) activities. We heard from keynote speakers on topics affecting First Nations peoples, participated in Digital Yarns led by allies of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network, and held an Indigenous Suppliers Showcase to promote local businesses.

Work health and safety

The department is committed to providing a safe, supportive and respectful workplace that prioritises physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing. This commitment is guided by the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) (WHS Act) and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (Cth).

Throughout 2024–25 the department maintained a strong focus on monitoring the work environment to safeguard the health and safety of our workers and minimise impact on business continuity. Staff continued to use a range of support services and wellbeing initiatives, contributing to a culture of care and resilience. These included:

- the Employee Assistance Program
- the Before Blue mental health coaching program
- the Resilience Project
- Mental Health First Aid training.

The department has continued to build upon its psychosocial safety programs by:

- reviewing its systems and resources to ensure alignment with the Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work) Code of Practice
- delivering a range of educational courses and workshops to build manager and staff capability in identifying and managing psychosocial hazards and support mental health and wellbeing
- providing training and support for roles involving distressing subject matter or challenging stakeholder interactions
- providing a targeted outreach program to assist branches with higher psychosocial risk
- conducting a targeted audit of its Work Health and Safety Management System to assess compliance with the WHS Act, including appropriateness of systems for managing psychosocial hazards and risks.

The department's principal consultative mechanism for health and safety matters, the Work Health and Safety Committee, met quarterly in 2024–25. The Health and Safety Representative network also met regularly to guide and support workforce safety initiatives.

In 2024–25 the department did not report any notifiable incidents to Comcare under Part 3 of the WHS Act, and no enforcement measures were taken under Part 10 of the Act.

Building capability

In 2024–25 the department made significant investments in building staff capabilities to align with its strategic plan and the APS Reform agenda. These efforts focused on strengthening leadership, enhancing core skills and preparing the workforce for future challenges.

Key initiatives included:

- a manager development program with 117 participants, supported by the launch of a Manager HUB portal to support employees in managerial and supervisory roles
- executive coaching focused on improving leadership skills, strategic thinking, decision-making and emotional intelligence to elevate organisational performance
- a structured mentoring program focused on career progression, connection, agility and resilience, involving 82 mentors and mentees
- updates to essential training modules – for example, by developing new content for procurement and recruitment panel training
- establishment of a Senior Executive Talent Platform, incorporating the 9-box grid and 360-degree feedback capability aligned to the APS SES Leadership performance framework.

To further strengthen departmental capability, the FocusED Development program was launched in 2025. This initiative aims to build critical skills and expertise in priority areas, including:

- manager capability
- trusted and lawful decision-making
- policy development and project management
- financial literacy.

In 2024–25 staff participated in the following learning and development activities:

- completion of 16,593 self-paced learning activities via Learnhub, covering APS and department-specific e-learning modules, and use of a large collection of LinkedIn Learning resources
- engagement of 1,076 employees in face-to-face and online professional development programs across a range of business and technical topics
- participation of 155 employees in tailored leadership programs for APS6 and Executive Level 1 (EL1) employees
- participation of Executive Level 2 (EL2) and SES employees in targeted senior leader development, with 60 executive leaders participating in external talent and executive education programs.

These initiatives reflect the department's commitment to growing a future-ready workforce and supporting individual development that supports strategic alignment.

Entry-level programs

Entry-level programs are critical to building a pipeline of talent to meet the future needs of the department and the APS. In 2024–25 the department continued to provide entry-level pathways for people seeking a career in the APS.

As part of the Australian Government Career Pathways initiative, we worked collaboratively with lead agencies across a range of whole of Australian Government entry-level programs to recruit capable and talented individuals, supporting the One APS model.

In 2024–25 the department participated in the Australian Government Graduate Program, accessing graduate talent across multiple streams. The program gives graduates the opportunity to engage in varied and challenging work, on-the-job training and formal learning and development.

A total of 35 participants were engaged as part of the Department of Education Graduate Program in 2024–25:

- 24 generalist graduates
- 6 data graduates
- 2 economist graduates
- 2 accounting and financial management graduates
- one digital graduate.

The department also participated in the following whole of Australian Government entry-level programs:

- Indigenous Apprenticeships Program, which provides a pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to start their career in the APS – 2 participants
- Australian Government School Leaver Program, a career development program aimed at school leavers – 3 participants
- Australian Science Policy Fellowship Program, an initiative of the Office of the Chief Scientist that gives scientists the opportunity to become skilled policy practitioners and brings scientific expertise into the policy process – 2 participants.

Remuneration

The Secretary's remuneration is set by the Remuneration Tribunal under section 13 of the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973* (Cth).

Remuneration and conditions for SES officers are covered by section 24(1) determinations made by the Secretary under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). These determinations provide for a total remuneration approach to SES remuneration and conditions. SES arrangements do not provide for performance pay.

In Appendix D, Table D.8 shows the number of SES employees covered by section 24(1) determinations. Table D.9 shows the salary ranges for SES employees. Additional statistics on remuneration for key management personnel, SES employees and other highly paid employees are provided in tables B.1, B.2 and B.3 in Appendix B.

Appendix D, Table D.8 shows the number of non-SES employees covered under the EA as their primary employment instrument. Table D.9 details their salary ranges under the EA. Non-SES arrangements do not provide for performance pay.

In March 2025 the EA provided non-SES employees with a 3.8% pay rise, along with an increase to the parental leave entitlement for secondary caregivers up to 11 weeks. Employees who had already accessed parental leave were also given a top-up entitlement to reach 11 weeks if their child had not yet reached 2 years of age.

To support good health and wellbeing, in September 2024 the EA provided non-SES employees with a health-related allowance. This was adjusted to include the consumer price index (CPI) increase of 3.8%:

- APS1 to APS3 employees received $638.52.
- APS4 to EL2 employees received $255.41.

The CPI increase was also applied to the school holiday care allowance, increasing the rate to $22.99 per day in July 2024.

The department also used individual flexibility arrangements to secure expertise or specialist skills that are critical to business needs. As at 30 June 2025, 62 employees had individual flexibility arrangements in place.

Information and communications technology

The department's information and communications technology (ICT) capability is delivered through shared services arrangements with a range of government agencies. Our primary service provider for 2024–25 continued to be DEWR.

The department has worked to embed the *ICT Strategy 2023–26* and to support investment in technology solutions that transform the way we work and how we deliver on our purpose, build capability and meet user and business needs.

There are 4 main priorities guiding this:

- **Get the basics right** – provide contemporary, reliable and secure digital services that centre on the end user experience and provide our staff and client 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 stakeholders to get the best value and outcomes.
- **Accelerate innovation** – enable the department's digital transformation, be ambitious and look for opportunities to leverage new capabilities and technologies.

Maintaining the security of our ICT systems, data holdings and people is a critical priority for the department. The department's *Cyber Security Strategy 2023–26* works to strengthen and safeguard the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information in accordance with the Protective Security Policy Framework.

In line with whole-of-government requirements, the department is currently developing a Digital Investment Plan. This document sets out a plan for our digital journey over the next 10 years and the enabling capabilities required to support it. It will be used to guide future investments.

Adoption of artificial intelligence

The department is focused on promoting a culture of transparency and innovation in the APS that effectively handles risk through evaluation and oversight of all emerging technologies. By adopting emerging technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI), the department is seeking to provide modern, efficient and high-quality services to Australians.

The department is taking a considered approach to adopting generative AI, allowing ourselves time to understand the risks and mitigate them. Over the past 12 months, the department has progressed the following initiatives to safely introduce and responsibly govern the use of AI in the department:

- The department participated in an extension of the Microsoft 365 Copilot trial along with our key ICT provider, DEWR. The trial was coordinated by the Digital Transformation Agency. The department has found that, when provided with adequate training and access to Copilot, staff in some roles are able to more efficiently complete repetitive tasks.
- The department extended access to Microsoft Copilot licences so that more department staff have access to this tool. Alongside this, the department conducted training, providing regular opportunities for staff to learn about the capabilities and opportunities Copilot provides. Regular communication and practical training sessions is helping to uplift Copilot skills across the department.
- The department appointed AI Accountable Officers to ensure the safe and effective development and deployment of AI within the department. The department published its AI Transparency Statement on its website in February 2025.
- The department participated in an Innovation Pilot with our IT provider, DEWR. The Innovation Pilot has delivered 2 proofs of concept that simplify business processes around Senate estimates and parliamentary hearings (ParliHelper) and audit and risk analysis work (audit tool).

Financial performance

Departmental activities

In 2024–25, the department received funding for Child Care Subsidy reforms, Closing the Gap, the Australian Universities Accord, the Anti-Bullying Rapid Review, and strengthening the integrity and sustainability of the international education sector. These measures were published in the department's 2024–25 Portfolio Budget Statements and Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2024–25.

The department continued to operate in an environment of strong financial discipline, reporting a net accounting surplus of $1.9 million (2023–24: surplus $1.3 million) after adjusting for unfunded expenses including depreciation, write-down and impairment of assets and principal lease repayments. As at 30 June 2025 the department reported a net asset position of $180.7 million (2023–24: $143.1 million), reflecting a sound financial position.

Further information is provided in the 2024–25 financial statements for the department (pages 163 to 214).

Administered activities

In 2024–25 the department administered 12 programs as outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements on behalf of the government, with expenses including:

- $47.4 billion in relation to early childhood, schools and youth programs
- $14.1 billion in relation to higher education, research and international programs.

Administered income comprises interest from the Higher Education Loan Program and revenue from the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) for annual registrations.

As at 30 June 2025 administered assets were $59.1 billion, which largely consists of the fair value of concessional loans for higher education, the Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers Special Account and administered investments. Assets increased from 2023–24 due to the increase in the fair value of the higher education concessional loans and the creation of the Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers Special Account. Administered liabilities were $6.0 billion as at 30 June 2025, which largely consists of the fair value of the higher education superannuation provision and the Child Care Subsidy withholding provision.

Purchasing

Purchasing and procurement

The department's procurement policies and practices were consistent with relevant Commonwealth laws, the Commonwealth Financial Framework (including Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs)) and other relevant policies.

The department published its procurement activities over $10,000 (GST inclusive) and business opportunities of $80,000 and above (GST inclusive) on the AusTender website (www.tenders.gov.au).

No contracts were exempt from reporting on AusTender in 2024–25.

Procurement initiatives to support small business

The department supports small business participation in the Australian Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website (www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/statistics-australian-government-procurement-contracts).

For the financial year 2024–25, 273 contracts with a total value of $162.7 million, were awarded by the Department of Education. Of the total contracts awarded, 164 contracts were awarded to SMEs with a total value of $107.51 million or 66% of the total value of contracts awarded in 2024–25. The majority of SME contracts for 2024–25 related to education and training services, software maintenance and support, and computer services.

The department's procurement practices were consistent with the CPRs, and they provided opportunities for SMEs to compete. For example, the department used the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for low-risk procurements valued under $200,000, which simplified the process and made it easier for SMEs to bid for business opportunities.

The department recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury's website (Pay On-Time Survey performance reports | Treasury.gov.au).

Electronic invoicing (e-invoicing) arrangements are in place to support small businesses to reduce administration, create savings and improve the timeliness of payment.

Indigenous Procurement Policy and initiatives to support Indigenous business

The Education portfolio, through the Indigenous Procurement Policy, is committed to growing its engagement with First Nations businesses. For 2024–25, the portfolio entered into 55 new contracts with majority First Nations owned businesses, valued at $4.05 million. This exceeded the First Nations procurement target of 19 contracts and $3.24 million contract value set for the portfolio by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

The department has engaged in multiple strategies to increase its engagement with Indigenous businesses. Supply Nation (https://supplynation.org.au/) has provided training to departmental staff on how to effectively use the Indigenous Business Direct to identify Indigenous suppliers, in addition to using the Members Opportunity Board to advertise current opportunities to members.

As part of National Reconciliation week activities, and in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the department hosted its first Indigenous Supplier Showcase in May 2025. Featuring a diverse range of Indigenous suppliers and support organisations such as the NIAA and Supply Nation, the showcase provided the opportunity for suppliers to present their services and products, emphasising their innovation, quality and cultural significance.

Supporting Indigenous suppliers is not only a step towards fostering diversity and inclusion but also a way to support the actions and deliverables in the department's Reconciliation Action Plan, and contribute to the portfolio's Indigenous Procurement Policy targets.

Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy

In accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the department's procurement processes require assessment of value for money to include factors such as environmental sustainability. Although the department predominantly engages in the procurement of services, it remains committed to incorporating practices that align with the intent of the policy.

The Australian Skills Guarantee

In July 2024, the Australian Government introduced the Australian Skills Guarantee (Skills Guarantee) to leverage its significant purchasing power to help address skills shortages and gender segregation in the building and construction and maintenance services (construction) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sectors. The policy seeks to address ongoing acute skills shortages by providing opportunities for apprentices and trainees (referred to as apprentices in this document), and ICT cadets across the country. The Skills Guarantee also aims to drive long-term sustainable change to tackle gender imbalance in historically male dominated industries and increase gender diversity in the apprenticeship system by setting targets for women. The department has updated its procurement processes and documentation to provide guidance to staff on the application of this policy.

Strategic Commissioning Framework

As part of the department's procurement planning process, business areas intending to engage external workers or contractors are required to confirm they have considered the Strategic Commissioning Framework before proceeding with a procurement. The department collects data on the nature of the work to be performed by external workers or contractors, along with the rationale for their engagement.

Credit cards

In accordance with the whole-of-government policy to pay suppliers in a timely manner, the department uses credit cards as the preferred payment method for the purchase of goods and services valued up to $9,999 (GST inclusive). As at 30 June 2025, the department had 912 credit cards.

Travel

In 2024–25 the department's travel expenditure (including travel for staff, contractors and other travellers) was $3,610,077 (GST exclusive).

Contracts and consultancies

The department engaged consultants to provide independent and expert advice or services, taking into account:

- the skills and resources required for the task
- the skills available internally
- the cost-effectiveness of these options.

Each decision to engage a consultant was made in accordance with the PGPA Act and related Accountable Authority Instructions and with Deputy Secretary approval to prior to the procurement process commencing.

The methods of selection for consultancies were open tender, limited tender and panel arrangement (initially selected through an open tender process).

In the 2024–25 financial year, 28 new consultancy contracts (as reported on AusTender) were entered into, involving total actual expenditure of $1.92 million.

In addition, 27 ongoing consultancy contracts (previously reported on AusTender) were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of $12.41 million.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website (www.tenders.gov.au).

Table 3.3: Expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts, 2024–25

	Number	Expenditure $ (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	28	$1,916,282
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	27	$12,410,860
Total	**55**	**$14,327,142**

During 2024–25, 245 new reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into, involving total actual expenditure of $54,300,744 (GST inclusive). In addition, 261 ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of $134,136,443 (GST inclusive).

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website (tenders.gov.au).

Table 3.4: Expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2024–25

	Number	Expenditure $ (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	245	$54,300,744
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	261	$134,136,443
Total	**506**	**$188,437,187**

Table 3.5: Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure, 2024–25

Name of organisation	Expenditure $ (GST inc.)	Proportion of total spend (%)
Parkville Institute Ltd	$3,377,000	24
SNAICC	$2,413,500	17
Accenture Australia Pty Ltd	$1,883,914	13
KPMG	$995,294	7
The Nous Group	$988,540	7
Dandolo Partners	$785,302	5
Ernst And Young	$752,448	5
BDO Services Pty Ltd	$673,074	5
Total of the largest shares	**$11,869,072**	**83**

Table 3.6: Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure, 2024–25

Name of organisation	Expenditure $ (GST inc.)	Proportion of total spend (%)
KU Children's Services	$25,679,264	14
Australian Council For Educational Research	$19,520,163	10
The Social Research Centre	$16,300,217	9
Education Services Australia	$10,730,023	6
Community Child Care Association	$9,631,148	5
Total of the largest shares	**$81,860,815**	**43**

Grant programs

Information on grants awarded by the department during 2024–25 is available at GrantConnect website (grants.gov.au).

Advertising, marketing and media

Campaigns

No advertising campaigns were conducted in the reporting period.

Advertising and marketing expenditure

The following tables list payments of $14,500 or more (GST inclusive) to advertising agencies, market research, polling and direct mail and media advertising organisations, as required under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Cth).

Table 3.7: Payments to media advertising organisations, 2024–25

Organisation	Service provided	Total paid $ (GST inc.)
Universal McCann	Paid social media for Tertiary Access Payment	$20,000
Universal McCann	Paid social media for Anti-Bullying Rapid Review	$33,000

Table 3.8: Payments for direct mail, 2024–25

Organisation	Service provided	Total paid $ (GST inc.)
CanPrint	Direct mail distribution	$19,578

Promotional merchandise

No promotional material was produced in the reporting period.

Media monitoring

In 2024–25 the department spent $357,575 (GST inclusive) on media monitoring services provided by Streem Pty Ltd.

Environmental sustainability and performance

The department did not administer legislation that had a direct impact on ecologically sustainable development, and the principles relating to scientific certainty and biological diversity were generally of limited application to our activities.

See Appendix C for the department's complete climate disclosure, including governance and climate-related risk management.

External scrutiny

Reports by the Auditor-General

In 2024–25 the Auditor-General tabled 3 performance audit reports on or relevant to the operations of the Department of Education:

- Auditor-General Report No. 39: Interim report on key financial controls of major entities
- Auditor-General Report No. 40: Targets for minimum Indigenous employment or supply use in major Australian Government procurements – follow-up
- Auditor-General Report No. 42: Management and oversight of compliance activities within the Child Care Subsidy Program.

These reports and, where applicable, the department's responses can be found on the Australian National Audit Office website (https://www.anao.gov.au/pubs).

Reports of parliamentary committees

The department provided evidence and/or submissions to a number of parliamentary committee inquiries in 2024–25, as outlined in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: Evidence and submissions to parliamentary committee inquiries, 2024–25

Committee	Inquiry
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport	• Health impacts of alcohol and other drugs in Australia
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit	• Inquiry into Commonwealth Financial Statements 2022–23
Joint Committee on Human Rights	• Antisemitism at Australian universities
Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment	• Better and Fairer Schools (Funding and Reform) Bill 2024 [Provisions] • Early Childhood Education and Care (Three Day Guarantee) Bill 2025 [Provisions] • Education Services for Overseas Students Amendment (Quality and Integrity) Bill 2024 [Provisions] • Inquiry into the Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers (Special Account) Bill 2024 [Provisions] • Quality of governance at Australian higher education providers • Universities Accord (Student Support and Other Measures) Bill 2024 [Provisions]
Senate Standing Committees on Legal and Constitutional Affairs	• Commission of Inquiry into Antisemitism at Australian Universities Bill 2024

Judicial decisions

In 2024–25 there were no decisions of any court that had, or may have had, a significant impact on the operations of the department.

Decisions of administrative tribunals

In 2024–25 there were no decisions of administrative tribunals that had, or may have had, a significant impact on the operations of the department.

Decisions by the Australian Information Commissioner

In 2024–25 there were no decisions by the Australian Information Commissioner that had, or may have had, a significant impact on the operations of the department.

Reports on the operations of the entity by the Commonwealth Ombudsman

In 2024–25 there were no reports by the Commonwealth Ombudsman on the operations of the department.

Information Publication Scheme

Agencies subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) are required to publish specified categories of information as part of the Information Publication Scheme. Each agency must display on its website a plan showing what information it publishes in accordance with the Information Publication Scheme requirements. The department's plan is available at education.gov.au/about-department/corporate-reporting/information-publication-scheme-ips.

Disability reporting

Australia's *Disability Strategy 2021–2031* is Australia's overarching framework for disability reform. The strategy is the main way Australia implements the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It will drive change over the next decade for people with disability, their families and carers. Australia's Disability Strategy includes policy priorities to ensure that people with disability achieve their full potential through education and learning. The strategy is a joint initiative of all Australian governments. More information on the strategy, including evaluation and reporting, is available from the Disability Gateway at www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/ads.

Disability reporting is also included in the APSC's State of the Service reports and the APS Data Release and Statistical Bulletin. These reports are available from apsc.gov.au.

04

Financial statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Education

To the Minister for Early Childhood Education

To the Minister for Youth

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Department of Education (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2025:

(a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and

(b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2025 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2025 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Statement of Cash Flows;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to and forming part of the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key audit matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of my audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

GPO Box 707, Canberra ACT 2601
38 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603
Phone (02) 6203 7300

Key audit matter

Valuation of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) receivable

Refer to Note D1.6 'Fair value losses' and Note F1.2 'Trade and other receivables: Advances and loans'.

I focused on the Entity's HELP receivable as a key audit matter as the valuation of the receivable involves significant and complex judgements about the timing and recoverability of HELP debts.

These judgements include assumptions about discount factors, future employment and salary rates and future collectability of repayments that contain a significant degree of uncertainty and are influenced by the economic environment.

The receivable is subject to an actuarial assessment and relies on the completeness and accuracy of taxation data and information provided by a number of universities.

For the year ended 30 June 2025, the Entity recognised a HELP receivable of $51.4 billion, and fair value losses of $669.4 million.

How the audit addressed the matter

To address this key audit matter, I:

- evaluated the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of key actuarial controls, including data reconciliations and the Entity's review and approval of the estimate;
- evaluated the reasonableness of the Entity's actuarial methodology. This included considering the work and findings of the external actuarial expert engaged by the Entity; and
- assessed the reasonableness of key actuarial assumptions by comparing them with accepted industry benchmarks for discount rates and salary growth rates in a range of occupations.

Key audit matter

Valuation of Higher Education Superannuation Program (HESP) provision

Refer to Note D1.6 'Fair value losses' and Note F3 'Provisions'.

I focused on the HESP liability as a key audit matter as the valuation of the provision is complex and involves significant judgement about the value of the Commonwealth's superannuation liability in respect of current and former university employees. These judgements include the selection of discount rates and estimation of salary growth rates.

The provision is subject to an actuarial assessment and relies on the completeness and accuracy of data provided by a number of universities and their individual actuaries.

A cost sharing arrangement that includes recovery of a proportion of funds from participating States underpins the proportion of the provision that is reported by the Entity which adds to the complexity of the calculation.

For the year ended 30 June 2025, the provision was reported as $4.7 billion, and the fair value losses were $202.6 million.

How the audit addressed the matter

To address this key audit matter, I:

- Evaluated the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of key actuarial controls, including data reconciliations and the Entity's review and approval of the estimate;
- evaluated the appropriateness of the Entity's actuarial methodology. This included review of the model underpinning the valuation used by Entity's actuaries;
- assessed the reasonableness of key actuarial inputs including, demographic inputs and discount rates by comparing them against accepted industry benchmarks; and
- assessed the reasonableness of the allocation of the total unfunded liability against the funding agreements between the Commonwealth and participating States. This included reviewing the underlying methodology and parameters used for allocation of the total unfunded liability.

Key audit matter	How the audit addressed the matter
Accuracy of 'Assistance to families with children' personal benefit expenses *Refer to Note D1.2 'Personal benefits: Assistance to families with children'.* I focused on the personal benefit expenses as a key audit matter as the expenses are based on information provided by the payment recipients and the accurate recording of expenses may be significantly impacted by the provision of inaccurate information. For the year ended 30 June 2025, the Entity recognised personal benefit expenses of $15.2 billion.	To address this key audit matter, I: • assessed the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of key internal controls related to the accreditation and registration of child care providers that submit claims for personal benefit payments; • assessed, on a sample basis, the registration and eligibility of parents for child care fee assistance; and • assessed the compliance framework, including testing a sample of attendance checks to verify information provided to the Entity that is used as a basis for payment calculations.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Secretary of the Department is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Secretary of the Department is also responsible for such internal control as the Secretary of the Department determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Secretary of the Department is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Secretary of the Department is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;

- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

From the matters communicated with the Accountable Authority, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Australian National Audit Office

Rahul Tejani
Executive Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
4 September 2025

Department of Education
STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Department of Education will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Signed..

Tony Cook PSM

Secretary

2 September 2025

Signed..

Craig Boyd FCPA

Chief Financial Officer

2 September 2025

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Education
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Departmental Primary Statements

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	C1.1	**265,282**	231,633	251,222
Supplier	C1.2	**134,769**	121,246	143,224
Interest on lease liabilities		**68**	47	-
Depreciation and amortisation	E2.1	**11,006**	11,198	12,488
Impairment loss on financial assets	I2.2	**-**	326	-
Write-down and impairment of other assets	E2.1	**5,736**	2,526	-
Total expenses		**416,861**	366,976	406,934
Own-Source Income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	C2.1	**3,854**	4,271	4,573
Resources received free of charge	C2.2	**2,628**	2,506	2,272
Total own-source revenue		**6,482**	6,777	6,845
Gains				
Reversal of write-downs and impairment	I2.2	**311**	-	-
Other gains		**-**	396	-
Total gains		**311**	396	-
Total own-source income		**6,793**	7,173	6,845
Net cost of services		**(410,068)**	(359,803)	(400,089)
Revenue from Government	C2.3	**396,501**	351,420	387,601
Surplus/(Deficit) on continuing operations		**(13,567)**	(8,383)	(12,488)
Total comprehensive profit/(loss)	B1	**(13,567)**	(8,383)	(12,488)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	E1.1	**498**	2,662	929
Trade and other receivables	E1.2	**213,162**	203,676	160,942
Total financial assets		**213,660**	206,338	161,871
Non-financial assets				
Buildings[1]	E2.1	**1,430**	1,161	-
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	E2.1	**5**	-	-
Computer software	E2.1	**95,107**	60,247	128,721
Prepayments		**1,621**	893	420
Total non-financial assets		**98,163**	62,301	129,141
Total assets		**311,823**	268,639	291,012
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Supplier payables		**43,292**	51,597	30,641
Other payables	E3.1	**12,237**	9,038	7,674
Total payables		**55,529**	60,635	38,315
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	E4.1	**1,464**	1,188	-
Total interest bearing liabilities		**1,464**	1,188	-
Provisions				
Employee provisions	H1.1	**74,134**	63,731	58,833
Total provisions		**74,134**	63,731	58,833
Total liabilities		**131,127**	125,554	97,148
Net assets		**180,696**	143,085	193,864
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		**463,529**	412,351	483,998
Reserves		**-**	-	1,380
Accumulated deficit		**(282,833)**	(269,266)	(291,514)
Total equity		**180,696**	143,085	193,864

[1] Right-of-use (ROU) assets are included in the 'Buildings' line item.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		**412,351**	378,037	419,240
Adjusted opening balance		**412,351**	378,037	419,240
Transactions with owners				
Contributions by owners				
Equity injection - appropriations		**37,346**	22,377	33,561
Departmental capital budget		**13,832**	13,975	31,197
Restructuring	J2.1	**-**	(2,038)	-
Total transactions with owners		**51,178**	34,314	64,758
Closing balance as at 30 June		**463,529**	412,351	483,998
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		**(269,266)**	(260,883)	(279,026)
Adjusted opening balance		**(269,266)**	(260,883)	(279,026)
Comprehensive income				
Deficit on continuing operations		**(13,567)**	(8,383)	(12,488)
Total comprehensive income		**(13,567)**	(8,383)	(12,488)
Closing balance as at 30 June		**(282,833)**	(269,266)	(291,514)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVES				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		**-**	-	1,380
Adjusted opening balance		**-**	-	1,380
Closing balance as at 30 June		**-**	-	1,380
Total equity as at 30 June		**180,696**	143,085	193,864

Accounting Policy

Equity Injections
Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

Restructuring of Administrative Arrangements
Net assets received from or relinquished to another Government entity under a restructuring of administrative arrangements are adjusted at their book value directly against contributed equity.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Appropriations		**397,345**	349,030	386,174
Sale of goods and rendering of services		**3,546**	2,630	4,573
Net GST received		**5,236**	4,030	11,127
Total cash received		**406,127**	355,690	401,874
Cash used				
Employee benefits		**250,370**	186,905	249,432
Suppliers		**139,935**	159,327	147,506
Interest payments on lease liabilities		**68**	47	-
Section 74 receipts transferred to the OPA		**16,662**	6,176	4,573
Total cash used		**407,035**	352,455	401,511
Net cash from operating activities		**(908)**	3,235	363
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash used				
Purchase of infrastructure, plant and equipment		**5**	-	-
Purchase/development of intangibles		**55,709**	13,737	65,121
Total cash used		**55,714**	13,737	65,121
Net cash used by investing activities		**(55,714)**	(13,737)	(65,121)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Contributed equity - equity injection		**28,203**	8,043	33,561
Contributed equity - departmental capital budget		**27,511**	5,694	31,197
Total cash received		**55,714**	13,737	64,758
Cash used				
Principal payments of lease liabilities		**1,256**	1,503	-
Total cash used		**1,256**	1,503	-
Net cash from financing activities		**54,458**	12,234	64,758
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		**(2,164)**	1,732	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		**2,662**	930	929
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	E1.1	**498**	2,662	929

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Departmental Budget Variance Commentary:
The below table provides commentary for significant variances between the department's budget estimates, as published in the 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statements, and the final financial outcome in the 2024-25 financial statements. Significant variances are those relevant to an analysis of the department's performance, not merely on numerical differences between actual amounts and budget. Unless otherwise individually significant, no additional commentary has been included.

Explanation of major variances	Affected line items (and statement)
At the time the 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statements were published, the 2024-25 capital contribution to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations for the provision of Property, IT infrastructure, and IT security totalling $18.418 million was not finalised. The budgeted intangible assets balance was reduced at Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2024-25 (PAES).	Computer software (Statement of Financial Position) Depreciation expense (Statement of Comprehensive Income) Equity (Statement of Financial Position)
The department has incurred higher employee expenses due to higher employee level classifications, less leave taken, higher superannuation costs and unbudgeted redundancy payments.	Employee expenses (Statement of Comprehensive Income) Employee provisions (Statement of Financial Position) Supplier expenses (Statement of Comprehensive Income)
The year on year balance of trade receivables and supplier payables is unpredictable based on the nature of the accounts. The variance is primarily due to higher appropriation receivable balance held particularly in relation to unspent Equity Injection.	Supplier payables (Statement of Financial Position) Trade and other receivables (Statement of Financial Position)

Department of Education
ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Administered Schedules

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Grants	D1.1	**43,318,790**	40,472,192	42,562,812
Personal benefits	D1.2	**15,196,863**	13,604,791	14,584,226
Supplier	D1.3	**203,722**	197,846	207,480
Subsidies	D1.4	**597,651**	119,904	196,591
Interest	D1.5	**183,760**	193,765	206,206
Impairment loss on financial assets		**-**	2,036	-
Finance costs		**1,075,487**	848,479	867,959
Depreciation	F2.1	**78**	85	92
Write-down and impairment of assets		**5,473**	33,174	-
Fair value losses	D1.6	**871,972**	-	3,304,365
Employee benefits		**220**	283	-
Total expenses		**61,454,016**	55,472,555	61,929,731
Income				
Revenue				
Taxation revenue				
Levies		**10,979**	8,940	10,372
Total taxation revenue		**10,979**	8,940	10,372
Non-taxation revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	D2.1	**5,392**	4,743	5,070
Interest	D2.2	**2,054,850**	1,936,676	1,821,956
Other revenue	D2.3	**93,786**	108,714	100,138
Total non-taxation revenue		**2,154,028**	2,050,133	1,927,164
Total revenue		**2,165,007**	2,059,073	1,937,536
Gains				
Fair value gains	D2.4	**-**	1,565,376	-
Reversal of write-downs and impairments		**3,690**	-	-
Total gains		**3,690**	1,565,376	-
Total income		**2,168,697**	3,624,449	1,937,536
Net cost of services		**(59,285,319)**	(51,848,106)	(59,992,195)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Change in asset revaluation reserve		**203,289**	280,121	-
Total other comprehensive income		**203,289**	280,121	-
Total comprehensive loss		**(59,082,030)**	(51,567,985)	(59,992,195)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
as at 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Original Budget 2025 $'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	F1.1	**3,009,588**	107,590	105,237
Trade and other receivables	F1.2	**51,993,412**	49,748,240	42,627,108
Investments	F1.3	**4,047,346**	3,844,057	3,563,936
Total financial assets		**59,050,346**	53,699,887	46,296,281
Non-financial assets				
Buildings	F2.1	**573**	651	712
Total non-financial assets		**573**	651	712
Total assets administered on behalf of Government		**59,050,919**	53,700,538	46,296,993
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Personal benefits		**255,597**	33,370	226,524
Supplier		**37,894**	41,485	54,569
Grants		**70,549**	1,871	8,854
Subsidies		**154,822**	-	-
GST payable		**733**	494	1,952
Total payables		**519,595**	77,220	291,899
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases - buildings		**646**	720	796
Total interest bearing liabilities		**646**	720	796
Provisions				
Higher Education Superannuation Program	F3	**4,669,600**	4,710,799	4,631,327
Personal benefits	F3	**806,478**	742,583	821,069
Total provisions		**5,476,078**	5,453,382	5,452,396
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government		**5,996,319**	5,531,322	5,745,091
Net assets		**53,054,600**	48,169,216	40,551,902

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
ADMINISTERED RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE
for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July		**48,169,216**	44,936,872
Net cost of services			
Income		**2,168,697**	3,624,449
Expenses			
Other than corporate Commonwealth entities		**(61,454,016)**	(55,472,555)
Other comprehensive income			
Revaluations transferred to reserves		**203,289**	280,121
Transfers (to) from the Australian Government			
Appropriation transfers from the OPA			
Annual appropriations			
Payments to entities other than corporate Commonwealth entities		**4,251,673**	1,227,800
Payments to entities other than corporate Commonwealth entities - GST		**75,150**	72,155
Special appropriations (unlimited)			
Payments to entities other than corporate Commonwealth entities		**67,816,686**	62,692,213
Appropriation transfers to the OPA			
Transfers to the OPA		**(8,118,071)**	(9,117,803)
Transfers to the OPA (withholdings)		**(58,024)**	(65,314)
Other movements		**-**	(8,722)
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June		**53,054,600**	48,169,216

Accounting Policy

Administered Cash Transfers to and from the Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the department for use by the Government rather than the department is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under Parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the department on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the Schedule of Administered Cash Flows and in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule.

Department of Education
ADMINISTERED CASH FLOW STATEMENT
for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Net GST refunds		**2,006,924**	1,878,651
Levies		**10,980**	8,940
Other revenue		**44,051**	45,372
Total cash received		**2,061,955**	1,932,963
Cash used			
Suppliers		**213,639**	219,440
Subsidies		**442,830**	119,904
Personal benefits		**14,982,737**	13,691,677
Grants		**45,688,582**	42,754,452
Total cash used		**61,327,788**	56,785,473
Net cash used by operating activities		**(59,265,833)**	(54,852,510)
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Repayments of loans		**6,046,687**	7,217,769
Total cash received		**6,046,687**	7,217,769
Cash used			
Loans provided		**7,904,293**	7,227,926
Total cash used		**7,904,293**	7,227,926
Net cash used by investing activities		**(1,857,606)**	(10,157)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash from the OPA			
Appropriations		**72,143,508**	64,023,537
Total cash from the OPA		**72,143,508**	64,023,537
Cash to the OPA			
Administered Receipts		**(8,118,071)**	(9,155,203)
Total cash to the OPA		**(8,118,071)**	(9,155,203)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		**2,901,998**	5,667
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		**107,590**	101,923
Cash at the end of the reporting period	F1.1	**3,009,588**	107,590

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Education
BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Administered Budget Variance Commentary:
The table below provides commentary for significant major variances between the original budget estimates, as published in the 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statements, and the final financial outcome in the 2024-25 financial statements. Unless otherwise individually significant, no additional commentary has been included.

Explanation of major variances	Affected line items (and statement)
The variance to budget of investments is due to the changes in net assets of entities that are recognised as administered investments by the department. Further details are at note F1.3.	Investments (Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities)
The fair values of the Higher Education Superannuation Program (HESP) provision and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) are based on actuarial assumptions. Any changes in the actuary's assessment, economic factors and the Government bond rates used to discount future cash flows will cause the balance to fluctuate when compared to the original budget. Further information in relation to the year-on-year change in the HELP and HESP balances are at notes I4 and D2.4 respectively.	Fair value gains (Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income) Interest expense (Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income) Interest revenue (Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income) Trade and other receivables (Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities) Provisions (Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities)
The variance to budget for Cash and cash equivalents is primarily due to the establishment of the Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers Special Account under *PGPA Act 2013 section 80 Wage justice for early childhood education and care workers (Special account) Act 2024 (no. 140 2024)*. Approximately $2.9 billion has been credited to this special account to facilitate Worker Retention Payments over the next two years.	Cash and cash equivalents (Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities)

Notes to the Financial Statements
A. About This Report

The Department of Education (the department) is an Australian Government controlled not-for-profit entity.

The department's purpose is to create a better future for all Australians through education.

The department provides strategic direction and national leadership of Australia's education system – through early years, school, higher education and research. The department advises the Australian Government on education and stewards the government's vision for reforming Australia's education system.

The department supports 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 learn during the early years
- support children through a positive school experience with equity and wellbeing outcomes for all learners
- provide skilled and adaptable workers with higher education qualifications and opportunities for lifelong learning that boost workforce productivity, sovereign capability and innovation, including skilled educators
- 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.

The continued existence of the department in its present form is dependent on government policy and on continuing funding by Parliament.

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR) and the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Reporting of Administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Unless otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

Tier 1 reporting requirements have been applied to administered disclosures in respect of AASB 7 *Financial Instrument: Disclosures* and AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement.*

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

During the 2024-25 financial year, the department made a number of judgements and applied estimates that had an impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements. Judgements and estimates that are material to the financial statements are found in the following notes:

- Employee Provisions (H1)
- Non-Financial Assets (E2)
- Personal benefits – Child Care Subsidy program (D1.2, F1.2 and F3)
- Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) (D1.6, D2.2, D2.4 and F1.2)
- Higher Education Superannuation Program (HESP) (D1.5, D1.6, D2.4, F1.2 and F3).

New Australian Accounting Standards

Adoption of new Australian Accounting Standard requirements

One amending standard (AASB 2022-10) was adopted for the 2024-25 reporting period.

Standard/ Interpretation	Nature of change in accounting policy, transitional provisions, and adjustment to financial statements
AASB 2022-10 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities*	The department assessed the amendment *AASB 2022-10. AASB 2022-10* amended *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* to provide further guidance on measuring non-financial assets, including specifying that current use is highest and best use, and that the 'financially feasible' criteria is met. This relates to non-financial assets of not-for-profit public sector entities not held primarily to generate net cash inflows. As the department does not hold non-financial assets measured at fair value, no material changes were made to amounts reported as a result of this amendment.

Taxation

The department is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Shared Service Arrangements

The department has several arrangements with other government agencies for services, including:

- Department of Finance – for the provision of core transactional services from the Service Delivery Office;
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) – for the provision of information and communications technology (ICT), property and other services;
- Department of Social Services (DSS) – for the provision of grant hub support; and
- Services Australia – for the provision of childcare debt management and payment support.

Comparative balances

There has been a minor reclassification in:

- Note C1.2 where comparatives have been updated to further disaggregate supplier expenditure. Comparatives have been updated to separately identify expenditures for consultancy and other non-consultancy contracts.
- Note G1.4 where comparatives have been updated to consistently reflect GST applied. This has also been reflected in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule.

Section 83 of the Constitution

Section 83 of the Constitution provides that no amount may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund except under appropriation made by law.

The department has primary responsibility for administering legislation related to education. In 2024-25 payments totalling approximately $67.8 billion were authorised against Special Appropriations (refer G1.4), including special accounts, by the department in accordance with a range of complex legislations. Payments are administered by the department through the Service Delivery Office for the *Australian Education Act 2013* and *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and via Services Australia for payments under *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Administration Act 1999*.

If an overpayment occurs, a breach of section 83 could result despite future payments being adjusted to recover the overpayment. In addition, simple administrative errors can lead to breaches of Section 83. Due to the number of payments made, the reliance that must be placed on other control frameworks outside the department, and the complexities of the legislation governing these payments, the risk of a Section 83 breach cannot be fully mitigated.

The department has assessed the following category of payments as non-compliant with the requirements of Section 83:

- Child Care Subsidy payments relating to the application of the first deadline for the CCS reconciliation process were incorrectly made to a number of recipients under the Family Assistance Law (FAL) since 2020-21. This is a result of a misalignment between the Family Assistance Law provisions and the CCS system design implemented when the program commenced. It is expected that legislative amendments will rectify the issue.

The department is committed to implementing measures to ensure that the possibility of unintentional breaches of Section 83 has as low a financial risk and impact as possible. The department will continue to review legislation and New Policy Proposals that create or modify payment eligibility and to ensure that business rules and processes are in place to minimise the risk of breaches of section 83 of the Constitution.

Events after the Reporting Period

Universities Accord (Cutting Student Debt by 20 Per Cent) Act 2025

On 2 August 2025 the *Universities Accord (Cutting Student Debt by 20 Per Cent) Act 2025* received royal assent. The Act:

- reduces all HELP and other student debts incurred on or before 1 June 2025 by 20%; and
- lowers compulsory repayments by raising the minimum repayment threshold from 1 July 2025 and basing compulsory repayments only on repayment income above the new repayment thresholds, rather than on total repayment income.

According to *AASB 110 Events after the Reporting Period*, these changes are classified as a non-adjusting subsequent event, as they pertain to conditions that arose after the reporting period. Therefore, no adjustments have been made to the financial statements for 2024-25.

In the 2025-26 financial year the *Universities Accord (Cutting Student Debt by 20 Per Cent) Act 2025* is expected to reduce the nominal value of Student HELP debt by approximately $16.1 billion and the fair value of the HELP loan balance by approximately $12.1 billion ($9.6 billion in relation to the 20% reduction in student HELP debt and $2.5 billion in relation to the change in repayment thresholds).

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

B. Departmental Operating Result Reconciliation

B1: Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Total comprehensive income/(loss) - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income[1]	**(13,567)**	(8,383)
Plus: depreciation/amortisation of assets funded through appropriations (departmental capital budget funding and/or equity injections)	**9,704**	9,685
Plus: depreciation of right-of-use assets[2]	**1,302**	1,513
Less: lease principal repayments	**(1,256)**	(1,503)
Net cash operating (deficit)/surplus[3]	**(3,817)**	1,312

[1] From 2010-11, the government introduced net cash appropriation arrangements where revenue appropriations for depreciation/amortisation expenses of non-corporate Commonwealth entities and selected corporate Commonwealth entities were replaced with a separate capital budget provided through equity appropriations. Capital budgets are to be appropriated in the period when cash payment for capital expenditure is required.

[2] AASB 16 *Leases* requires the inclusion of depreciation/amortisation expenses related to Right-of-Use (ROU) leased assets and the lease liability principal repayment amount. These do not directly reflect a change in appropriation arrangements.

[3] The net cash operating deficit in 2024-25 includes $5.7 million in non-cash accounting adjustments related to write-downs and impairment of non-financial assets, the exclusion of which results in a net cash operating surplus of $1.9 million.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

C. Departmental Financial Performance

C1: Expenses

C1.1: Employee benefits	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Salaries and entitlements	**183,157**	165,594
Superannuation:		
Defined benefit plans	**13,039**	11,981
Defined contribution plans	**24,630**	19,808
Leave and other entitlements	**36,789**	29,308
Separations and redundancies	**4,269**	3,234
Other	**3,398**	1,708
Total employee benefits	**265,282**	231,633

The accounting policies for employee benefits are described in note H1.1.

C1.2: Supplier

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Goods and services supplied or rendered		
IT services	**42,139**	29,463
Consultancy contracts	**4,162**	5,337
Other non-consultancy contracts	**32,888**	24,347
Property	**19,944**	20,483
Managed services	**14,487**	22,140
Travel	**3,396**	2,852
Resources received free of charge	**1,628**	1,506
Audit fees	**1,000**	1,000
Other	**11,578**	11,769
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	**131,222**	118,897
Goods supplied	**3,344**	2,467
Services rendered	**127,878**	116,430
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	**131,222**	118,897
Other supplier expenses		
Workers compensation expenses	**3,547**	2,349
Total other supplier expenses	**3,547**	2,349
Total supplier expenses	**134,769**	121,246

The department does not recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (less than $10,000). The department recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

C2: Income

C2.1: Revenue from contracts with customers	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Sale of goods	**513**	523
Rendering of services	**3,341**	3,748
Total revenue from contracts with customers	**3,854**	4,271

Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Revenue from services	**48**	10
Corporate services	**2,877**	3,261
Publications	**513**	523
Other	**416**	477
Total	**3,854**	4,271

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when control has been transferred to the buyer.

The department recognises revenue when the performance obligations are required by an enforceable contract and are sufficiently specific to enable the department to identify when they have been satisfied. The majority of the departmental revenues are specified in legally enforceable contracts or Memoranda of Understanding where it is reasonable to expect that parties will act on their obligations and there are consequences for non-performance.

Revenue from contracts with customers is recognised either:

- at a point in time, where the ownership or control of the goods or services is passed to the customer at a specific time; or
- over time where the services are provided and consumed simultaneously, or the department has an enforceable right to payment for performance completed to date.

Contract liabilities associated with customers are recognised in unearned revenue, refer note E3.1.

C2.2: Resources received free of charge	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Australian Taxation Office collection of revenues on behalf of the department	**1,628**	1,506
Australian National Audit Office financial statement audit fee	**1,000**	1,000
Total resources received free of charge	**2,628**	2,506

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined, and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

C2.3: Revenue from Government	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Appropriations		
Departmental appropriations	**396,501**	351,420
Total revenue from Government	**396,501**	351,420

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when the department gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Appropriated amounts that are designated as equity injections (less any formal reductions) and the Departmental Capital Budget are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

D. Administered Financial Performance

D1: Expenses

D1.1: Grants	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Public sector		
Australian Government entities	**83,505**	71,450
State and Territory Governments	**31,529,782**	29,276,952
Private sector		
Not-for-profit organisations	**219,598**	226,358
Multi-jurisdictional sector	**11,145,778**	10,656,679
Other	**340,127**	240,753
Total grants	**43,318,790**	40,472,192

The department administers a number of grant and subsidy schemes on behalf of the government.
Grant and subsidy liabilities and associated expenses, are recognised to the extent that:

- the services required to be performed by the grantee have been performed; or
- the grant eligibility criteria has been satisfied, but payments due have not been made. A commitment is recorded when the government enters into an agreement to make these grants and subsidies, but services have not been performed or criteria satisfied.

D1.2: Personal benefits

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Assistance to families with children	**15,182,128**	13,591,109
Student assistance	**14,735**	13,682
Total personal benefits	**15,196,863**	13,604,791

The department administers personal benefit programs on behalf of the government that provide entitlements to individuals. Total personal benefits are represented by:

- direct personal benefits of $15.7 million (2023-24: $14.7 million); and
- indirect personal benefits of $15.2 billion (2023-24: $13.6 billion).

D1.3: Supplier

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Services rendered		
School education - specific funding	**113,310**	108,999
Assistance to families with children	**69,550**	68,968
Higher education	**16,732**	16,330
General research	**4,130**	3,549
Total services rendered	**203,722**	197,846
Total supplier expenses	**203,722**	197,846

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

D1.4: Subsidies	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Assistance to families with children	**597,651**	119,904
Total subsidies	**597,651**	119,904

D1.5: Interest

Higher Education Superannuation Program (HESP)	**183,760**	193,765
Total interest	**183,760**	193,765

D1.6: Fair value losses

Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)	**669,412**	-
HESP	**202,560**	-
Total fair value losses	**871,972**	-

The actuarial assessments of the HELP and HESP resulted in a fair value loss of $0.9 billion in 2024-25 (2023-24: $1.6 billion fair value gain).

HESP provides supplementary funding to eligible higher education providers to cover certain superannuation expenses incurred for staff who are members of identified state government emerging cost superannuation schemes. A portion of the funding is recovered from the relevant states under cost-sharing arrangements. The Australian Government Actuary (AGA) estimates the provision and receivable balances relying upon data provided by the state superannuation schemes, adjusting for the differing valuation dates and economic basis underpinning the estimates of the liabilities. The actuarial assessment resulted in a fair value loss of $202.6 million in 2024-25 (2023-24: $120.9 million fair value gain).

This note should be read in conjunction with notes D2.4 and F1.2.

D2: Income

D2.1: Revenue from contracts with customers	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Rendering of services	**5,392**	4,743
Total revenue from contracts with customers	**5,392**	4,743
Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Major product / service line:		
Cost recovery	**5,392**	4,743
Total	**5,392**	4,743

All administered revenues relate to ordinary activities performed by the department on behalf of the Australian Government.

Administered revenue recognised is primarily from Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) annual registrations.

D2.2: Interest

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
HELP	**2,054,850**	1,936,676
Total interest	**2,054,850**	1,936,676

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method.

D2.3: Other revenue

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Loan fee revenue	**85,932**	101,784
Refunds of prior year payments	**5,878**	610
Special accounts	**1,680**	5,936
Other	**296**	384
Total other revenue	**93,786**	108,714

Refunds of prior year payments are recognised under AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Refunds of prior year payments may include items such as repayments of grants that were not spent by the grantee. These amounts are recognised when received, however are then returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

D2.4: Fair value gains

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
HELP	**-**	1,444,501
HESP	**-**	120,875
Total fair value gains	**-**	1,565,376

The actuarial assessments of the HELP and HESP resulted in a fair value loss of $0.9 billion in 2024-25 (2023-24: $1.6 billion fair value gain).

This note should be read in conjunction with notes D1.6 and F1.2.

For further information on the fair value of HELP loans, refer to note I4.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

E. Departmental Financial Position

E1: Financial Assets

E1.1: Cash and cash equivalents	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Cash on hand or on deposit	**498**	2,662
Total cash and cash equivalents	**498**	2,662

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash includes demand deposits in bank accounts.

E1.2: Trade and other receivables	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Goods and services receivable		
Goods and services	**2,772**	4,933
Total goods and services receivable	**2,772**	4,933
Appropriations receivable		
Operating annual appropriations	**170,794**	154,976
Departmental capital budget	**8,128**	21,807
Equity injections	**30,870**	21,727
Total appropriations receivable	**209,792**	198,510
Other receivables		
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	**734**	617
FBT receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	**-**	63
Total other receivables	**734**	680
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	**213,298**	204,123
Less impairment loss allowance	**(136)**	(447)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	**213,162**	203,676

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day (2023-24: 30 day) terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due, less any impairment allowance.

E2: Non-Financial Assets

E2.1: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of land and buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment and computer software

	Buildings (ROU) $'000	Infrastructure, plant and equipment $'000	Computer software $'000	Total $'000
As at 1 July 2024				
Gross book value	4,543	-	150,247	154,790
Accumulated depreciation, impairment and amortisation	(3,382)	-	(90,000)	(93,382)
Adjustment to depreciation				-
Net value as at 1 July 2024	**1,161**	**-**	**60,247**	**61,408**
Additions				
By purchase	**-**	**5**	**-**	**5**
By development	**-**	**-**	**50,300**	**50,300**
Right-of-use assets	**1,571**	**-**	**-**	**1,571**
Write-down and impairment recognised in net cost of services	**-**	**-**	**(5,736)**	**(5,736)**
Depreciation and amortisation	**-**	**-**	**(9,704)**	**(9,704)**
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	**(1,302)**	**-**	**-**	**(1,302)**
Net value as at 30 June 2025	**1,430**	**5**	**95,107**	**96,542**
Net value as at 30 June 2025 represented by				
Gross book value	**6,114**	**5**	**192,640**	**198,759**
Accumulated depreciation, impairment and amortisation	**(4,684)**	**-**	**(97,533)**	**(102,217)**
Net value as at 30 June 2025	**1,430**	**5**	**95,107**	**96,542**
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	**1,430**	**-**	**-**	**1,430**

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of non-financial assets are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than the asset capitalisation thresholds. Purchases below the threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total.

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

Whilst the asset thresholds and useful lives for computer software remain unchanged from 2024, the department has added a minor change to policy, allowing the extension of useful life for computer software beyond 15 years in certain circumstances.

Asset class	2025 Useful life	2025 Threshold
Computer software	2-15 years	$200,000
Buildings (ROU)	Lease term	$10,000
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	5-20 years	$2,000

Impairment

All cash-generating assets and assets held at cost, including intangibles and ROU assets, were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2025. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount. For non-cash generating assets held at fair value, the recoverable amount is expected to be materially the same as fair value at 30 June 2025.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the department were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Depreciation

Depreciable assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the department using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the above-mentioned useful lives.

Intangibles

The department's intangibles comprise purchased and internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated depreciation or accumulated impairment losses. No material amounts of computer software are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

All computer software assets are assessed for impairment annually, and this resulted in impairment and write-down expenses of $5.7 million in 2024-25 (2023-24: $2.5 million).

Building ROU Assets

On 1 July 2023, the department assumed responsibility for the management of leases for overseas chanceries and residences from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, refer to note J.2. Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise the initial lease liability amount, and initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright however, are included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets

As at 30 June 2025, contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets amounted to $44.9 million (2023-24: $51.9 million).

E3: Payables

E3.1: Other payables	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Separations and redundancies	**3,037**	1,745
Wages and salaries	**7,313**	5,588
Unearned revenue from contracts with customers	**479**	854
Superannuation	**1,111**	851
Other employee benefits	**297**	-
Total other payables	**12,237**	9,038

E4: Interest Bearing Liabilities

E4.1: Leases	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Lease liabilities	**1,464**	1,188
Total leases	**1,464**	1,188

There is $1.3 million in cash outflows for leases for the year ended 30 June 2025 (2023-24: $1.6 million).

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows	2025	2024
Within 1 year	**988**	865
Between 1 to 5 years	**525**	350
More than 5 years	**-**	-
Total leases	**1,513**	1,215

For all new contracts entered into, the department considers whether the contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as ‘a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration’.

Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the department’s incremental borrowing rate.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the ROU asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification. Refer to note E2.1.

The department in its capacity as lessee has no lease arrangements with below market terms.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

F. Assets and Liabilities Administered on Behalf of the Government

F1: Administered – Financial Assets

F1.1: Cash and cash equivalents	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Cash on hand or on deposit	**-**	-
Cash held in the OPA - special accounts	**3,009,588**	107,590
Total cash	**3,009,588**	107,590

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash includes demand deposits in bank accounts, and cash in special accounts. Note G2.1 refers.

F1.2: Trade and other receivables	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Goods and services receivable		
Goods and services receivable	**20,329**	16,021
Total goods and services receivable	**20,329**	16,021
Advances and loans		
HELP - students	**51,319,356**	49,074,473
HELP - providers	**129,350**	156,367
Total advances and loans	**51,448,706**	49,230,840
Other receivables		
HESP receivable	**222,100**	233,400
Personal benefits receivable	**507,673**	490,017
GST receivable	**17,492**	15,232
Total other receivables	**747,265**	738,649
Total receivables (gross)	**52,216,300**	49,985,510
Less impairment allowance		
Goods and services receivable	**(16,339)**	(6,528)
HELP - providers	**(19,322)**	(33,251)
Personal benefits receivable	**(187,227)**	(197,491)
Total impairment allowance	**(222,888)**	(237,270)
Total receivables (net)	**51,993,412**	49,748,240

Where receivables are not subject to concessional treatment, they are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Gains and losses due to impairment, derecognition and amortisation are recognised through the Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income.

Concessional loans	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
HELP - students		
Nominal value	**76,217,200**	75,114,567
Unexpired discount	**(7,042,706)**	(8,036,150)
Impairment	**(17,855,138)**	(18,003,944)
Carrying amount	**51,319,356**	49,074,473
HELP - providers		
Nominal value	**139,288**	174,940
Unexpired discount	**(9,938)**	(18,573)
Impairment	**(19,322)**	(33,251)
Carrying amount	**110,028**	123,116
Total concessional loans	**51,429,384**	49,197,589

For further information on the fair value of HELP – students loans, refer to note I4.

In 2021-22 concessional loans were made to Higher Education providers (HELP – providers) due to the impact of COVID-19. Providers received 8-year interest-free loans with the first instalments due in 2021-22 and the final instalments due in 2028-29.

F1.3: Investments	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Australian National University	**4,023,484**	3,823,917
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership	**16,668**	12,938
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority	**7,194**	7,202
Total investments	**4,047,346**	3,844,057

The principal activities of each of the entity's administered investments were as follows:

- Australian National University – provision of research and teaching services.
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Ltd – supports and enhances the teaching profession for the benefit of all Australians.
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority – executes the policy directions that are determined by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs regarding curriculum, assessment, data collection and reporting at a national level.

Administered investments are measured at their fair value as at 30 June 2025. Fair value has been taken to be the Australian Government's proportional interest in the net assets of the entities.

Movements between years are recognised at fair value through other comprehensive income. The current year movement is a $203.3 million increase (2023-24: $280.1 million).

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

F2: Administered – Non-Financial Assets

F2.1: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of buildings

	Buildings (ROU) $'000	Total $'000
As at 1 July 2024		
Gross book value	1,057	1,057
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(406)	(406)
Net value 1 July 2024	**651**	**651**
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	**(78)**	**(78)**
Net book value 30 June 2025	**573**	**573**
Net book value as of 30 June 2025 represented by		
Gross book value	**1,057**	**1,057**
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	**(484)**	**(484)**
Net book value 30 June 2025	**573**	**573**
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	**573**	**573**

F3: Provisions

	HESP 2025 $'000	Personal benefits 2025 $'000
Opening balance as at 1 July	**4,710,799**	**742,583**
Amounts used	**(433,009)**	**(349)**
Increase (decrease) recognised in net cost of services	**391,810**	**64,244**
Total as at 30 June	**4,669,600**	**806,478**

HESP
HESP provides supplementary funding to eligible higher education providers to cover certain superannuation expenses incurred for staff who are members of identified state government emerging cost superannuation schemes. The level of supplementary funding is demand driven with assessment of claims from institutions occurring annually.

As at 30 June 2025, the AGA estimated the Commonwealth's liability under HESP as the present value of the Commonwealth's future obligation in respect of current and former university employees who are members of state superannuation schemes. The timing of the cash flows that represent the future obligation are impacted by rates of retirement, death, mortality improvements, invalidity, resignation, and take-up rates of pensions. The rate used to discount future benefits is determined by matching the weighted duration of the liabilities with the corresponding duration on a zero-coupon yield curve based on government bond rates. Based on a calculated average liability duration of 8.2 years, a discount rate of 4.0% was applied (2023-24: 4.3%).

A portion of the funding is recovered from the relevant states under cost-sharing arrangements. The current cost share arrangements are based on allocating the emerging cost of benefits between the states and the Commonwealth based on the split of responsibility at the time the benefits accrued.

Personal benefits
Prior to any Child Care Subsidy payment being made, a withholding percentage (the default is 5% of entitlement) is applied. Withheld amounts are used to offset potential debts generated when families lodge their tax with the Australian Taxation Office, triggering the reconciliation process. The personal benefits provision represents the balance of Child Care Subsidy withholding amounts as at 30 June 2025.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

G. Funding

G1: Appropriations

G1.1: Annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

Annual Appropriations for 2025

	Annual Appropriation $'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s75 transfers $'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s74 receipts $'000	Total appropriation $'000	Appropriation applied in 2025 (current and prior years) $'000	Variance[1] $'000
Departmental						
Ordinary annual services	396,501	-	21,898	418,399	(404,629)	13,770
Capital Budget[2]	32,250	-	-	32,250	(27,511)	4,739
Other services						
Equity Injections	37,346	-	-	37,346	(28,203)	9,143
Total departmental	466,097	-	21,898	487,995	(460,343)	27,652
Administered						
Ordinary annual services						
Administered items	4,248,591	-	1,361	4,249,952	(4,120,845)	129,107
Other services						
States, ACT, NT and Local government	133,572	-	57	133,629	(130,827)	2,802
Total administered	4,382,163	-	1,418	4,383,581	(4,251,672)	131,909

[1] The variance in departmental is made up of the movement in cash, GST receivable and appropriation receivable. Departmental Section 51 quarantines are in place for current year DCB operating appropriations of $18.418 million. The administered variance represents the movement in the balance of appropriations, quarantining of current year appropriations, and cash spent from the balance of prior year appropriations. Administered Section 51 quarantines are in place for current year annual operating appropriations of $28.139 million. Section 74 receipts include GST refunds from the Australian Taxation Office of $5.236 million for departmental appropriations.

[2] Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Annual Appropriations for 2024

	Annual Appropriation $'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s75 transfers $'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s74 receipts $'000	Total appropriation $'000	Appropriation applied in 2024 (current and prior years) $'000	Variance[1] $'000
Departmental						
Ordinary annual services	352,695	-	6,176	358,871	(347,251)	11,620
Capital Budget[2]	22,105	-	-	22,105	(5,694)	16,411
Other services						
Equity Injections	25,039	-	-	25,039	(8,043)	16,996
Total departmental	399,839	-	6,176	406,015	(360,988)	45,027
Administered						
Ordinary annual services						
Administered items	1,220,290	-	3,565	1,223,855	(1,064,583)	159,272
Other services						
States, ACT, NT and Local government	172,738	-	-	172,738	(166,782)	5,956
Total administered	1,393,028	-	3,565	1,396,593	(1,231,365)	165,228

[1] The variance in departmental is made up of the movement in cash, GST receivable and appropriation receivable. Departmental Section 51 quarantines are in place for current year annual operating appropriations of $1.275 million, DCB operating appropriations of $8.130 million, and Equity Injection appropriations of $2.662 million. The administered variance represents the movement in the balance of appropriations, quarantining of current year appropriations, and cash spent from the balance of prior year appropriations. Administered Section 51 quarantines are in place for current year annual operating appropriations of $41.230 million, and annual payments to States, ACT, NT and local government of $20.534 million.

[2] Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
G1.2: Departmental - Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')		
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-23 - Operating[1,2]	**396**	396
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-23 - Departmental Capital Budget[1,3]	**362**	2,516
Supply Act (No. 1) 2022-23 - Departmental Capital Budget[1]	**-**	5,678
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-24 - Operating[4]	**1,275**	143,451
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-24 - Departmental Capital Budget[5]	**8,130**	20,570
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2023-24 - Equity Injection[6]	**2,662**	24,389
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023-24 - Operating	**-**	12,800
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023-24 - Departmental Capital Budget	**-**	1,535
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024-25 - Operating	**161,894**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024-25 - Departmental Capital Budget (DCB)[7]	**25,493**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2024-25 - Equity Injection	**27,085**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024-25 - Operating	**8,900**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024-25 - Departmental Capital Budget (DCB)	**1,053**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 4) 2024-25 - Equity Injection	**3,785**	-
Cash at bank	**498**	2,662
Total unspent annual appropriations	**241,533**	213,997

[1] This appropriation will lapse on 1 July 2025.

[2] This appropriation includes $0.396 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[3] This appropriation includes $0.362 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[4] This appropriation includes $1.275 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[5] This appropriation includes $8.130 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[6] This appropriation includes $2.662 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[7] This appropriation includes $18.418 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

G1.3: Administered - Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2021-22[1]	**-**	187,346
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2021-22[1]	**-**	59
Appropriation Act (No. 4) 2021-22[1]	**-**	2,575
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-23[2,3]	**139,558**	139,558
Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-23[2,4]	**26,844**	26,844
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2022-23[2,5]	**194,229**	194,229
Supply Act (No. 2) 2022-23[2]	**2,612**	2,612
Supply Act (No. 4) 2022-23[2]	**7,248**	7,248
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-24[6]	**100,648**	101,334
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2023-24[7]	**30,159**	30,159
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023-24[8]	**106,730**	106,883
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024-25[9]	**106,211**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2024-25	**57**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024-25[10]	**22,373**	-
Appropriation Act (No. 4) 2024-25	**2,688**	-
Total unspent annual appropriations	**739,357**	798,847

[1] This appropriation lapsed on 1 July 2024.

[2] This appropriation will lapse on 1 July 2025.

[3] This appropriation includes $139.558 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[4] This appropriation includes $0.444 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[5] This appropriation includes $169.797 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[6] This appropriation includes $50.602 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[7] This appropriation includes $20.534 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[8] This appropriation includes $33.029 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[9] This appropriation includes $27.239 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

[10] This appropriation includes $0.900 million in quarantine, but legally available at 30 June 2025.

G1.4: Special appropriations applied ('recoverable GST exclusive')

Authority	Appropriations applied[1]	
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999	**15,574,817**	13,987,432
Australian Education Act 2013	**32,864,767**	30,743,555
Higher Education Support Act 2003, section 238-12	**19,376,107**	17,961,226
Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, section 77	**995**	-
Total special appropriations applied	**67,816,686**	62,692,213

[1] Special appropriations not used during 2024-25 and 2023-24:
Schools Assistance Act 2008, s.167; and
Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004, s133.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

G2: Special Accounts – Administered ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

G2.1: Administered - Special Accounts ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys[1]		Early Years Quality Fund Special Account[2]		Overseas Students Tuition Fund[3]	
	2025	2024	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024
	$'000	$'000	**$'000**	$'000	**$'000**	$'000
Balance as at 1 July (represented by cash held in the OPA)	**2,857**	3,599	**42,135**	42,135	**47,813**	45,899
Increases						
Receipts	**7,518**	28,288	**-**	-	**7,421**	4,086
Total increases	**7,518**	28,288	**-**	-	**7,421**	4,086
Available for payments	**10,375**	31,887	**42,135**	42,135	**55,234**	49,985
Decreases						
Payments made	**(7,712)**	(29,030)	**-**	-	**(4,777)**	(2,172)
Total decreases	**(7,712)**	(29,030)	**-**	-	**(4,777)**	(2,172)
Balance as at 30 June (represented by cash held in the OPA)	**2,663**	2,857	**42,135**	42,135	**50,457**	47,813

	Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund[4]		Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers Special Account[5]	
	2025	2024	**2025**	2024
	$'000	$'000	**$'000**	$'000
Balance as at 1 July (represented by cash held in the OPA)	**14,785**	9,923	**-**	-
Increases				
Receipts	**3,946**	5,026	**2,895,782**	-
Total increases	**3,946**	5,026	**2,895,782**	-
Available for payments	**18,731**	14,949	**2,895,782**	-
Decreases				
Payments made	**(180)**	(164)	**-**	-
Total decreases	**(180)**	(164)	**-**	-
Balance as at 30 June (represented by cash held in the OPA)	**18,551**	14,785	**2,895,782**	-

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Special Account	Establishing Instrument	Purpose
[1] Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys Special Account	*PGPA Act 2013* section 78 *Determination (Education SOETM Special Account 2018)*, section 5.	To disburse amounts held on trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth; in connection with services performed for a corporate Commonwealth entity, Commonwealth company or other government; in connection with joint activities performed on behalf of another government, organisation or person; with an agreement between the Commonwealth and another government; and to repay amounts where a court order, Act or other law requires or permits the repayment of an amount received.
[2] Early Years Quality Fund Special Account	*PGPA Act 2013* section 80 *Early Years Quality Fund Special Account Act 2013*, section 5.	To provide funding to approved centre based long day care services to be used exclusively for paying remuneration and other employment-related costs and expenses in relation to employees in the early childhood education and care sector. This amount has been subject to quarantine pending return to the OPA since 1 July 2018.
[3] Overseas Students Tuition Fund	*PGPA Act 2013* section 80 *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*, taking into account amendments to *Education Services for Overseas Students Legislation Amendment (Tuition Protection Services and Other Measures) Act 2012*, section 52A.	For expenditure in connection with assisting international students whose education providers are unable to deliver their course of study in full.
[4] Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund	*PGPA Act 2013* section 80 *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, Compilation No. 78, section 167 1, commenced 28 May 2021. This instrument continues the existence of the HELP Tuition Protection Fund established under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, Compilation No. 71, section 167-1, with a new name.	The purposes of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund are as follows: a) making payments in connection with tuition protection under this Act and the Higher Education Provider Guidelines; b) making payments in connection with tuition protection under the TEQSA Act and the Up-front Payments Guidelines; c) paying or discharging the costs, expenses and other obligations incurred by the Commonwealth in the performance of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Director's functions, including in managing the Fund; d) paying any remuneration and allowances payable to the Higher Education Tuition Protection Director; e) paying any remuneration and allowances payable to the members of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board; f) paying any amount that is required or permitted to be repaid; and g) reducing the balance of the Fund (and therefore the available appropriation for the Fund) without making a real or notional payment.
[5] Wage Justice for Early Childhood Education and Care Workers Special Account	*PGPA Act 2013* section 80 *Wage justice for early childhood education and care workers (Special account) Act 2024 (no. 140 2024)*	The purpose of the account is to make grants to support remuneration increases for workers in the early childhood education and care sector in order to facilitate access to quality early childhood education and care.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

G3: Regulatory charging

G3.1: Regulatory charging summary	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Amounts applied		
Annual appropriation	**6,380**	5,705
Total amounts applied	**6,380**	5,705
Expenses		
Employee benefits	**4,846**	4,290
Supplier	**1,534**	1,415
Total expenses	**6,380**	5,705

G3.2: Administered - regulatory charging summary	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Expenses		
Suppliers	**-**	-
Total expenses	**-**	-
External revenue		
Cost recovery	**5,381**	4,738
Total external revenue	**5,381**	4,738
Write-down and impairment	**-**	-

The department undertakes regulatory charging activities relating to:

- the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS); and
- HELP.

Further information on above activities is available at:

- CRICOS: www.internationaleducation.gov.au
- HELP: www.studyassist.gov.au

H. People and Relationships

H1: Employee Provisions

H1.1: Employee provisions	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Annual and long service leave provisions	**74,134**	63,731
Total employee provisions	**74,134**	63,731

As required by AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*, the estimate of future cash outflows considers estimated attrition, probability factors, future salary rates and ancillary costs. In 2024-25, the AGA undertook an assessment of leave provisions considering the likely tenure of existing staff, patterns of leave claims and payouts, future salary movements and discount rates. The AGA confirmed their assessment on 25 June 2025.

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits expected to be paid within 12 months of the end of reporting period are measured at the two-year Commonwealth Government bond rate of 3.21 per cent (2023-24: 4.19 per cent). Liabilities for long term employee benefits are discounted using the 10-year Commonwealth Government bond rate of 4.16 per cent (2023-24: 4.39 per cent).

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The department recognises a provision for separation and redundancy based on AASB 119 for those employees affected.

Employees of the department are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) or other elected defined contribution schemes. The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance administered financial statements. The department makes employer contributions to defined benefit superannuation schemes at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the government. The department accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans. The payable for superannuation recognised at 30 June 2025 represents outstanding contributions owed by the department to the superannuation schemes.

H2: Key Management Personnel Remuneration (KMP)

H2.1: KMP remuneration for the department for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department. The department has determined the KMP to be the Portfolio Ministers, the Secretary, and the Deputy Secretaries. Other senior executives may at times act in one of these positions (excluding for the Portfolio Ministers) for a short period of time during the year. These officers are not reported as KMP unless they have acted in the position for more than three consecutive months.

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Short-term employee benefits[1]	**2,845**	2,774
Post-employment benefits	**307**	288
Other long-term employee benefits	**70**	64
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	**3,222**	3,126

[1] Includes allowances and reportable fringe benefits.

The above table includes the remuneration for five officers (five for the full period) occupying KMP positions for the department during the year (2023-24: five officers (five for the full period)). The remuneration and benefits for the portfolio minister are excluded from the table as they are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the department.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

H3: Related Party Disclosures

The department is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the department are KMP as described in note H2, and other Australian Government entities.

Given the breadth of government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of child care subsidies or higher education loans which are not included in this note.

Transactions with entities where KMP have an interest:

During 2024-25 and 2023-24, the department did not make any related party purchases.

I. Managing Uncertainties

I1: Contingent Assets and Liabilities

I1.1: Departmental contingent assets and liabilities

Departmental contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the statement of financial position. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of an asset or liability or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

Quantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2025, there are no departmental quantifiable contingent assets and there are two quantifiable liabilities amounting to $0.4 million, in respect of one or more claims against the department (2023-24: $0.8 million).

Unquantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2025, there are no departmental unquantifiable contingent assets or liabilities (2023-24: nil).

I1.2: Administered contingent assets and liabilities

Administered contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the administered schedule of assets and liabilities. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of an asset or liability or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

Quantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2025, there is one administered quantifiable contingent asset amounting to $0.4 million (2023-24: $0.4 million).

As at 30 June 2025, there is one administered quantifiable contingent liability amounting to $0.1 million (2023-24: $0.1 million), in respect to potential Child Care Subsidy funding owed to Childcare providers.

Unquantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2025, there are two administered unquantifiable contingent assets in respect to the Child Care Subsidy program (2023-24: two).

As at 30 June 2025, there are five unquantifiable contingent liabilities; four in respect of the Child Care Subsidy program and one in respect to Worker Retention Payments (2023-24: one).

Child Care Subsidy:

Child Care Subsidy program payments are subject to eligibility requirements including a year-end reconciliation.

Contingent assets and liabilities predominantly arise from the Child Care Subsidy program’s reconciliation process. The reconciliation process is dependent on the lodgement of the recipient’s income tax return, which occurs after 30 June each year. The estimate of all reconciliation payable and debt outcomes that have not yet been established due to the income tax returns not yet lodged by the first deadline are treated as unquantifiable contingencies as at 30 June 2025.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I2: Financial Instruments

Financial assets

The department classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

a) financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;

b) financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income; and

c) financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both the entity's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'. Supplier and grant payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

I2.1: Categories of Financial instruments	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	**498**	2,662
Goods and services receivable	**2,636**	4,486
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**3,134**	7,148
Total financial assets	**3,134**	7,148
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Supplier payables	**43,292**	51,597
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	**43,292**	51,597
Total financial liabilities	**43,292**	51,597

The department has adopted the simplified approach for measuring the impairment loss allowance for these financial assets. This approach measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses. Any amounts written off have been recognised as a reduction to the financial asset.

All payables are expected to be settled within 12 months except where indicated.

I2.2: Net Gains or Losses on Financial Assets		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Impairment of receivables - goods and services	**311**	(326)
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets at amortised cost	**311**	(326)
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets	**311**	(326)

I2.3: Categories of financial instruments	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash	**3,009,588**	107,590
Goods and services receivable	**3,990**	9,493
HELP - providers	**110,028**	123,116
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**3,123,606**	240,199
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income		
Investments	**4,047,346**	3,844,057
Total financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	**4,047,346**	3,844,057
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (designated)		
Concessional loans		
HELP	**51,319,356**	49,074,473
Total financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (designated)	**51,319,356**	49,074,473
Total financial assets	**58,490,308**	53,158,729
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Supplier payables	**37,894**	41,485
Grants payable	**70,549**	1,871
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	**108,443**	43,356
Total financial liabilities	**108,443**	43,356

I2.4: Net gains or losses on financial assets	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Interest revenue	**8,636**	6,820
Write-down and impairment / reversal	**3,690**	(2,036)
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets at amortised cost	**12,326**	4,784
Investments in equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income (designated)		
Gains/(losses) recognised in equity	**203,289**	280,121
Net gains/(losses) on investments in equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income (designated)	**203,289**	280,121
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss		
Interest revenue	**2,046,214**	1,929,855
Loan fee revenue	**85,932**	101,784
Concessional loan discount	**(1,075,457)**	(848,444)
Fair value (losses)	**(669,412)**	-
Fair value gains	**-**	1,444,501
Net gains/(losses) at fair value through profit or loss	**387,277**	2,627,696
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets	**602,892**	2,912,601

The financial assets measured at amortised cost are impaired according to AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, wherein the lifetime expected credit losses are measured using the simplified approach.

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
I2.5: Financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss		
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Fair value changes due to credit risk		
During the period	**(925,041)**	(918,168)
Prior periods	**(15,114,703)**	(16,219,501)
Cumulative change	**(16,039,744)**	(17,137,669)

I2.6: Credit risk

The financial assets measured at amortised cost are not exposed to a high level of credit risk and the department manages this risk by applying debt recovery policies and procedures. The risk of default on payments has been assessed and an impairment provision brought to account. Note F1.2 refers.

The financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income represent the government's proportional interest in the net assets of the entities which are not exposed to a high level of credit risk. Note F1.3 refers.

The financial assets at fair value through profit or loss are subject to annual fair value actuarial assessments which take into account the future income projections, pattern and timing of repayments and debt not expected to be repaid. Note F1.2 refers.

I2.7: Liquidity risk

The department is exposed to minimal liquidity risk and is appropriated funding from the Australian Government. The department manages its budgeted funds to ensure it has adequate funds to meet payments as they fall due. In addition, the department has policies in place to ensure timely payments are made when due and has no past experience of default.

I2.8: Market risk

The value of concessional loans held at fair value, such as HELP, are also impacted by changes in market interest rates. For example, if the interest rates were to increase by 0.1%, the fair value of these loans would decrease by approximately 1%. However, interest rate changes will have no impact on the future cash flows or principal amounts at maturity.

I3: Fair Value

I3.1: Fair value measurement of level 3 financial instruments

Fair value measurement as at 30 June

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	Level[2]	Valuation technique[3]	Inputs used
Financial assets					
Concessional loans					
HELP	**51,319,356**	49,074,473	3	Loan conditions	Principal due
Investments	**4,047,346**	3,844,057	3	Net assets of the entity	Net assets of the entity
Total[1]	**55,366,702**	52,918,530			

[1] The book value of these assets equals the fair value.
[2] There has been no transfer between levels during the period.
[3] The methods and valuation techniques used for the purpose of measuring fair value of assets in 2025 are unchanged from the previous reporting period.

I3.2: Movement in level 3 fair value measurement

Financial assets

	Concessional loans		Investments	
	2025 $'000	2024 $'000	**2025 $'000**	2024 $'000
As at 1 July	**49,074,473**	46,436,621	**3,844,057**	3,563,936
Total gains/(losses) recognised in net cost of services	**387,277**	2,627,696	**-**	-
Total gains/(losses) recognised in comprehensive income	**-**	-	**203,289**	280,121
Issues	**7,904,293**	7,227,926	**-**	-
Settlements	**(6,046,687)**	(7,217,770)	**-**	-
As at 30 June	**51,319,356**	49,074,473	**4,047,346**	3,844,057

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I4: HELP Loans fair value reconciliation

	Notes	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Fair value of HELP Loans as at 1 July		**49,074,473**	46,436,621
Movements during the financial year:			
Loans issued	I3.2	**7,904,293**	7,227,926
Loans repaid	I3.2	**(6,046,687)**	(7,217,770)
Gains/(losses) on fair value	D2.4/(D1.6)/I2.4	**(669,412)**	1,444,501
Loan Fee revenue	I2.4	**85,932**	101,784
Interest revenue	I2.4	**2,046,214**	1,929,855
Finance costs - concessional loan discount	I2.4	**(1,075,457)**	(848,444)
Total movement		**2,244,883**	2,637,852
Fair value of HELP Loans as at 30 June	**F1.2**	**51,319,356**	49,074,473

Summary of Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) Financial Information

HELP is a complex and significant program that is represented throughout the financial statements and a significant driver to a number of other disclosures. The above table provides a summary of financial information relating to the program disclosed in the Administered Cash Flow Statement and notes D2.4, F1.2 and I2.4.

The HELP net actuarial assessment resulted in a fair value loss in 2024-25 of $0.7 billion (2023-24: $1.4 billion fair value gain).

The Higher Education Loan Program (HELP - students) is an income contingent loan program that assists eligible higher education students with the cost of tuition. It is administered under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. The HELP debt, recognised as an administered receivable, comprises HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP, SA-HELP, STARTUP-HELP and OS-HELP programs.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) collects repayment of these debts through the taxation system.

The Australian Government Actuary (AGA) has developed a microsimulation model to provide estimates of a number of financial measures related to the HELP receivables, including an estimate of the debt that is not expected to be repaid. Significant judgements, estimates and assumptions are re-valued for each reporting period in light of historical experience, new loan schemes and changes to reasonable expectations of future events. As part of their continuous improvement, the AGA refines its methodology for calculating the HELP receivables balance.

In the determination of the fair value of these loans, consideration is given to projections of future income of debtors; pattern and timing of repayments; changes in legislation; the recoverability of concessional debt; and the discounting of future cash flows to a present value. This discounting is based on a yield curve derived from Commonwealth securities on issue as at 30 June 2025. The outcome of discounting based on the 30 June 2025 yield curve is equivalent to the use of a single valuation discount rate of 4.34% (2023-24: 4.47%).

As at 30 June 2025, the AGA estimated the fair value of the HELP loans to be $51.3 billion, applying the discount rate of 4.34% (2023-24: 4.47%). The increase in the estimated fair value of HELP was the net result of several factors. Factors contributing to the increase include the unwinding of the concessional loan discount ($2.0 billion) and the net movement of new loans and repayments made in 2024-25 ($1.9 billion). Factors contributing to the offsetting decrease included the fair value loss ($0.7 billion), which is made up of a gain due to revision to last year's estimate due to updated data and modelling ($1.7 billion), offset by losses attributable to indexation adjustments for these loans ($1.9 billion) and movements in the yield curve ($0.5 billion). The balance is further reduced by Finance costs ($1.1 billion).

The decline in the amount of loans repaid compared to 2024 is due to a considerable reduction in the amount of voluntary repayments made in 2025 ($0.9 billion compared to $1.8 billion in 2024). This is primarily due to the government announcement on 2 November 2024, committing to a 20% reduction in student loan debts changing debtor behaviour.

J. Other Information

J1: Current/Non-current Distinction for Assets and Liabilities

J1.1: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	**498**	2,662
Trade receivables	**213,162**	203,676
Prepayments	**1,578**	792
Total no more than 12 months	**215,238**	207,130
More than 12 months		
Buildings (ROU)	**1,430**	1,161
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	**5**	-
Computer software	**95,107**	60,247
Prepayments	**43**	101
Total more than 12 months	**96,585**	61,509
Total assets	**311,823**	268,639
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	**43,292**	51,597
Other payables	**12,237**	9,038
Leases	**939**	835
Employee provisions	**23,325**	20,387
Total no more than 12 months	**79,793**	81,857
More than 12 months		
Leases	**525**	353
Employee provisions	**50,809**	43,344
Total more than 12 months	**51,334**	43,697
Total liabilities	**131,127**	125,554

Department of Education
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

J1.2: Administered - Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	2025	2024
Assets expected to be recovered in:	**$'000**	$'000
No more than 12 months		
Cash	**3,009,588**	107,590
Receivables	**5,915,290**	5,570,174
Total no more than 12 months	**8,924,878**	5,677,764
More than 12 months		
Receivables	**46,078,122**	44,178,066
Investments	**4,047,346**	3,844,057
Buildings	**573**	651
Total more than 12 months	**50,126,041**	48,022,774
Total assets	**59,050,919**	53,700,538
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	**37,894**	41,485
Subsidies	**154,822**	-
Grants	**70,549**	1,871
Personal benefits	**255,597**	33,370
GST payable	**733**	494
Leases - buildings	**75**	76
Provision for HESP	**400,749**	419,506
Total no more than 12 months	**920,419**	496,802
More than 12 months		
Leases - buildings	**571**	644
Provision for Personal Benefits	**806,478**	742,583
Provision for HESP	**4,268,851**	4,291,293
Total more than 12 months	**5,075,900**	5,034,520
Total liabilities	**5,996,319**	5,531,322

J2: Restructuring

J2.1: Departmental restructuring

	2025	2024
		Skills and Employment DEWR[1]
	$'000	$'000
FUNCTIONS RELINQUISHED		
Assets relinquished		
Computer software	-	2,020
Total assets relinquished	-	2,020
Net assets relinquished	-	2,020

[1] Following the machinery of government change with DEWR with an effective date of 1 July 2022, there was a minor carry over restructure for further assets identified as being relinquished to DEWR as at 1 July 2023.

	2025	2024
		Skills and Employment DEWR[1]
	$'000	$'000
FUNCTIONS ASSUMED[2]		
Assets recognised		
Buildings	-	819
Total assets recognised	-	819
Liabilities recognised		
Leases	-	(837)
Total liabilities recognised	-	(837)
Net (liabilities) recognised	-	**(18)**

[1] Following the machinery of government change with DEWR with an effective date of 1 July 2022, there was a minor carry over restructure for further assets and liabilities identified as being assumed by the department as at 1 July 2023. The assets and liabilities recognised in 2023-24 reflect the agreement that the department will manage leases for overseas properties.
[2] The department assumed the function of the Indigenous Student Success Program from the National Indigenous Australians Agency on 1 July 2025. There were no transfers of assets or liabilities as a result of this transfer.

05

Appendices

Appendix A: Agency resource statement and expenses for outcomes

Table A.1: Agency Resource Statement, 2024–25

	Actual available appropriations for 2024–25 $'000	Payments made 2024–25 $'000	Balance remaining $'000
Ordinary annual services			
Departmental appropriation			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services[1 2]	640,141	432,140	208,001
Annual appropriations – other services – non-operating[3]	61,735	28,203	33,532
Total	**701,876**	**460,343**	**241,533**
Administered expenses			
Outcome 1[4]	3,660,186	3,558,536	
Outcome 2[4]	589,766	562,309	
Total	**4,249,952**	**4,120,845**	
Total ordinary annual services	**4,951,828**	**4,581,188**	
Other services			
Administered expenses			
Specific payments to states, ACT, NT and local government[5]			
Outcome 1	133,629	130,827	
Total	**133,629**	**130,827**	
Total other services	**133,629**	**130,827**	
Total available annual appropriations	**5,085,457**	**4,712,015**	

	Actual available appropriations for 2024–25 $'000	Payments made 2024–25 $'000	Balance remaining $'000
Special appropriations			
Special appropriations limited by criteria/entitlement			
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999		15,574,817	
Australian Education Act 2013		32,864,767	
Higher Education Support Act 2003		19,376,107	
Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 – section 77		995	
Total special appropriations		**67,816,686**	
Special accounts			
Opening balance	107,590		
Appropriation receipts	2,896,011		
Non-appropriation receipts to special accounts	18,656		
Payments made		12,669	
Closing balance			3,009,588
Total special accounts	**3,022,257**	**12,669**	
Less appropriations drawn from annual or special appropriations above and credited to special accounts	2,896,011	2,896,011	
Less payments to corporate entities through annual appropriations	28,899	28,899	
Total net resourcing and payments for Education	**5,182,804**	**69,616,460**	

1 *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024–25* and *Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024–25*. This also includes prior-year departmental appropriation and section 74 external revenue.

2 Departmental capital budgets are not separately identified in Appropriation Bill (Nos.1 and 3) and form part of ordinary annual services items. For accounting purposes, this amount has been designated as a 'contribution by owner'.

3 *Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2024–25*, and *Appropriation Act (No. 4) 2024–25*. This also includes prior-year available appropriations.

4 *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024–25* and *Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024–25*.

5 *Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2024–25* and *Appropriation Act (No. 4) 2024–25*.

Table A.2: Expenses for Outcome 1, 2024–25

Outcome 1	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Administered expenses			
Program 1.1: Support for the Child Care System			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)			
Child Care Services Support	462,941	371,279	91,662
Special Appropriations			
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999	656,317	487,393	168,924
Total for Program 1.1	**1,119,258**	**858,672**	**260,586**
Program 1.2: Child Care Subsidy			
Special Appropriations			
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999	15,429,437	15,188,517	240,920
Total for Program 1.2	**15,429,437**	**15,188,517**	**240,920**
Program 1.3: Government Schools National Support			
Other Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 2 and 4)			
Additional Support for Northern Territory	7,536	7,536	-
Special Appropriations			
Australian Education Act 2013	11,704,782	11,691,760	13,022
Total for Program 1.3	**11,712,318**	**11,699,296**	**13,022**
Program 1.4: Non-Government Schools National Support			
Other Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 2 and 4)			
Choice and Affordability Fund	121,349	121,348	1

Outcome 1	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Special Appropriations			
Australian Education Act 2013	19,248,718	19,250,910	(2,192)
Total for Program 1.4	**19,370,067**	**19,372,258**	**(2,191)**
Program 1.5: Early Learning and Schools Support			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)			
Early Learning Support			
Australian Early Development Census	10,714	10,714	-
Preschools Data Framework	21,710	19,044	2,666
SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children	4,000	4,000	-
Total Early Learning Support	**36,424**	**33,758**	**2,666**
Schools Support			
Australian Education Research Organisation	10,000	10,000	-
First Nations Education	41,403	40,147	1,256
First Nations Languages in Schools	9,833	4,225	5,608
Grants and Awards	1,532	1,447	85
Helping Children with Autism	6,974	6,010	964
Life Education - Being Healthy, Being Active	1,700	1,700	-
National Assessment Reforms	5,979	4,169	1,810
National Consent Survey	1,000	1,000	-
National Schools Reform	8,958	7,536	1,422
National School Resourcing Board	1,059	227	832

Outcome 1	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
National Teacher Workforce Action Plan	64,190	61,852	2,338
Quality Outcomes	46,249	45,944	305
School Education Support	19,565	19,565	-
Student Engagement and Wellbeing	2,021	2,021	-
Student Support Package	22,156	29,129	(6,973)
Student Wellbeing Boost	250	250	-
Supporting Australia's Teacher Workforce	2,286	1,851	435
Supporting Quality Boarding for Rural and Remote Students	1,700	1,588	112
Teacher Resource Hubs	5,230	5,230	-
Youth Support	1,030	967	63
Other Services (Appropriation Bill No.2)			
First Nations Education	2,687	2,687	-
Literacy Support for Tasmanian Students	2,000	2,000	-
Schools Upgrade Fund[2]	-	(40)	40
Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys	-	275	(275)
Total Schools Support	**257,802**	**249,780**	**8,022**
Total for Program 1.5	**294,226**	**283,538**	**10,688**

Outcome 1	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Outcome 1 Totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)	752,480	649,894	102,586
Other services (Appropriation Act Nos. 2 and 4)	133,572	133,531	41
Special Appropriations	47,039,254	46,618,580	420,674
Special Accounts	-	275	(275)
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriations	251,794	251,182	612
Expenses not requiring appropriation in current year[3]	8,893	10,013	(1,120)
Total for Outcome 1	**48,185,993**	**47,663,475**	**522,518**
Average staffing level (number)	**1,066**	**1,045**	**21**

1 Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2024–25 budget.

2 The expenditure for this program is negative due to the return of grants from grant recipients, the grants were paid to these recipients in a prior financial year.

3 Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, write down and impairment of non-financial assets and resources received free of charge.

Table A.3: Expenses for Outcome 2, 2024–25

Outcome 2	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Administered expenses			
Program 2.1: Commonwealth Grant Scheme			
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Commonwealth Grant Scheme	8,039,107	7,690,570	348,537
Total for Program 2.1	**8,039,107**	**7,690,570**	**348,537**
Program 2.2: Higher Education Superannuation Program			
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Higher Education Superannuation Program	192,380	396,025	(203,645)
Total for Program 2.2	**192,380**	**396,025**	**(203,645)**
Program 2.3: Higher Education Support			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)			
National Microcredentials Marketplace	900	900	-
Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching	6,894	6,354	540
Tertiary Access Payment	28,360	14,806	13,554
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Tertiary Access Payment[2]	-	(27,431)	27,431
Commonwealth Practicum Support	2,375	2,311	64

Outcome 2	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Disability Support Program	35,961	13,575	22,386
Higher Education and Offshore Microcredentials	8,164	3,051	5,113
Higher Education Continuity Guarantee[3]	9,197	354,946	(345,749)
Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund	273,939	268,195	5,744
National Institutes	267,507	267,505	2
National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund	265,854	259,172	6,682
Regional University Study Hubs	23,838	22,515	1,323
Strong Beginnings Fund	-	30	(30)
Suburban University Study Hubs	11,772	7,451	4,321
Women in STEM	7,000	2,009	4,991
Total for Program 2.3	**941,761**	**1,195,389**	**(253,628)**
Program 2.4: Higher Education Loan Program			
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Higher Education Loan Program	15,471,029	1,735,858	13,735,171
Special Account Expenses			
Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund	3,609	179	3,430
Total for Program 2.4	**15,474,638**	**1,736,037**	**13,738,601**

Outcome 2	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Program 2.5 Investment in Higher Education Research			
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Research Support Program	1,064,398	1,064,397	1
Research Training Program	1,222,827	1,222,826	1
Total for Program 2.5	**2,287,225**	**2,287,223**	**2**
Program 2.6 Research Capacity			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)			
Increase Workforce Mobility (Training programs)	4,339	3,670	669
National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy	502,648	502,648	-
Special Appropriations			
Higher Education Support Act 2003			
Enhance Research Capacity of Regional Universities	3,669	3,569	100
Higher Education Research Promotion	6,615	6,614	1
Increase Workforce Mobility	6,713	4,302	2,411
Launch Australia's Economic Accelerator	189,148	93,754	95,394
Trailblazer Universities Program	108,717	108,717	-
Total for Program 2.6	**821,849**	**723,274**	**98,575**

Outcome 2	Budget[1] 2024–25 $'000 A	Actual expenses 2024–25 $'000 B	Variation 2024–25 $'000 A-B
Program 2.7 International Education Support			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)			
International Education Support	18,257	16,889	1,368
Special Account Expenses			
Overseas Students Tuition Fund	8,788	4,886	3,902
Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys - Cheung Kong	1,500	1,445	55
Total for Program 2.7	**28,545**	**23,220**	**5,325**
Outcome 2 Totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1 and 3)	561,398	545,266	16,132
Special Appropriations	27,210,210	13,499,959	13,710,251
Special Accounts	13,897	6,510	7,387
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriations	147,463	146,309	1,154
Expenses not requiring appropriation in current year[4]	10,448	9,357	1,091
Total for Outcome 2	**27,943,416**	**14,207,401**	**13,736,015**
Average staffing level (number)	**573**	**588**	**(15)**

1 Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2024–25 budget.

2 The expenditure for this program is negative due to the return of grants from grant recipients, the grants were paid to these recipients in a prior financial year.

3 Due to the nature of this program, the majority of the program budget is recorded against Program 2.1.

4 Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, write down and impairment of non-financial assets and resources received free of charge.

Appendix B: Executive remuneration

Table B.1: Remuneration for key management personnel, 2024–25

		Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits				
Name	Position title	Base salary[1] $	Bonuses $	Other benefits and allowances[2] $	Superannuation contributions[3] $	Long service leave[4] $	Other long-term benefits $	Termination benefits $	Total remuneration[5] $	Term as KMP[6]
Tony Cook	Secretary	916,002	0	23,012	40,083	23,791	0	0	1,002,888	Full term
Meg Brighton	Deputy Secretary	431,181	0	12,864	80,805	11,866	0	0	536,716	Full term
Kylie Crane	Deputy Secretary	402,647	0	3,120	73,397	11,040	0	0	490,204	Full term
Marcus Markovic	Deputy Secretary	424,231	0	16,133	82,923	12,194	0	0	535,481	Full term
Benjamin Rimmer	Deputy Secretary	515,409	0	100,623	29,932	10,602	0	0	656,566	Full term

1 Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowances.

2 Other benefits and allowances include monetary and non-monetary benefits such as provision of a car park.

3 Accumulation superannuation schemes (for example PSSap and super choice) include employer superannuation contribution amounts. Defined benefit schemes (for example CSS and PSS), include the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

4 Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken in the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

5 Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with AASB 119 Employee Benefits. This means there is a difference between the total remuneration included on an individual's annual payment summary and the remuneration disclosed in the table. This will also result in differences between the Remuneration Tribunal determination and the accrued total remuneration.

6 The full term for KMPs in the Department of Education was 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Table B.2: Remuneration for senior executives, 2024–25

		Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration[5]
Total remuneration bands	**Number of senior executives**	**Average base salary[1] $**	**Average bonuses $**	**Average other benefits and allowances[2] $**	**Average superannuation contributions[3] $**	**Average long service leave[4] $**	**Average other long-term benefits $**	**Average termination benefits $**	**Average total remuneration $**
$0 - $220,000	29	109,444	-	5,288	21,731	2,999	-	700	140,162
$220,001 - $245,000	5	187,436	-	1,967	36,604	5,787	-	-	231,794
$245,001 - $270,000	9	219,961	-	1,291	34,258	5,461	-	-	260,970
$270,001 - $295,000	14	227,953	-	9,635	36,103	5,615	-	-	279,305
$295,001 - $320,000	11	253,659	-	4,253	42,942	6,838	-	-	307,693
$320,001 - $345,000	8	271,545	-	6,695	47,451	7,343	-	-	333,035
$345,001 - $370,000	8	295,189	-	3,367	50,617	7,599	-	-	356,772
$370,001 - $395,000	4	314,353	-	2,134	54,972	8,682	-	-	380,141
$395,001 - $420,000	2	347,577	-	2,686	56,037	8,069	-	-	414,369
$420,001 - $445,000	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
$445,001 - $470,000	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
$470,001 - $495,000	1	227,532	-	199,877	42,385	6,238	-	-	476,032
$495,001 - $520,000	1	230,173	-	2,109	44,337	5,881	-	233,935	516,434
$520,001 - $545,000	1	228,387	-	260,534	35,173	6,461	-	-	530,556

Note: This table includes all substantive SES employed by the department during the period and those employees acting in SES positions for 3 consecutive months or longer.

1 Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowances.

2 Other benefits and allowances include monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits such as provision of a car park, overseas posting allowances, such as cost of overseas living adjustment (COLA), cost of overseas posting allowance (COPA), provision of housing, and associated reportable fringe benefits tax (RFBT) and departmental FBT.

3 Accumulation superannuation schemes (for example PSSap and Super Choice), superannuation includes superannuation contribution amounts. Defined benefits scheme (for example CSS and PSS), superannuation includes the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

4 Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken for the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

5 Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with AASB 119 Employee Benefits. This means there is a difference between the remuneration determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and the remuneration disclosed in this table.

Table B.3: Remuneration for other highly paid staff, 2024–25

Total remuneration bands $	Number of other highly paid staff	Short-term benefits: Average base salary[1] $	Short-term benefits: Average bonuses $	Short-term benefits: Average other benefits and allowances[2] $	Post-employment benefits: Average superannuation contributions[3] $	Other long-term benefits: Average long service leave[4] $	Other long-term benefits: Average other long-term benefits $	Termination benefits: Average termination benefits $	Total remuneration[5]: Average total remuneration $
$260,000- $270,000	1	65,782	-	255	11,123	1,611	-	189,111	267,882
$270,001 - $295,000	7	133,066	-	16,657	25,606	3,616	-	101,211	280,156
$295,001 - $320,000	2	130,592	-	255	25,318	3,479	-	147,526	307,171
$320,001 - $345,000	4	147,805	-	25,033	28,859	3,584	-	122,053	327,333
$345,001 - $370,000	2	136,593	-	191,947	27,307	3,997	-	-	359,844
$370,001 - $395,000	1	174,226	-	255	30,842	4,132	-	177,678	387,133
$395,001 - $420,000	8	164,713	-	75,602	31,490	4,455	-	131,210	407,471
$420,001 - $445,000	2	168,575	-	112,569	35,663	4,485	-	104,793	426,085
$445,001 - $470,000	1	191,121	-	255	34,997	4,653	-	225,862	456,887
$470,001 - $495,000	1	133,926	-	305,734	41,803	3,713	-	-	485,176
$495,001 - $520,000	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
$520,001 - $545,000	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
$545,001 – $570,000	1	177,643	-	306,461	59,894	4,746	-	-	548,743

Note: This table includes holders of public office paid by the department.

1 Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowances.

2 Other benefits and allowances include monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits such as provision of a car park, overseas posting allowances, such as cost of overseas living adjustment (COLA), cost of overseas posting allowance (COPA), provision of housing, and associated reportable fringe benefits tax (RFBT) and departmental FBT.

3 Accumulation superannuation schemes (for example PSSap and Super Choice), superannuation includes superannuation contribution amounts. Defined benefits scheme (for example CSS and PSS), superannuation includes the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

4 Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken for the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

5 Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with AASB 119 Employee Benefits. This means there is a difference between the remuneration determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and the remuneration disclosed in this table.

Appendix C: Commonwealth Climate Disclosure

Governance

The Secretary is the accountable authority for departmental risks, including climate-related risks under section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth). The department assessed climate risks and opportunities by applying existing governance arrangements, risk systems and reporting, policies and tools. This climate disclosure statement has been prepared in accordance with the Year 1 Reporting Provisions for Non-corporate Commonwealth Entities.

The department embeds a culture that empowers staff to proactively manage risk, be innovative where possible, and make decisions that reflect a positive risk and integrity culture. The department will continue developing our staff with the appropriate skills to identify and manage climate-related risks and opportunities. Capability gaps will be monitored and reported to the accountable authority through the Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) and Chief Risk Officer (CRO).

In 2024–25 the department's CSO coordinated the implementation, integration and review of the Climate Action in Government Operations Strategy, which included the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program (CROMP). The CSO oversees the review of our existing processes and policies on how we consider trade-offs between climate-related risks and government policy constraints. The CSO role is an appointment encouraged in the Net Zero in Government Operations strategy.

Our climate risk governance and accountability arrangements are underpinned by our Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework (ERMPF). This year, climate risk and opportunity considerations were incorporated into the department's review of the Enterprise-Wide Risks (EWRs), the department's highest-level risks. The Secretary is supported by the Executive Board and the Audit and Risk Committee to monitor and manage our EWRs, including consideration of climate related impacts. First Assistant Secretaries appointed as stewards for EWRs are encouraged to consider climate impacts in their strategic oversight of the management of EWRs.

The 2024–25 governance roles and responsibility structure associated with climate risk and opportunity management is outlined in Figure C.1.

Figure C.1: Climate-risk governance structure, 2024–25

Secretary

The Secretary as the accountable authority is responsible for ensuring appropriate departmental risk management systems and controls are in place and is accountable for the department's climate risk profile. The Secretary exercises their climate risk and opportunity accountability with the assistance of all staff through a series of delegated responsibilities, including overseeing the setting and monitoring of targets.

Audit and Risk Committee

This is an independent committee that reports quarterly to the Secretary on the progress and management of risks in the department including climate risk and opportunity management, and to bring urgent and/or critical risks to the attention of the Secretary.

Executive Board

The Executive Board is the department's key decision-making body responsible for setting long-term strategy and ensuring the delivery of the government's objectives, including the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy. It is responsible for setting the department's climate risk appetite and tolerance and making decisions in relation to the department's climate risk profile.

Chief Risk Officer (CRO)

The CRO supports the Secretary to achieve a positive risk culture. The CRO ensures the department's enterprise risk management approach (strategic and operational) facilitates the efficient and effective governance of climate risks and opportunities. The CRO ensures we provide quarterly reports to the Audit and Risk Committee on the management of climate-related risks and opportunities as guided by our existing risk management arrangements.

MOU Governance Committee

This is an interdepartmental committee with our service provider the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. It oversees the delivery of services, including relevant climate-related matters.

Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO)

The CSO supports the CRO and is responsible for coordinating and championing the Climate Action in Government Operations strategy for the department. The CSO provides quarterly reports to the CRO on the management of climate-related risks and opportunities as guided by our existing risk management arrangements.

First Assistant Secretaries

First Assistant Secretaries oversee the management of climate-related risks and opportunities, the setting and monitoring of targets, and mitigation strategies for their divisions through mandatory divisional risk plans and escalating issues.

Internal Audit and Risk Team

This team delivers activities that coordinate and implement the department's ERMPF, including alignment of processes and practices to the CROMP and engagement with the climate risk and opportunities assessment.

Strategy

Climate-related risks and opportunities

In progressing our organisation-wide climate risk and opportunity assessment this year, we have identified and categorised our material climate-related risks and opportunities that could have a significant impact on our ability to deliver our outcomes.

Table C.1: Categorisation of material climate-related risks and opportunities

Risk or opportunity statement	Risk/opportunity	Risk type
High-impact weather events affecting child care, schools and universities, requiring emergency funding for extra staff hours	Risk	Physical
Extreme weather events affecting access to offices or educational facilities, workforce mobility and staff wellbeing	Risk	Physical
Extreme weather events leading to increased cooling requirements or electricity grid instability, and impacts to the operation of data centres with uptake of high-performance computing technologies	Risk	Physical
Regulation change with increased reporting expectations, higher procurement costs and strict time constraints	Risk	Transitional
Increased demand for low-emissions technology drives Australian innovation	Opportunity	Transitional
Emissions reduction from increased uptake of hybrid working, in addition to low-emission technologies	Opportunity	Transitional

Operational model effects

The current and anticipated consequences of our identified material climate-related risks and opportunities on the department's operational model – that is, the way in which we operate to achieve our outcomes – include:

- impacts to staff health and wellbeing due to extreme weather events
- reduced staff efficiency, mobility and access to sites due to extreme weather events
- disruptions to business continuity due to natural disaster events
- damage to assets and data centres impacting access to technologies to support the department's transition to climate sustainability.

Our Emissions Reduction Plan (education.gov.au/about-department/resources/emissions-reduction-plan) sets out our pathway to contribute to the achievement of the APS Net Zero 2030 target through emissions-reduction activities and management of climate-related risks.

Our time horizon specifications are aligned with the CROMP Climate Risk Management Guide: Organisation Application Guide (dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/publications/climate-risk-opportunity-management-program-resources), which provides the definitions for short term as 2030, medium term as 2050, and long term as 2090. This year, our assessment considers events that have occurred in recent years to inform our projections of the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

We operate nationally with staff located in all states across Australia and our head office in Canberra. We expect the severity of climate-related impacts to increase over time as already seen through an increase in extreme weather events over the past 5 years impacting our staff's access to buildings and technology. To ensure the geographical concentrations of risks are incorporated into our day-to-day operations, the department is focused on building climate-related awareness and capability for our staff across Australia.

Risk management

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is responsible for enabling climate risk management by Australian Government entities and companies through the CROMP (dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/policy/adaptation/climate-risk-opportunity-management-program). The department adopted the CROMP as our risk management methodology.

We progressed our organisation-wide climate risk and opportunity assessment in 2024–25, informed by workshops across the department and guided by the 6 steps outlined in the CROMP's Organisation Application Guide. The scope of our assessment aligned to our EWRs as listed in our Corporate Plan 2024–25 (education.gov.au/about-department/corporate-reporting/corporate-plan) to identify both physical and transitional climate-related risks and opportunities.

Our climate-related risks and opportunities are managed and monitored through our ERMPF by refining climate risk roles and responsibility for all staff, through climate risk reporting within our existing governance structure and through our risk management arrangements as provided in Table C.2.

The department has adopted the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy as its risk policy, which extends to the management of our climate risks and opportunities. The effects of our climate-related risks and opportunities were assessed using consequence and likelihood ratings as agreed on in workshops, and were prioritised based on their residual risk rating.

Table C.2: Data sources used to inform the department's climate risk and opportunity assessment

Internal data sources	External data sources
• Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework • Workshops and surveys with senior executives and subject-matter experts • Emissions Reduction Plan • Insurance claims history	• Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Sixth Assessment Report (2021) • DCCEEW, Climate Risk Management Guide: Organisation Application Guide • DCCEEW, Climate Risk Management: The Australian Government's Approach to Climate Risk and Opportunity Management in the Public Sector 2024–26 • National Climate Risk Assessment Methodology • APS Net Zero 2030 target

In the next reporting year, the department will continue engaging with stakeholders to review our climate risk and opportunity assessment in line with our ERMPF, including expanding on activities to inform our climate scenario analysis.

Metrics and targets

Table C.3: 2024–25 greenhouse gas emissions inventory – location-based method

Emission source	Scope 1 t CO_2-e	Scope 2 t CO_2-e	Scope 3 t CO_2-e	Total t CO_2-e
Electricity (location-based method)	n/a	∆	∆	∆
Natural gas	∆	n/a	∆	∆
Solid waste	n/a	n/a	∆	∆
Refrigerants*	∆	n/a	n/a	∆
Fleet and other vehicles	∆	n/a	∆	∆
Domestic commercial flights	—	n/a	567.77	567.77
Domestic hire car	n/a	n/a	5.62	5.62
Domestic travel accommodation	n/a	n/a	139.53	139.53
Other energy	∆	n/a	∆	∆
Total t CO_2-e	—	—	**712.92**	**712.92**

Note: The table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method. CO_2-e = Carbon dioxide equivalent.

∆ indicates a value reported in the DEWR Annual Report 2024–25

n/a indicates not applicable

* Reporting on refrigerants is being phased in over time as emissions reporting matures. Refer to the Emissions Reporting Framework for more details.

Table C.4: 2024–25 electricity greenhouse gas emissions

	Scope 2 t CO_2-e	Scope 3 t CO_2-e	Total t CO_2-e	Electricity kWh
Location-based electricity emissions	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ
Market-based electricity emissions	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ
Total renewable electricity consumed	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**—**
Renewable Power Percentage[1]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
Jurisdictional Renewable Power Percentage[2, 3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
GreenPower[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
Large-scale generation certificates [2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
Behind the meter solar[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
Total renewable electricity produced	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**Δ**
Large-scale generation certificates [2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ
Behind the meter solar[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	Δ

Note: The table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods. CO_2-e = carbon dioxide equivalent. Electricity usage is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh).

Δ indicates a value reported in the DEWR Annual Report 2024–25

n/a indicates not applicable

1 Listed as Mandatory renewables in 2023–24 Annual Reports. The renewable power percentage (RPP) accounts for the portion of electricity used, from the grid, that falls within the Renewable Energy Target (RET).

2 Listed as Voluntary renewables in 2023–24 Annual Reports.

3 The Australian Capital Territory is currently the only jurisdiction with a jurisdictional renewable power percentage (JRPP).

4 Reporting behind-the-meter solar consumption and/or production is optional. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.

Appendix D: Workforce statistics

Table D.1: All ongoing employees by location, 2024–25

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Uses a different term			Total[1]
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
NSW	38	1	39	52	10	62	-	-	-	101
Qld	32	1	33	69	22	91	-	-	-	124
SA	19	3	22	36	18	54	-	-	-	76
Tas	3	1	4	7	3	10	-	-	-	14
Vic	44	4	48	70	17	87	-	-	-	135
WA	11	1	12	23	6	29	-	-	-	41
ACT	357	27	384	714	152	866	-	-	-	1,250
NT	-	-	-	10	1	11	-	-	-	11
External territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	3		3	7		7	-	-	-	10
Totals[1]	**507**	**38**	**545**	**988**	**229**	**1,217**	**-**	**-**	**7**	**1,769**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

1 Seven employees identified as indeterminate gender. To protect their identification, they have been added to the total figure only.

Table D.2: All non-ongoing employees by location, 2024–25

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
NSW	-	-	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	3
Qld	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	4
Tas	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	2
Vic	-	-	-	6	2	8	-	-	-	8
WA	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
ACT	8	5	13	23	9	32	-	-	-	45
NT	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	3
External territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	**9**	**5**	**14**	**39**	**13**	**52**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**66**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

Table D.3: APS ongoing employees by classification, 2024–25

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Uses a different term			Total[1]
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
SES3	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	4
SES2	5	1	6	7	1	8	-	-	-	14
SES1	15	-	15	35	3	38	-	-	-	53
EL2	69	5	74	124	24	148	-	-	-	222
EL1	153	14	167	321	90	411	-	-	-	578
APS6	138	8	146	274	80	354	-	-	-	500
APS5	77	5	82	141	23	164	-	-	-	246
APS4	29	4	33	54	5	59	-	-	-	92
APS3	16	-	16	27	3	30	-	-	-	46
APS2	2	1	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	4
APS1	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	3
Totals[1]	**507**	**38**	**545**	**988**	**229**	**1,217**	**-**	**-**	**7**	**1,769**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

1 Seven employees identified as indeterminate gender. To protect their identification, they have been added to the total figure only.

Table D.4: APS non-ongoing employees by classification, 2024–25

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
SES3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EL2	2	-	2	2	2	4	-	-	-	6
EL1	1	2	3	8	2	10	-	-	-	13
APS6	-	-	-	8	1	9	-	-	-	9
APS5	1	-	1	3	5	8	-	-	-	9
APS4	3	1	4	15	1	16	-	-	-	20
APS3	2	2	4	3	1	4	-	-	-	8
APS2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1
APS1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	**9**	**5**	**14**	**39**	**13**	**52**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**66**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

Table D.5: APS employees by classification and employment status, 2024–25

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total[1]
	Full time	Part time	Total ongoing	Full time	Part time	Total non-ongoing	
SES3	4		4	-	-	-	4
SES2	12	2	14	-	-	-	14
SES1	50	3	53	-	-	-	53
EL2	193	29	222	4	2	6	228
EL1	474	104	578	9	4	13	591
APS6	412	88	500	8	1	9	509
APS5	218	28	246	4	5	9	255
APS4	83	9	92	18	2	20	112
APS3	43	3	46	5	3	8	54
APS2	3	1	4	-	1	1	5
APS1	3		3	-	-	-	3
Totals[1]	**1,495**	**267**	**1,762**	**48**	**18**	**66**	**1,835**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

1 Seven employees identified as indeterminate gender. To protect their identification, they have been added to the total figure only.

Table D.6: APS ongoing and non-ongoing by location, 2024–25

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total[1]
NSW	101	3	104
Qld	124	-	124
SA	76	4	80
Tas	14	2	16
Vic	135	8	143
WA	41	1	42
ACT	1,250	45	1,295
NT	11	3	14
External territories	-	-	-
Overseas	10	-	10
Totals[1]	**1,762**	**66**	**1,835**

Note: Includes employees on leave without pay. Excludes inactive employees and the Secretary.

1 Seven employees identified as indeterminate gender. To protect their identification, they have been added to the total figure only.

Table D.7: APS ongoing and non-ongoing employees by First Nations status, 2024–25

	Total
Ongoing	51
Non-ongoing	2
Total	**53**

Table D.8: Primary employment arrangements of SES and non-SES APS employees, 2024–25

	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise agreement	-	1,764	1,764
*Section 24(1) determinations	71	-	71
Total	**71**	**1,764**	**1,835**

Note: *Excludes the Secretary as remuneration arrangements for departmental secretaries are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.

Table D.9: APS employment salary ranges by classification level (minimum/maximum), 2024–25

	Minimum salary $	Maximum salary $
SES3	383,630	492,876
SES2	286,945	343,262
SES1	222,386	289,671
EL2	147,352	181,300
EL1	125,220	153,394
APS6	101,833	111,979
APS5	90,580	96,839
APS4	82,039	87,737
APS3	75,419	78,554
APS2	67,532	71,966
APS1	57,497	62,868
Other[1]	-	-

Note: Salary minimum and maximum as per 2024–2027 Department of Education Enterprise Agreement.

1 'Other' is no longer a category under the department's current Enterprise Agreement.

Table D.10: APS employment performance pay by classification level, 2024–25

	Number of employees receiving performance pay	Aggregated (sum total) of all payments made	Average of all payments made	Minimum payment made to employees	Maximum payment made to employees
SES3	-	-	-	-	0
SES2	-	-	-	-	0
SES1	-	-	-	-	0
EL2	-	-	-	-	0
EL1	-	-	-	-	0
APS6	-	-	-	-	0
APS5	-	-	-	-	0
APS4	-	-	-	-	0
APS3	-	-	-	-	0
APS2	-	-	-	-	0
APS1	-	-	-	-	0
Other[1]	-	-	-	-	0
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

1 'Other' is no longer a category under the department's current Enterprise Agreement.

Appendix E: Recoverable payments

The department is responsible for administering payments made to approved authorities for schools under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth) (the Act).

Section 113 of the Act requires the department to report recoverable payments for the purposes of section 11 of the Act. Recoverable payments occur where the department retrospectively identifies that the Australian Government did not have the power to make a payment of financial assistance to a state or territory under the Act, and these payments are not overpayments. The number and total value of the recoverable payments paid in 2024–25 are shown in Table E.1.

Table E.1: Recoverable payments under the Act, 2024–25

These payments relate to funding for proposed schools under the Capital Grants Program. The payments are recoverable as the relevant schools should have had an approved authority in place under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, prior to the funding determinations being made. The funded projects aligned with the government's policy objectives and achieved their intended outcomes.

Financial year	Number of payments	Amount paid $
2024–25	5	$13,115,516.55

In 2024–25 the department identified recoverable payments that were paid during earlier financial years. The number and total value per year is shown in Table E.2.

Table E.2: Recoverable payments under the Act

These payments relate to funding for proposed schools under the Capital Grants Program and Building Boarding Schools on Country measure. The payments are recoverable as the relevant schools should have had an approved authority in place under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, prior to the funding determinations being made. The funded projects aligned with the government's policy objectives and achieved their intended outcomes.

Financial year	Number of payments	Amount paid $
2014–15	5	$1,255,529.09
2015–16	11	$6,193,684.91
2016–17	11	$10,073,709.09
2017–18	11	$8,287,164.82
2018–19	11	$10,501,315.45
2019–20	6	$8,356,363.64
2022–23	6	$50,488,636.36
2023–24	12	$16,364,975.91

Appendix F: Annual report of the Tuition Protection Service

Background

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) safeguards 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, fails to start a course or unit of study, or stops offering a course or unit of study to enrolled students.

The TPS was established in 2012 as an international student tuition protection scheme under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth) (ESOS Act). From 1 January 2020 the program commenced supporting domestic students in receipt of income contingent loans through the VET Student Loans (VSL) program or the Higher Education Loans Program (HELP). On 1 January 2021 the responsibilities of the TPS were further expanded to also cover domestic higher education up-front fee-paying students at private education providers.

The TPS assists international students; eligible domestic students accessing a VSL, FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP loan; and higher education up-front fee-paying students. The 3 schemes of the TPS are set out in the ESOS Act, the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth) (HESA Act), the *VET Student Loans Act 2016* (Cth) (VSL Act), the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth) (TEQSA Act) and relevant subordinate legislation.

The TPS Director, appointed by the Minister for Education, is responsible for delivering the service and ensuring its sustainability.

The TPS ensures that eligible students can either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education provider
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees (international students), a re-credit of their loan for open units of study (domestic VSL and HELP students), or a refund of any up-front payments made against an affected unit (up-front payments students).

The TPS also assists eligible international students if they experience a student default.

An international student default involves circumstances where a student visa is refused and the student has paid fees that their provider fails to refund in accordance with the ESOS Act. These safeguards are in place to ensure that eligible students can receive a refund of paid fees in circumstances outside of the student's control.

This report summarises the activities of the TPS from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, in compliance with section 170B of the ESOS Act. It includes an assessment of issues affecting TPS operations and an overview of program activity and improvements, including a snapshot of the Overseas Students Tuition Fund (OSTF) and the Higher Education Tuition Protection (HETP) Fund. As the accountable authority for the VSL Tuition Protection (VSLTP) Fund is the Minister for Skills and Training, VSL tuition protection activities are reported in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report.

In 2024–25 the TPS has been monitoring and reminding an increasing number of international education providers of their obligations in accordance with the ESOS Act to refund students in 28 days in the case of a student default caused by a visa refusal. The TPS continues to work closely with government departments and regulators to identify and respond to instances where providers may be at risk of not meeting their obligations to students.

Tuition protection levies

The TPS manages 4 annual tuition protection levy collections from education providers, one each for international and VSL, and 2 for higher education. The 4 levies are:

- International TPS Levy
- VSL Tuition Protection Levy
- HELP Tuition Protection Levy
- Up-front Payments Tuition Protection Levy.

The 4 tuition protection levies are paid annually by education providers delivering education services to international students, education providers whose domestic students access VSL or HELP schemes, and education providers charging up-front fees to domestic higher education students.

The levies are used to administer the TPS and to build reserves in the OSTF, the VSLTP Fund and the HETP Fund to be available for student placement fees, student refunds, and student loan re-credits. The 3 funds are maintained as distinctly separate special purpose accounts.

The 2025 International TPS Levy collection invoiced 1,522 international education providers with 839,069 international student enrolments.

As part of the 2024 domestic TPS levy collection, the TPS invoiced 150 VSL providers with 10,466 students, 92 HELP providers with 53,261 HELP students, and 143 higher education providers that charged up-front fees to 26,583 students.

In formulating the tuition protection levy settings, the TPS Advisory Board (the Board) and the TPS Director aim for an appropriate balance between ensuring there are sufficient reserves in the relevant funds to meet potential demand, ensuring the accumulated reserves are not excessive, and ensuring the levy charged is reasonable for education providers.

In finding this balance, the Board and TPS Director consult with stakeholders across the relevant sectors, including industry peak bodies, the regulators, and education and training providers.

On 30 June 2025 the balance of the OSTF was $50.46 million, which is within the Board's strategic reserve target of $40 million to $60 million.

Based on actuarial advice, the Board set the strategic reserve target for the HETP Fund between $21 million and $25 million. The balance of the HETP Fund on 30 June 2025 was $18.55 million.

The Board reviews the fund targets each year and recommends adjustments as necessary.

The Board provides advice to the TPS Director in relation to the Risk Rated Premium and Special Tuition Protection components for the 4 levies. The TPS streamlined the domestic TPS levy collection in 2024 for VSL, HELP and up-front payments, and collected all 3 domestic TPS levies at the same time from October 2024. The 2025 International TPS Levy collection was between February and July 2025.

The domestic TPS levies were collected for the first time in 2022, after being waived in 2020 and 2021 as part of the government's COVID-19 support measures.

The opening and closing balances and the revenue and expenditure of the OSTF and HETP funds are reported on a cash basis in Tables F.1 and F.2.

Table F.1: Financial status of the Overseas Students Tuition Fund, 2024–25

	$,000
Opening balance at 1 July 2024	47,813
Annual and initial TPS levy collected	6,119
Other revenue collected (includes prior year levy payments)	1,302
Total revenue	**7,421**
Student and education provider payments	(4,416)
TPS consultant and contractor services	(227)
Other operational/administrative expenses	(136)
Total expenditure	**(4,777)**
Closing balance at 30 June 2025	**50,457**

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table F.2: Financial status of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund, 2024–25

	$,000
Opening balance at 1 July 2024	14,785
Annual HELP and up-front payments levies collected	3,946
Total revenue	**3,946**
TPS consultant and contractor services	(60)
Other operational/administrative expenses	(119)
Total expenditure	**(180)**
Closing balance at 30 June 2025	**18,551**

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

TPS governance

A statutorily appointed director manages the TPS. The Board, comprising education and training sector members and government representatives, provides the TPS Director with advice regarding levy targets and settings. The TPS Director is also the Higher Education Tuition Protection Director (established under the HESA Act and the TEQSA Act) and the VSL Tuition Protection Director (established under the VSL Act). Members of the Board are also members of the Higher Education Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board and the VSL Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board established under the same Acts of parliament.

A small branch of departmental officers and contractors support the TPS Director to deliver tuition protection services, including student claim management and providing secretariat support to the Board.

In the 2024–25 financial year, Ms Sharon Robertson remained the appointed Chair of the TPS Advisory Board and the Hon Phil Honeywood remained the appointed Deputy Chair. Government members Ms Victoria Miller of the Department of Home Affairs, Ms Rebecca Mok of the Department of Finance, Ms Karen Sandercock of the Department of Education and Mr Guy Thorburn of the Australian Government Actuary remained members of the Board during the financial year.

The Board farewelled appointed non-government member Ms Yeganeh Soltanpour, as well as government appointed members Ms Gloria Yu (Australian Prudential Regulation Authority) and Mr George Thiveos (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations).

Working with stakeholders

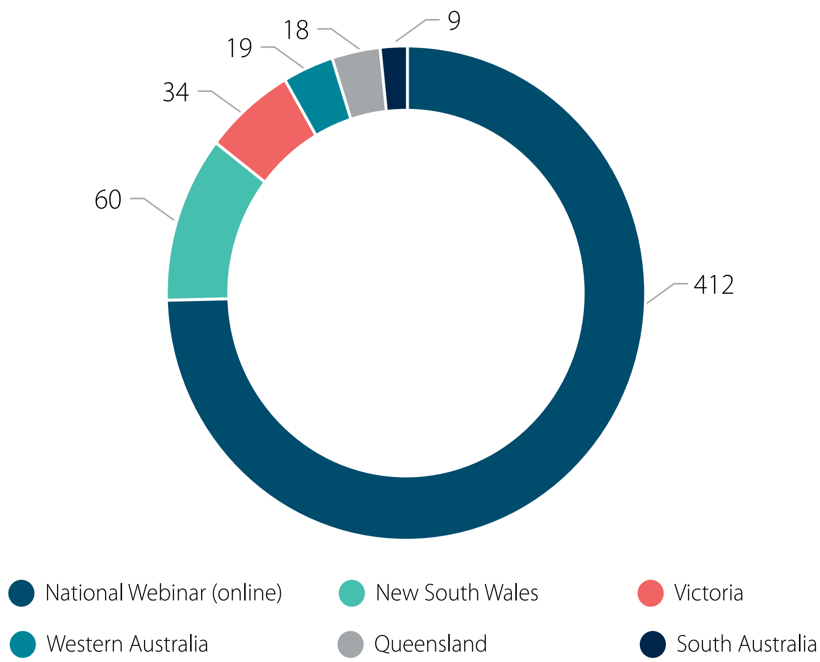
The TPS maintains strong working relationships with education providers, regulators and peak bodies to achieve the best outcomes for students.

Twice a year the TPS Director engages in nationwide consultations regarding the tuition protection levies, meeting with representatives from peak bodies and education and training providers. Meetings and consultation sessions are held online and in person in major capital cities.

From mid-August to early October 2024 the TPS Director consulted on the 2025 International TPS Levy, meeting with 461 individual provider representatives.

Consultations on the 2025 domestic TPS levies were held in March and April 2025. The TPS Director consulted 91 individual provider representatives during this period.

Figure F.1: Number of individual provider representatives who attended a consultation session on international and domestic TPS levies by state/territory, 2024–25



The TPS continues to work closely with the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman to resolve disputes between education providers and international students over the payment of tuition fee refunds, as well as tuition protection related complaints from domestic VSL students.

The TPS collaborates with the relevant international and higher education policy areas in the Department of Education, and with the VSL policy teams in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, providing feedback on the implementation of each of the tuition protection services to inform future policy development.

The TPS engages across the public sector, with both state government entities and relevant Commonwealth agencies and regulators (including Department of the Treasury, Department of Finance, Department of Home Affairs, Austrade, Australian Skills Quality Authority, and Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) to ensure the TPS continues to operate effectively within the broader policy and regulatory environments.

Tuition Protection Service placement and payment activity

Over the 12 months to 30 June 2025, 6 education providers failed to meet their obligations to students, displacing 3,014 international students requiring TPS support.

In 2024–25 the TPS made 1,422 refund and placement payments to international students and replacement providers from the OSTF, regardless of when the provider default took place. Tables F.3 and F.4 show the time taken by the TPS to place students and make payments relating to provider defaults in 2024–25. Table F.5 shows the time taken by the TPS to make payments relating to student defaults in 2024–25.

There were no domestic higher education provider closures requiring TPS assistance to place, refund or re-credit students in 2024–25.

Table F.3: Time taken by the TPS to place students, 2024–25

Number of students placed	Within 30 days	Over 30 days	Total
International	0	0	**0**

Note: No placement payments were made in 2024–25 than the previous year, due to more students opting for refunds.

Table F.4: Time taken to make payments from the Overseas Student Tuition Fund (provider defaults), 2024–25

Payments made during 2022–23	Refunds to students		Placement payments to providers		Total paid $'000
	Within 30 days	Over 30 days	Within 30 days	Over 30 days	
International	96	969	0	0	**$2,867**

Note: There were 41% more refunds paid in 2024–25 than the previous year. Payments relate to amounts expensed in 2024–25, regardless of when the provider default took place.

Table F.5: Time taken to make payments from the Overseas Student Tuition Fund (provider defaults), 2024–25

Payments made during 2024–25	Refunds to students		Total paid $'000
	Within 30 days	Within 30 days	
International	63	294	**$1,328**

Note: There were 297% more refunds paid in 2024–25 than the previous year. The reason for this increase is the significantly higher number of students who experienced visa refusals. Payments relate to amounts expensed in 2024–25, regardless of when the provider default took place.

Program improvements

The TPS continues to respond to the evolving government policy changes in the international education landscape. This includes working closely with relevant sector regulators to improve existing risk factors in both domestic and international levies.

The TPS continues to explore better ways to maximise the effectiveness of the program to better support students and education providers as well as reducing risk and ensuring the best use of the funds.

Melinda Hatton
Director
Tuition Protection Service

Appendix G: Annual Child Safety Statement

Our commitment to child safety

The department is committed to creating and maintaining an organisational culture that upholds the safety, wellbeing and rights of all children and young people. We do not tolerate child abuse, neglect or exploitation in any form.

We recognise our responsibility to safeguard children and young people engaged through our programs, policy development, and stakeholder activities – especially through the work of the Office for Youth, which facilitates the Youth Steering Committee, Youth Advisory Groups, in-person consultations, and the National Youth Forum.

We are committed to embedding the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations across our people, policies and practices. Through this, we aim to ensure that our interaction with children and young people is safe, respectful and empowering.

Embedding a child safe culture

The department has continued to strengthen its child safe culture through the following policies and practices:

- Office for Youth Safeguarding Framework: A tailored Child Safeguarding Framework has been developed and implemented by the Office for Youth, including role-specific training to support staff who work directly with young people aged 12 to 25.
- Whole-of-department training: All staff are required to complete the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework e-learning module every 2 years as part of the department's mandatory training program.
- Child safe role classification: Recruitment processes include assessment of whether a role should be designated as child safe. A central register of child safe positions and Working with Children Checks is maintained and reviewed regularly.
- Third-party safeguarding requirements: The department integrates child safety considerations into all relevant contracts and grant agreements. Staff managing third-party arrangements must assess potential contact with children and ensure appropriate safeguards are in place.

- **Clear reporting and complaint-handling processes**: The department has improved its public guidance on reporting concerns, including child safety complaints, and reinforced internal responsibilities for managing and escalating such matters.
- **Transparency**: Our policy is publicly available on our website (education.gov.au/about-department/resources/child-safe-policy).

Child safety risk assessment

The department is required to review annually the child safety risk assessment in accordance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework. This process evaluates both organisation-wide and program-specific risks.

Overall risk rating

The department has assessed its overall child safety risk as medium, due primarily to ad hoc direct engagement with children and young people through Office for Youth activities and occasional school engagement.

Key mitigations

- Structured supervision and pre-screening for all youth-facing roles
- Mandatory child safety training
- Dedicated risk planning for major youth forums and consultations
- Child safe provisions in procurement and accommodation arrangements.
- Additional review mechanisms are also being developed to enhance third-party assurance and compliance checks.

Monitoring and continuous improvement

The department maintains a compliance monitoring system to ensure:

- completion of mandatory child safety training
- accuracy of the child safe positions register
- compliance with child safety clauses in contracts and grants.

We continue to communicate regularly with staff about their responsibilities, policy updates, and reporting mechanisms. We are committed to continuous improvement and will review our internal systems, policy implementation, and risk mitigation strategies annually.

Strengthening safety and quality in early childhood education and care

The department remains committed to the safety and wellbeing of children in early learning environments. In collaboration with state and territory governments, regulators, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority and sector stakeholders, we are working to strengthen oversight and accountability across the early childhood education and care sector. This includes exploring enhancements to regulatory frameworks, compliance measures, and provider standards to support a child safe culture and uphold public confidence in the quality of care.[1]

Compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The department remains fully compliant with the requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including:

- annual risk assessments – conducted across corporate and program levels
- training and compliance systems – ongoing mandatory training and monitoring
- adoption of national principles – reflected in policy and operational guidance
- publication of an annual statement – this appendix is our published annual statement for 2024–25.

By reinforcing a child safe culture across all areas of our work, we are ensuring the Department of Education upholds the highest standards of safety, inclusion and accountability for the children and young people we serve.

1 Strengthening safety and quality in early childhood education and care – Department of Education, Australian Government

Appendix H: Gender equality reporting

In line with commitments made under *Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality* (Working for Women), Australian Government departments have committed to report on their efforts to achieve gender equality and build gender analysis capability in their annual reports. Along with our department, a small number of departments have agreed to be part of a pilot project to report on a limited scope of requirements in 2024–25.

Gender-based disparities affect the educational aspirations and outcomes of learners, preventing them from achieving their full potential. Ensuring the education system meets all learners' academic and wellbeing needs benefits individuals and the broader economy by boosting economic participation and productivity.

The department has many initiatives that contribute achieving the Working for Women priority areas, particularly gender-based violence (priority area 1), unpaid and paid care (priority area 2) and economic equality and security (priority area 3). Our achievements in 2024–25 include the following.

Priority area 1: Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence, including sexual violence, is an ongoing issue in higher education communities. In February 2024, education ministers released the Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education. The department has been supporting the implementation of several key actions from the action plan.

The department supported the development of legislation to establish a National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (National Code). The National Code will hold higher education providers to consistent standards for proactively preventing and responding to gender-based violence, including in student accommodation. The National Code will ensure the factors that drive and contribute to gender-based violence are being addressed in higher education communities, and that prevention efforts are at the forefront, to help drive the cultural change that is needed.

The National Student Ombudsman began taking student complaints on 1 February 2025. The National Student Ombudsman is independent and impartial and provides a trauma-informed mechanism for higher education students to escalate complaints about their higher education provider, including complaints relating to gender-based violence.

Priority area 2: Unpaid and paid care

While women's workforce participation has recently reached a near-record high of 62.8%, compared to men at 70.9%, women are more likely to work part time or take leave due to unpaid care responsibilities.[2] In 2024–25 the department continued to implement the provisions of the *Early Childhood Education and Care (Three Day Guarantee) Bill 2025*, which was passed by parliament on 13 February 2025. From January 2026 the 3-Day Guarantee will replace the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) activity test to ensure CCS-eligible families are entitled to at least 3 days of subsidised early childhood education and care (ECEC) per fortnight. The changes will support women to participate in work, study or volunteering, if they choose.

The department also funds a range of programs and initiatives to support the ECEC workforce, 91% of whom are women.[3] In 2024–25 the department started delivering funding to support a wage increase for ECEC workers via the ECEC Worker Retention Payment. This $3.6 billion opt-in grant program provides eligible providers with funding to support a 10% wage increase for eligible workers from December 2024, and an additional 5% from December 2025, as well as a contribution to on-costs. Funding is conditional on providers constraining their fees, helping to ensure ECEC affordability.

Additional measures were also established to build and retain the ECEC workforce through funding to subsidise wages or backfill for ECEC staff undertaking professional development training, support for educators studying initial teacher education or diploma-level qualifications to undertake a paid practicum, and assistance for ECEC workers to undertake a practicum exchange at a different service.

A persistent barrier to completing qualifications in the educator workforce is that these feminised industries require students to undertake lengthy unpaid placements, putting students at a financial disadvantage. To address this, the department has been implementing the Commonwealth Prac Payment, which took effect from 1 July 2025. From this date, eligible students studying nursing, midwifery, teaching or social work are able to access financial support ($331.65 per week in 2025) while undertaking their mandatory placements.

2 ABS, **Labour force, Australia**, 2025; ABS, **Gender indicators**, 2024

3 Department of Education, **National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census**, 2024; ABS, **Schools**, 2024

Priority area 3: Economic equality and security

Gender-based differences in learning and behaviour emerge early and continue through school, affecting academic success and aspiration, which impacts a learner's economic opportunity. Over 2024–25 the department negotiated the B*etter and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025–2034* and the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034*. Under these agreements, the Australian Government and states and territories have committed to targeted reforms for schools in 3 key areas: equity and excellence, wellbeing for learning and engagement, and a strong and sustainable workforce.

The department is dedicated to ongoing efforts to improve gender equity in our work and departmental culture. Since 2022 the department has been at the forefront of gender capability uplift, building on our involvement in the pilot project to implement gender-responsive budgeting across the APS. Over the past year, the department has continued to refine resources to support staff to understand their role in gender impact assessments as part of policy development. The Gender Equity Network within the department continues to advocate for gender equity in the workplace and provides resources to staff on support they can access personally, and to improve gender equity within their work.

Appendix I: Corrigendum

Pursuant to section 17AH(1)(e) of the PGPA Act the department is required to report on the correction of material errors in a previous annual report.

The department does not have any material errors to report.

06

Indexes

List of requirements

The table below contains a list of annual report requirements prepared in accordance with 17AJ(d) of the PGPA Rule and set out in Schedule 2.

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal		
17AI	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by the accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report	Mandatory	iii
17AD(h)	Aids to access		
17AJ(a)	Table of contents	Mandatory	iv
17AJ(b)	Alphabetical index	Mandatory	279
17AJ(c)	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms	Mandatory	273
17AJ(d)	List of requirements	Mandatory	264
17AJ(e)	Details of contact officer	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(f)	Entity's website address	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(g)	Electronic address of report	Mandatory	ii
17AD(a)	Review by accountable authority		
17AD(a)	A review by the accountable authority of the entity	Mandatory	2–6
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity		
17AE(1)(a)(i)	A description of the role and functions of the entity	Mandatory	9
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	A description of the organisational structure of the entity	Mandatory	12–13

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	A description of the outcomes and programs administered by the entity	Mandatory	8
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan	Mandatory	8, 35–36
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority	Mandatory	9
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority	Mandatory	9
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period	Mandatory	9
17AE(1)(b)	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity	Portfolio departments – mandatory	7–11
17AE(2)	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AD(c)	Report on the performance of the entity		
	Annual Performance Statements		
17AD(c)(i); 16F	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule	Mandatory	35–128
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on Financial Performance		
17AF(1)(a)	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance	Mandatory	151
17AF(1)(b)	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity	Mandatory	216–225

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AF(2)	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AD(d)	Management and accountability		
	Corporate governance		
17AG(2)(a)	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems)	Mandatory	137–138
17AG(2)(b)(i)	A certification by accountable authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(c)	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance	Mandatory	130–131
17AG(2)(d)–(e)	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non compliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy non compliance	If applicable, mandatory	139

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
	Audit committee		
17AG(2A)(a)	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee	Mandatory	132
17AG(2A)(b)	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee	Mandatory	132–136
17AG(2A)(c)	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee	Mandatory	132–136
17AG(2A)(d)	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings	Mandatory	132–136
17AG(2A)(e)	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee	Mandatory	132–136
	External scrutiny		
17AG(3)	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny	Mandatory	158–160
17AG(3)(a)	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity	If applicable, mandatory	160
17AG(3)(b) (i)–(iii)	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman	If applicable, mandatory	158–160
17AG(3)(c)	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period	If applicable, mandatory	6

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
	Management of human resources		
17AG(4)(a)	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives	Mandatory	141–146
17AG(4)(aa)	(a) Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non ongoing basis, including the following:	Mandatory	239–246
17AG(4)(b)	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non ongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full time employees (b) statistics on part time employees (c) statistics on gender (d) statistics on staff location	Mandatory	239–246
17AG(4)(b)	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and non ongoing basis; including the following: (a) statistics on staffing – classification level (b) statistics on full time employees (c) statistics on part time employees (d) statistics on gender (e) statistics on staff location (f) statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous	Mandatory	239–246
17AG(4)(c)	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth)	Mandatory	148
17AG(4)(c)(i)	Information on the number of SES and non SES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c)	Mandatory	245
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level	Mandatory	245

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	A description of non salary benefits provided to employees	Mandatory	148
17AG(4)(d)(i)	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay	If applicable, mandatory	246
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level	If applicable, mandatory	246
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level	If applicable, mandatory	246
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments	If applicable, mandatory	246
	Assets management		
17AG(5)	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
	Purchasing		
17AG(6)	An assessment of entity performance against the *Commonwealth Procurement Rules*	Mandatory	152
	Reportable consultancy contracts		
17AG(7)(a)	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST)	Mandatory	155

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AG(7)(b)	A statement that "*During [reporting period], [specified number] new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of $[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of $[specified million]*".	Mandatory	154
17AG(7)(c)	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged	Mandatory	154
17AG(7)(d)	A statement that "*Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.*"	Mandatory	154
	Reportable non-consultancy contracts		
17AG(7A)(a)	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable non-consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST)	Mandatory	155
17AG(7A)(b)	A statement that "*Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.*"	Mandatory	155

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AD(daa)	**Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts**		
17AGA	Additional information, in accordance with section 17AGA, about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts	Mandatory	156
	Australian National Audit Office access clauses		
17AG(8)	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than $100 000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor's premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
	Exempt contracts		
17AG(9)	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than $10 000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
	Small business		
17AG(10)(a)	A statement that "*[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.*"	Mandatory	152

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AG(10)(b)	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises	Mandatory	152
17AG(10)(c)	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature—a statement that "*[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury's website.*"	If applicable, mandatory	152
	Financial statements		
17AD(e)	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act	Mandatory	163–214
	Executive remuneration		
17AD(da)	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 2-3 of the Rule	Mandatory	226–231
17AD(f)	Other mandatory information		
17AH(1)(a)(i)	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that "*During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity's website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website.*"	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect	If applicable, mandatory	157
17AH(1)(b)	A statement that "*Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website].*"	If applicable, mandatory	156

PGPA Rule Reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AH(1)(c)	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information	Mandatory	161
17AH(1)(d)	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found	Mandatory	160
17AH(1)(e)	Correction of material errors in previous annual report	If applicable, mandatory	262
17AH(2)	Information required by other legislation	Mandatory	247–248 249–255 256–258

Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCS	Additional Child Care Subsidy
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEA	Australia's Economic Accelerator
ACECQA	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AGA	Australian Government Actuary
AGGP	Australian Government Graduate Program
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANU	Australian National University

Abbreviation	Description
APS	Australian Public Service
APSC	Australian Public Service Commission
ARC	Australian Research Council
ASA	Australian Submarine Agency
ATEC	Australian Tertiary Education Commission
BFSA	Better and Fairer Schools Agreement
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CCCF	Community Child Care Fund
CCS	Child Care Subsidy
CGS	Commonwealth Grant Scheme
CO2-e	carbon dioxide equivalent
COLA	cost of overseas living adjustment
COPA	cost of overseas posting allowance
CPA	Certified Practising Accountant
CPI	consumer price index
CPRs	Commonwealth Procurement Rules
CROMP	Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program
CRRE	Consent and Respectful Relationships Education
CSO	Chief Sustainability Officer
CSPs	Commonwealth-supported places
CTC	capacity to contribute
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DTA	Digital Transformation Agency
EA	enterprise agreement
ECEC	early childhood education and care
education ministers	Australian state and territory ministers for education
ERMPF	Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework

Abbreviation	Description
ESOS Act	*Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*
ESS	Employer Satisfaction Survey
EL	Executive Level
EWRs	Enterprise-Wide Risks
FTE	full-time equivalent
GST	goods and services tax
HDR	higher degree by research
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program
HETP	Higher Education Tuition Protection
ICT	information and communications technology
IMOS	Integrated Marine Observation System
IRLSAF	Indigenous, Regional, and Low SES Attainment Fund
ISP	Inclusion Support Program
IT	information technology
ITE	initial teacher education
low SES	low socio-economic status
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NACC	National Anti-Corruption Commission
NATSIEC	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation
NCRIS	National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy
NSRA	National School Reform Agreement
NTWAP	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSTF	Overseas Students Tuition Fund
PGPA Act	*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
PGPA Rule	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014
PWS	photocatalytic water splitting

Abbreviation	Description
QILT	Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RFBT	reportable fringe benefits tax
RSGC	Risk, Security and Governance Committee
RSPC	Random Sample Parent Check
RTP	Research Training Program
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SES	Senior Executive Service
SMEs	small and medium enterprise
STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TAFE	technical and further education
TEEP	Teacher Education Expert Panel
TPS	Tuition Protection Service
UNSW	University of New South Wales
USI	Unique Student Identifier
VET	vocational education and training
VSL	VET Student Loans
VSLTP	VSL Tuition Protection
WHS	work health and safety
WHS Act	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

List of figures and tables

List of figures

List of tables

Index

#

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

We create a better
future for all Australians
through education.

education.gov.au