Australian Government

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

2020 —21 | Corporate Plan

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges diversity and respectfully uses both the terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' interchangeably throughout this document.

'Our work impacts the lives of all Australians, from the formative years of early childhood education and care, through to schooling, higher education and gaining the skills and capabilities to find employment.

We deliver programs that support all Australians to make a contribution to society.'

Secretary's introduction

This is the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's first full-year corporate plan, following the department's formation on 1 February 2020.

Our corporate plan provides the strategic context for the role we play in delivering the Australian Government's priorities in the education, skills and employment sectors. It sets out our priorities, performance and capability requirements, and highlights the national impact our work has on individuals, families, communities, business and industry.

This plan describes what we aim to achieve over the next four years, the activities that will get us there, performance measures to keep us on track, and the capabilities and behaviours needed to support delivery.

Our work impacts the lives of all Australians, from the formative years of early childhood education and care, through to schooling, higher education and gaining the skills and capabilities to find employment. We deliver programs that support all Australians to make a contribution to society.

We have worked with a strong, shared commitment to deliver our part of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the bushfire recovery measures. In the year ahead, we will continue to be responsive and agile, and apply our professionalism and commitment to public service as we face new issues and deliver against even higher expectations for the Australian community.

This same professionalism will be required in supporting our ministers, continuing to build our evidence base and our data capability for policy development, maintaining our governance and reporting practices and providing accountability and transparency for the programs we deliver for the Government, Parliament and the community.

Collaboration, strategic connections and strong performance are the key elements of building a positive culture and will continue to be a priority for us. This positive culture will further build unity and effectiveness across the department, successful partnerships across the Australian Public Service (APS), and collaboration with our stakeholders to achieve outcomes for the citizens we serve.

Our dedication to Indigenous business being everybody's business is integral to who we are, as is our commitment to a dynamic, diverse and inclusive workplace.

We will be united in our efforts as one department as we work to support our nation's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters.

Statement of preparation

As the accountable authority of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, I present the Department of Education, Skills and Employment Corporate Plan 2020–2021, for the reporting period 2020–21, which covers the period 2020–21 to 2023–24 as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Dr Michele Bruniges AM
Secretary

31 August 2020

Purpose

We help to create an inclusive and prosperous Australia by maximising opportunity through national leadership on education, skills and employment policy development.

We will work to ensure Australians can experience the social wellbeing and economic benefit that quality education, training and employment provide by actively supporting our ministers to deliver Australian Government policies and priorities.

The department achieves its purpose through the delivery of outcomes.

Outcomes

The department's outcomes reflect the key elements of our purpose.

Quality early learning and schooling

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

Quality higher education, international education and international quality research

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

Quality skills and training

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

Employment and jobs

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work and meet employer needs.

Performance framework

Our corporate plan is the department's primary planning document, and sets the direction for how we will work, build our capability and engage with risk to deliver on our purpose over the next four years. We will work together to leverage the transformative opportunities that our new responsibilities represent.

Our corporate plan is a key component of our performance framework, which reflects the requirements of the Commonwealth Performance Framework. It outlines our purpose, how we will measure our performance and the elements (environment, risk, cooperation and capability) that will play a role in supporting us to achieve our purpose.

The Portfolio Budget Statements set out our annual funding appropriations, and how we will measure the impact of the expenditure of these appropriations against our outcomes and programs.

Our annual performance statements are included in our annual report. The annual performance statements report our performance for the year against the performance measures and targets in our corporate plan. The annual performance statements demonstrate the extent to which we have achieved our purpose and the factors that contributed to the outcome.

Our annual priorities provide direction into our division and branch business plans, and then into individual performance agreements. This enables a clear line of sight from the department's purpose to the work of the individual.

The department's planning framework
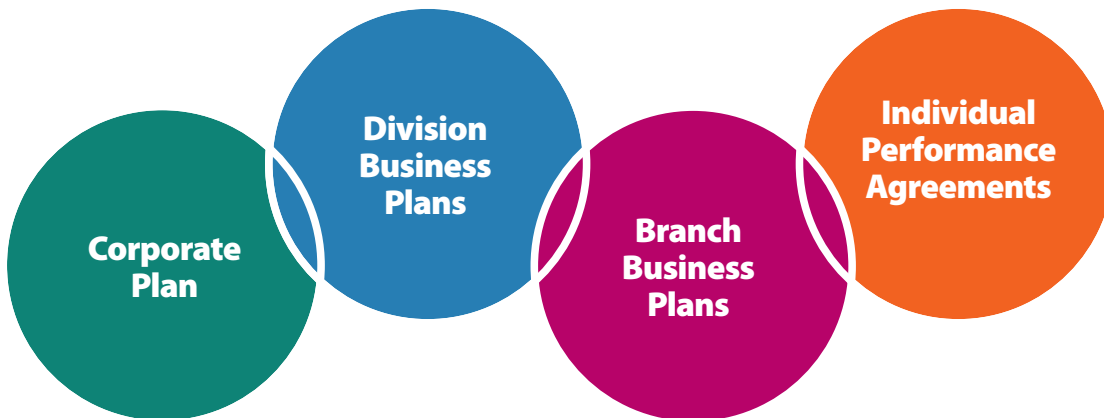
Operating context

The department recognises that its purpose is pursued and achieved within its operating context.

Environment

Australia's response to the 2019 and 2020 natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic had the dual objective of saving lives and livelihoods. With the start of the 2020–21 financial year, Australia remains focused on limiting the spread of COVID-19 and supporting individuals, businesses and communities. Across the country we have seen workplaces, and education and training organisations, adapt to the disruption and find alternative modes of delivery and new ways of working and learning.

There is no doubt the recovery, and the essential role we will play in that recovery, will continue to be challenging for the four-year duration of this plan and beyond.

In Australia, the economic slow-down has had a disproportionate impact on women, younger Australians and those with lower skills attainment. Long-term unemployment is a serious threat for some people in these cohorts. Job losses are both widening inequity and potentially seeding new intergenerational disadvantage.

The department is actively responding by advising on labour market conditions and the skills needed for critical vacancies as the economy recovers.

Our support includes enabling a skilled workforce to meet current, emerging and future skills needs, targeted policy advice, and responsive legislative change for deregulation. In addition, we will assist Australians to pursue education and training, and find jobs through a range of targeted employment services programs and help employers to find the trained people they need.

In focusing on economic recovery, we will continue our important work to reform the education and skills systems for the benefit of our future economy, as well as delivering initiatives, such as subsidised child care, that support Australian parents to work, study and volunteer.

The demand for students and workers to have basic digital literacy skills is continuing and growing, as recent events have demonstrated. These skills are already required to meet labour market needs for specialised and high-level technical roles. Demand is further growing for complex judgement, scenario building and analysis skills. The department will continue to work with education and training organisations, industry, businesses, including small businesses, that have responsibilities to support individuals, to develop job-relevant skills and those essential capabilities required to quickly re-skill to meet areas of greatest need.

Australians increasingly expect to access information and services online as part of their everyday interactions and this has become even more important during COVID-19 restrictions.

The department is continuing to enhance and improve its digital services and channels to respond to the needs of job seekers, employers, service providers and stakeholders.

Improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through education, skills and employment is of national significance and an important priority for the department. This year marks the signing of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap, forged in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In the new agreement, the department is responsible for six of the 16 socio-economic targets and will work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve these goals.

The department will continue to engage with the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, the Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements and the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. These Royal Commissions will require our focused attention as they deal with issues relevant to our responsibilities.

Cooperation

Increasingly the concepts of cooperation and collaboration are central to both policy information and the achievement of outcomes, in our fast changing world.

The department works closely with state and territory governments, government agencies, regulators, business, industry, peak bodies and communities—from policy design through to delivery and evaluation.

The department's remit provides a strong basis to strengthen our sectoral relationships nationally and internationally and enables an environment for information sharing, diverse perspectives, collaboration and co-design. These are the key enablers for the positive impact our work has on individuals, families and communities alike, and its contribution to our society—socially and economically.

An example of this is the way in which we developed and delivered economic and sectoral stimulus packages and services across the APS and our sectors in response to national impacts of bushfires and COVID-19. The department rapidly redeployed staff to the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, National COVID-19 Incident Room and to Services Australia to meet increased demand for Government assistance and advice.

The following examples drawn from across the portfolio demonstrate our department's culture of cooperation, collaboration and commitment to work with our communities over the life of this plan.

New Employment Services Model

A New Employment Services Model to replace the current jobactive model is being developed for delivery in July 2022. Eight service providers are testing elements of the new model, including enhanced online services, in two employment regions—Adelaide South, South Australia, and Mid North Coast, New South Wales.

Co-design, user-centred design principles and testing, and extensive consultation have been key to the development and delivery of the new model and its trial. An external reference group and working groups with strong community links are involved in development and delivery.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

The department, state and territory government and non-government education authorities work collaboratively with ACARA, an independent statutory authority, to develop and implement agreed national curriculum, assessment and reporting initiatives. This ensures all Australian students have access to a world-class curriculum and a national assessment program that measures students' literacy and numeracy skills. This collaboration—through both formal and informal reference and advisory groups, that includes representation of all key stakeholders, also ensures robust data and reporting, including the online resource, My School.

Indigenous Education Consultative Meeting

The Secretary hosts a biannual Indigenous Education Consultative Meeting to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from each state and territory to engage with the department and provide a key voice in national education policy design and delivery.

The meetings provide a valuable forum to share expertise and local perspectives in ways that bring diversity and cultural integrity to the department's consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education policy.

The representatives from each state and territory are seeking incorporation as a national body that, through this consultative meeting, will ensure the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is embedded in the way we work.

The consultive group provided advice which informed the new Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration, released in 2019. At its core the Declaration has a renewed focus on prioritising the needs of First Nations children.

Bushfire Response

During the unprecedented 2019–20 bushfires, a departmental Bushfire Recovery Taskforce worked to support Government ministers, our Executive and leaders across the APS to provide up-to-date critical information and briefings to inform decision-making in a rapidly evolving environment.

To understand priority needs and offer prompt assistance, the taskforce organised a roundtable meeting between the Minister for Education and education sector representatives and worked collaboratively with state and territory officials and other stakeholders in all bushfire-affected jurisdictions.

The department delivered expanded mental health support for schools, a Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships Program for students from bushfire-affected communities to attend university, Child Care Subsidy activity test debt exemptions, and funding to support child care centres in bushfire affected areas.

Risk oversight and management

The department manages risk in accordance with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and our Risk Management Framework and Policy. The Risk Management Framework and Policy governs how we identify, manage, and communicate strategic and operational risks and sets out our risk appetite and tolerance, governance and accountability arrangements.

Our Executive Board has overarching responsibility for the Risk Management Framework. The Executive Board is supported by the Chief Risk Officer, a central risk function, and governance committees, including the Risk, Security and Governance Committee and the Audit and Assurance Committee, that are responsible for reviewing and assuring the appropriateness of the department's systems of risk oversight and management.

Individual senior executive officers are assigned responsibility for key strategic and operational risks. They monitor and manage these against the delivery of the relevant outcomes. Risk management is further embedded into the department with senior risk officers being responsible for risk management at the project and activity level, reporting to key governance committees and ensuring a line of sight between day-to-day risk management and our key strategic and operational risks.

The department's risk management framework and other key supporting frameworks and policies, such as the Accountable Authority Instructions and project management frameworks, support the department's planning and decision-making processes. This ensures that the department meets its purpose and conforms to legislative and other Government requirements.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought immediate changes to the department's operating environment, key programs and service delivery. The department adapted immediately to the rapidly changing environment by ensuring systems and governance were in place to manage the risks associated with delivering the Government's COVID-19 response. This will continue to be a key risk management focus over the next 12 months and beyond as Australia recovers. In collaboration with our stakeholders, the department will continue to work in agile and innovative ways to implement measures that will support the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the next 12 months of this plan, the department will be transitioning to one enterprise risk system to support our new department with improved risk reporting aligned with the business and workforce planning cycle.

Enterprise-wide risks

The enterprise-wide risks are actively managed, mitigated and considered as part of our enterprise risk management model and in line with our risk appetite and tolerance, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Policy

Enterprise risk 1	**Risk mitigation strategies**
The department does not deliver timely and evidence-based policy advice.	The department has a framework of policies, instructions and guidance in place to support the development, and implementation, of evidence-based policy advice. Oversight and monitoring are through established governance arrangements.

Delivery

Enterprise risk 2	**Risk mitigation strategies**
The department's key programs, projects and services are not delivered on time, or on budget, or do not meet policy intent.	The department has a framework of policies, instructions, guidance and governance arrangements to support the delivery and implementation of programs, projects and services in line with the proper use of public resources.

People

Enterprise risk 3	**Risk mitigation strategies**
The department does not have the right people with the right skills and capabilities to deliver on key Government priorities.	The updated People Strategy 2020–23 will set the direction and priorities for how we will support and develop our people. The department supports diversity and continues to focus on building capabilities, recruitment activities, succession planning, and training.

Stakeholders

Enterprise risk 4	**Risk mitigation strategies**
Ineffective engagement with our stakeholders constrains collaboration, innovation and achievement of the policy intent.	The department is committed to identifying, developing and maintaining long-term stakeholder relationships within the department, with the community, different sectors, our ministers and the Australian Government.

Information Technology

Enterprise risk 5	**Risk mitigation strategies**
The department's Information Technology (IT) and Digital Services including capability and processes do not adequately support effective delivery of our programs, projects and services.	IT is embedded in all of our day-to-day processes. We manage risks that could compromise the delivery of our programs, projects and services. Our IT strategic and IT implementation plans ensure suitable IT and digital services are ready and available to deliver our business.

Information Management

Enterprise risk 6	**Risk mitigation strategies**
The department's governance and management of its information does not effectively protect data, assets and its key payments.	Information management is embedded into all of our business activities. The department has sound arrangements in place to protect information in our Protective Security Framework, Information Management Framework, and Data Management Strategy. We effectively manage risks that could compromise the security of classified and sensitive data and information.

Performance

The department will achieve its purpose through delivery against our four outcomes. Each outcome will be achieved through a set of key activities, with delivery strategies that support their accomplishment. Risks to delivery are identified and mitigated by the various risk strategies listed in the enterprise-wide risks table and by risk plans which detail risk assessments and treatments within the department's Risk Management Framework.

How we perform in undertaking those activities is measured through performance measures and targets for each outcome.

Effective performance information is important to us because it enables the department to:

- demonstrate whether the use of public resources is making a difference and delivering on government objectives
- measure and assess our progress
- drive desired changes in the efficiency and effectiveness of our services
- make decisions about how best to deploy our resources to achieve competing priorities
- demonstrate and promote our achievements and explain any variance from expectations.

Monitoring performance

Achievement against the performance criteria in this plan is monitored by the Executive Board on a quarterly basis and will be reported in the department's annual performance statements at the end of the reporting period.

In the following performance tables, the ✔ indicates the application of the performance measure over the forward years of the corporate plan.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is not yet clear and may impact on the achievement of some performance measures, particularly in the case of employment outcomes and international student measures.

Outcome 1: Quality early learning and schooling

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

The following programs support the delivery of this outcome:

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

Key Activities

Support to families who rely on subsidised child care to work, train, study or volunteer.

Programs 1.1, 1.2.

Delivery strategies

Provide families with access to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy to improve access to care.

Provide support to vulnerable and disadvantaged families and communities through the Child Care Safety Net.

Through our monitoring and compliance frameworks, ensure the accuracy and integrity of CCS, transition and other program payments.

Remove unnecessary barriers and ensure Early Childhood Education and Care sector regulation is appropriate and fit for purpose.

Develop, maintain and improve early learning and child care policy frameworks, with a focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable, disadvantaged and Indigenous children.

Monitor the impact of COVID-19 on financial viability for the Early Childhood Education and Care sector.

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

Program 1.5.

Delivery strategies

Continue to work with states, territories and stakeholders to:

- support early learning in the year before school (i.e. preschool), with a focus on improving attendance of Indigenous, vulnerable, and disadvantaged children, and those in rural and remote areas, and provide funds through the Universal Access National Partnership to state and territory governments

- maintain and improve the quality and safety of early learning and care, through the National Quality Framework, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority and development of a national workforce strategy.

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

Programs 1.3, 1.4.

Delivery strategies

Administer recurrent funding entitlements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act) based on the Schooling Resourcing Standard that provides a base amount for every student and loadings to target disadvantage.

Monitor the compliance of approved authorities with requirements under the Act and ensure the accuracy and integrity of payments.

Continue to implement the new direct measure of capacity to contribute, including a process for the review of individual school scores and a program of further refinement work.

Support the National School Resourcing Board in undertaking reviews of the Australian Government's school funding model under the Act and implement the Australian Government's response to the board's reviews of the loading for students with a disability, reporting of section 22A obligations and the review of needs-based funding requirements.

Provide funding for capital infrastructure for non-government schools, particularly for the most disadvantaged.

Provide funding under the Choice and Affordability Fund for non-government representative bodies as a flexible means of driving government priorities including supporting parental choice and affordability of schools and assisting schools in regional, remote and drought-affected areas.

Monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the financial viability of non-government schools.

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

Program 1.5.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding and support to implement national and international assessments including the Programme for International Student Assessment and the transition to online delivery of the National Assessment Program–Literacy and Numeracy.

Deliver programs that supplement the Australian Curriculum and support teachers and school leaders to improve student learning, through the delivery of literacy and numeracy initiatives, science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) initiatives, civics and citizenship and music and arts programs.

Deliver programs centred on teaching practice, teacher and principal wellbeing and that support alternative pathways into teaching.

Deliver programs supporting student participation, parent and community engagement and student wellbeing with focus areas that include mental health, students with disability, school education for Indigenous Australians and regional, rural and remote initiatives.

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

Program 1.5.

Delivery strategies

Work in partnership with state and territory governments, non-government education authorities, national education agencies and other key stakeholders to develop and implement the National Policy Initiatives under the National School Reform Agreement.

Track and report to Education Council on the progress of national policy initiatives.

Analyse data to inform policy advice.

Provide funding to non-government representative bodies to support implementation of national reforms in non-government schools.

Performance measures

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
1.1	Proportion of Child Care Safety Net that supports vulnerable and disadvantaged families and communities	100%	Number of vulnerable and disadvantaged Child Care Safety Net recipients over total Child Care Safety Net applicants. Eligibility is determined from several sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census and the Australian Early Development Census. Data source: Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE), Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
1.2	Proportion of accurate child care payments to all services	At least 90%	Number of accurate sampled CCS payments over the total participants in the random sample parent check interviews. Data source: Independent actuarial assessment	✔	✔	✔	✔
1.5	Proportion of Indigenous children enrolled in early childhood education in the year before full-time school are enrolled for 600 hours per year	95%[1]	Number of Indigenous children receiving 600 hours a year in preschool over the total population of all Indigenous children enrolled in preschool. Data source: ABS Preschool Education, Australia (cat. No. 4240.0) with input from states and territories	✔	✔		
1.5	Proportion of vulnerable and disadvantaged children who are enrolled in the year before full-time school and are enrolled for 600 hours per year	95%[1]	Number vulnerable and disadvantaged children receiving 600 hours a year in preschool over the total population of all vulnerable and disadvantaged children enrolled in preschool. Data source: ABS Preschool Education, Australia (cat. No. 4240.0) with input from states and territories	✔	✔		
1.1 1.2	COVID-19 measure—Weekly average of the proportion of early childhood education and care services that are open	At least 90%	Number of temporarily closed services over the number of CCS approved services as at 20 April 2020. Data source: ABS Preschool Education, Australia (cat. No. 4240.0) with input from states and territories	✔			
1.1 1.2	COVID-19 measure—Proportion of accurate Relief Package and Transition Payments	At least 90%	Number of accurate sampled payments over the total sampled payments. Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔			
1.3 1.4 1.5	Increase the Year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate Level III attainment rate by 2020	Increased to 90% by 2020 and maintained	Number of 20–24 year olds who have attained Year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate Level III or above, over the total population aged 20–24 years. Data source: ABS Education and Work Australia 6227.0	✔	✔	✔	✔

1. The National Partnership Agreement for 2020 and the extension for 2021 calendar year are still subject to finalisation.

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
1.3 1.4 1.5	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (age 20–24) attaining Year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96%	Increase proportion to 96% by 2031	Number of Indigenous 20–24 year olds who have attained Year 12 (or equivalent) or Certificate Level III or above over the total Indigenous population aged 20–24 years Data source: Census of Population and Housing Note: Data also available from ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey. This data can be used a supplementary data source to monitor progress, particularly in intercensal years	✔	✔	✔	✔

Outcome 2: Quality higher education, international education and international quality research

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

The following programs support the delivery of this outcome:

Program 2.1 Commonwealth Grants 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

Key Activities

Enhance the quality of the higher education system.

Programs 2.1, 2.3, 2.4.

Delivery strategies

Implement the Job-ready Graduates reform package[1] to:

- rebase funding to align with cost and increase focus on the national interest
- introduce a simpler funding system with improved incentives and accountability
- incentivise students and universities to focus on work-relevant qualifications
- deliver new provider standards, a better qualifications framework and a national repository of tertiary qualifications.

Publish nationally consistent provider performance data through the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT).

Provide grants to support the quality teaching of mathematics and science; and fund research-based industry internships in STEM fields.

Support universities to embed a Model Code in their institutional regulations or policies.

Support the research sector, research training and national research infrastructure.

Programs 2.5, 2.6.

Delivery strategies

Provide Research Block Grants to eligible universities to incentivise providers to attract research income and to support the successful completion of postgraduate research degrees by their students.

Provide infrastructure project grants through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy to support quality research to drive innovation in the Australian research sector and the economy more broadly.

Support a high quality and sustainable international education sector.

Program 2.7.

Delivery strategies

Continue to build bilateral and multilateral partnerships through engagement with foreign governments to advance Australia's education sector and reputation.

Implement Government programs and priorities, including the National Strategy for International Education, to achieve a high-quality sustainable sector.

1. Pending legislation

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

Programs 2.1, 2.3, 2.4.

Delivery strategies

Provide grants, through the Commonwealth Grants Scheme, to subsidise costs for students enrolled in the undergraduate and selected postgraduate courses at public universities.

Support student places in priority areas at other higher education providers.

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

Fund universities, through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program, to undertake activities that improve access to, and completion of, undergraduate courses for people from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Assist people with disability to access and participate in tertiary education and subsequent employment through the National Disability Coordination Officer Program.

Enable students in regional and remote Australia to access higher education without having to leave their community through the Regional University Centres.

Establish education facilities that build links with local industry, address skills needs and improve student employment outcomes.

Provide financial assistance to regional and remote students through the Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships Program.

Provide advance payments to higher education providers to cover the costs of tuition fees for students that have taken out HELP loans.

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

Programs 2.2.

Delivery strategies

University claims are based on the emerging costs charged by the identified state government emerging cost superannuation funds for payments to eligible retirees.

Funding is administered in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and *Other Grants Guidelines (Education) 2012*.

Performance measures

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
2.1 The proportion of the 25 to 34 year-old population with a tertiary qualification	Increase from previous year	Number of 25 to 34 year olds with a tertiary qualification over the total number of 25 to 34 year olds compared to previous year Data source: ABS, Education and Work, Australia, 6227.0, Table 9	✔	✔	✔	✔
2.1 The rate of attrition for domestic Bachelor students	Lower than 15%	Number of commencing domestic students who do not complete or who do not return to study in year (x+1) over the total number of commencing domestic students enrolled in year (x) Data source: DESE, Higher Education Student Statistics	✔	✔	✔	✔
2.1 Proportion of undergraduates who are employed within four months of completing a degree	Equal to or higher than 85%	Number of undergraduates employed within four months of completing a degree over the total number of graduates available for work in that four months Data source: QILT, Graduate Outcomes Survey	✔	✔	✔	✔
2.2 Proportion of eligible universities that are able to meet specific superannuation expenses.	100%	Number of eligible universities that are able to meet specific superannuation expenses over the total eligible universities Data Source: DESE, Program Administrative Data	✔	✔	✔	✔
2.3 Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on postcode)	Equal to or higher than 18%	By postcode, the number of undergraduates from a low socio-economic background over the total of domestic undergraduate students registered Data source: DESE, Higher Education Student Statistics	✔	✔	✔	✔
2.3 Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low socio-economic background (based on Statistical Area level 1)	Equal to or higher than 16%	Number of undergraduates from a low socio-economic background over the total of domestic undergraduate students registered at the disaggregated survey level of Statistical Area Level 1, as defined by ABS Data source: DESE, Higher Education Student Statistics	✔	✔	✔	✔

04

PERFORMANCE

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
2.3 Proportion of higher education students who are Indigenous	2%	Number of students who identify as Indigenous in enrolment data over the total of domestic undergraduate students registered Data source: QILT, Student Experience Survey	✅	✅	✅	✅
2.3 Proportion of undergraduate students who rate the teaching quality at their institution positively	At least 80%	Number of students rating the teaching received as positive over the total number of students with valid survey responses Data source: QILT, Student Experience Survey	✅	✅	✅	✅
2.3 Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the skills of graduates (overall across all skills)	85%	Number of employers of graduates satisfied with the skills of the graduate over the number of employers who responded to the survey question Data source: QILT, Employer Satisfaction Survey	✅	✅	✅	✅
2.4 The proportion of HELP debt not expected to be repaid	Equal to or lower than 2019–20 (14.69%)	Number of estimated HELP 'debt not expected to be repaid' over the total HELP debt. The actuarial determined 'debt not expected to be repaid' and total HELP debt is based on modelling of longitudinal data including loan recipient age, repayment and default history Data source: Australian Taxation Office, Annual HELP Data Report	✅	✅	✅	✅
2.5 Australia's share of the world's top 10% most highly cited research publications	Above the OECD average	Number of Australian research publications in the top 10% most cited over the total number of publications in the top 10% most cited, compared to the average share of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries Data source: SciVal/Scopus (bibliometric database)	✅	✅	✅	✅
2.5 Proportion of research postgraduates who are employed within four months of completing their degree	90% or higher	Number of research post graduates employed within four months of completing their degree over the total number available for work in that four months Data source: QILT, Graduate Outcomes Survey	✅	✅	✅	✅

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
2.5 Indigenous Higher Degree by Research (HDR) completions	Increase from previous year	A comparison of the number of Indigenous higher education research completions to the previous year Data source: DESE, Higher Education Student Statistics	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6 Proportion of research conducted by Australian universities and related to priority investment areas is rated as world standard or above	85% or higher	Number of publications rated as world standard or above over the total number of publications that have used a National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) facility Data source: DESE, NCRIS Census Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6 Proportion of researchers who report that access to NCRIS facilities and projects improved their research quality and outputs	90% or higher	Number of respondents that report NCRIS has improved research quality and outcome over total number of survey respondents Data source: DESE, NCRIS Census Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.7 Average annual growth rate in international education export earnings	3% to 5% annual growth	The increase of international education export earnings for the particular year over the international education export earnings from the previous year Data source: ABS, International Trade Services, 5368.0.55	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.7 Proportion of international students who are satisfied or very satisfied with studying and living in Australia	85% or higher	Number of international students who are satisfied or very satisfied with studying and living in Australia over the total number of international students with valid survey responses Data source: DESE, International Student Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.7 Proportion of international students employed or enrolled in further study after graduation	60%	Number international students employed or enrolled in further study after graduation over the total number of international students in Australia that graduated in the previous decade Data source: DESE, Graduate Outcomes Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.7 Number of students enrolled in offshore and transnational education and training delivered by Australian providers	Numbers stabilised[2]	Number of overseas students studying Australian higher education offshore courses compared to previous year Data source: DESE, Higher Education Statistics Collection	✓	✓	✓	✓

2. This target is likely to be impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic including border closures.

Outcome 3: Quality skills and training

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

The following program supports the delivery of this outcome:

Program 3.1 Building Skills and Capability

Program 3.2 VET Student Loans

Key Activities

Enhance the quality of vocational education and training.

Program 3.1.

Delivery strategies

Negotiate a new skills agreement, that supports Australia's growth and productivity, with the states and territories to replace the National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development.

Through the National Skills Commission (NSC), help to ensure the pricing of vocational education and training (VET) qualifications reflects quality training by developing nationally efficient prices for high volume VET qualifications.

Work with states and territories and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to move the system of regulation from its focus on compliance to focus on excellence in training.

Develop an in-training student survey to support ASQA's regulatory role, through the collection of targeted and timely data from current VET students.

Deliver the 2021 Survey of Employer Use and Views of the VET System, and include questions to measure the impact of COVID-19 and the economic downturn on training.

Respond to industry and employers' needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills.

Program 3.1.

Delivery strategies

Through the JobTrainer program, provide up to an additional 340,700 training places to help school leavers and job seekers access short and long courses to develop new skills in growth sectors and create a pathway to more qualifications.

Through the NSC, identify current and emerging skills needs and develop nowcasting capability to understand the state of the labour market in almost real-time.

Through the National Careers Institute, assist people at all career stages to navigate the changing labour market and connect with training and work pathways, through its expanded digital capabilities and delivery of the Enhanced Support for School Leavers initiative.

Support the Australian Industry Skills Committee and its network of Industry Reference Committees to design industry-relevant training products and to work with states and territories to streamline and simplify existing national qualifications.

Conduct Skills Organisation Pilots in Human Services Care, Digital Technologies and Mining to build expertise in rapid qualifications development and embed industry engagement to support future qualifications reforms.

Manage the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive Program to encourage the continued training and development of a highly skilled Australian workforce.

Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET training.

Program 3.1, 3.2.

Delivery strategies

Support eligible individuals, including job seekers, recently unemployed, or those at risk of unemployment to gain critical skills for learning and employment through the Skills for Education and Employment and Foundation Skills for Your Future programs.

Expand the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees wage subsidy to help almost 90,000 businesses employing around 180,000 apprentices and trainees.

Improve the VET Student Loans program to increase access to quality, higher-level VET training.

Performance measures

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
3.1 Proportion of employers that report use of the VET system	50%	Number of businesses with employees that, in the previous 12 months, either have used nationally recognised training, have apprentices/trainees, or have jobs that require a vocational qualification, over the total number of businesses with employees Data source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) statistics: Employers' Use and Views of the VET System	✔	✔	✔	✔
3.1 Proportion of graduates who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training	85%	Number of VET graduates who were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of VET graduates Data source: NCVER: National Student Outcomes Survey (2019)	✔	✔	✔	✔
3.1 Proportion of VET graduates who are employed or enrolled in further study after training	80%	Number of VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey, over the total number of VET graduates Data source: NCVER: National Student Outcomes Survey (2019)	✔	✔	✔	✔
3.1 Maintain the number of apprenticeship commencements	Maintain numbers from 2019–20	Number of apprenticeship commencements in the current financial year compared to the number of commencements for the previous financial year Data source: NCVER, National Apprentice and Trainee Collection	✔	✔	✔	✔
3.1 Proportion of participants assessed in targeted programs that increase one or more levels on the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) or the Digital Literacy Skills Framework (DLSF)	80%	Number of clients assessed as achieving an increase in one or more indicators after completing 200 hours or more of training, over the total number of assessed program participants Data source: ACSF/DLSF assessments completed by service providers	✔	✔	✔	✔

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
3.2	Proportion of VET Student Loans students who are satisfied with the quality of their training provider	80%	Number of VET Student Loans students who responded to the electronic Commonwealth assistance form (e-CAF) survey and who provided an average rating of 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' over the total number of VET Student Loans students who responded to the e-CAF survey Data source: Student electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (e-CAF) survey results	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2	Proportion of VET Student Loans students who complete units of study in VET Student Loans	70%	Number of reported Equivalent Full Time Study Load (EFTSL) units of study completed, over the total number of EFTSL units of study Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.1	Proportion of eligible apprentices that employers lodge claims for under the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees measure	70%	Number of claims lodged by employers for unique apprentices, over the total number of eligible apprentices Data source: NCVER: Data for VET, including commencement, completion and attrition data	✓			

Outcome 4: Employment and jobs

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work and meet employer needs.

The following program supports the delivery of this outcome:

Program 4.1 Employment Services

Key Activities

Help job seekers find and keep a job.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to jobactive providers in non-remote Australia to provide individually tailored support to job seekers to help them find and keep a job.

Publish provider performance information to drive continuous improvement and support job seeker choice of provider.

Deliver the tools and support to assist the most job ready to self-manage using online employment services.

Help job seekers move from welfare to work.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide payments to providers that incentivise the achievement of sustainable outcomes, particularly for the most disadvantaged job seekers.

Use the provider performance framework to emphasise the achievement of sustainable outcomes for job seekers.

Make funding available to providers and provide access to complementary programs to assist job seekers into employment.

Provide access to tools and support through online employment services to assist the most job-ready job seekers to self-manage their search for employment.

Help job seekers meet their mutual obligation requirements.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide tools and support to assist job seekers to report their job search and attendance/participation at appointments and activities.

Provide a Targeted Compliance Framework that focuses penalties on the small minority of job seekers who persistently do not comply with their requirements, while ensuring that requirements take into account each individual's capabilities.

Provide frameworks for providers and job seekers to agree to individual job plans outlining mutual obligation requirements.

Provide job seekers in online employment services with tools and support to self-manage their mutual obligation requirements.

Provide incentives through the performance framework for providers to ensure job seekers are motivated and can meet their mutual obligations.

jobactive program is efficient.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide program settings that are flexible and responsive and allow providers to tailor servicing to individual needs.

Monitor program performance and efficiency and make changes to program settings as required.

jobactive organisations deliver quality services.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Monitor delivery of services, including service delivery commitments, by jobactive providers.

Monitor the sustainability of job placements to ensure job seekers are placed in appropriate roles and employer needs are met.

Fund jobactive providers to connect job seekers to employment, including providing tools (such as wage subsidies and the Employment Fund) and offering a range of services and support to employers.

Help young people move into work or education.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to Transition to Work providers to provide intensive, pre-employment support to improve the work readiness of young people aged between 15 and 24 and help them into work (including apprenticeships or traineeships) or education. Incentivise Transition to Work providers to place young people into sustainable employment or education.

Support parents to build their work readiness.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to ParentsNext providers to deliver personalised assistance to improve work readiness.

Monitor provider performance to increase parents' work readiness.

Encourage providers to use work readiness assessments to help refine and set parents short-term goals.

Support parents on a pathway to education or work.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to ParentsNext providers to deliver personalised assistance to help parents at risk of long-term welfare dependency identify and achieve their education goals and pre-employment goals.

Monitor provider performance, including achievement of education and employment outcomes.

Help people to create their own job through self-employment.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to New Business Assistance with the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) providers to help people create their own job through self-employment.

Support Indigenous prisoners to prepare to find employment and reintegrate into the community.

Program 4.1.

Delivery strategies

Provide funding to Time to Work Employment Service providers to deliver in-prison employment services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.

Performance measures

jobactive[3]

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1	Proportion of job placements sustained to 26 weeks	Overall: 30% Indigenous: 30%	Number of job placements that sustained to a 26-week employment outcome over the total number of job placements, that can achieve a 26-week outcome, in a 12-month period. Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.1	Proportion of job seekers employed three months following participation in employment services	Overall: 45% Stream A: 55% Stream B: 40% Stream C: 25%	Estimated number, of a representative sample, of job seekers employed three months following participation in jobactive over the total number of job seekers who participated in jobactive during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period). Data source: DESE, Program administrative data and post-program monitoring survey	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.1	Proportion of job seekers moving off income support, or with reduced reliance on income support, six months after participation in jobactive	40%	Number of job seekers off income support, or with reduced reliance on income support (defined as a reduction of 60% or more), six months after participating in jobactive over the total number of job seekers on income support who participated in jobactive during the reference period. Data source: DESE, Program and Services Australia administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.1	Proportion of Work for the Dole participants who report increased motivation to find a job	75%	Number, of a representative sample, of job seekers surveyed six weeks after participating in Work for the Dole who reported participation in the activity improved their desire to find a job over the total number of job seekers who responded to the survey following participation in Work for the Dole. Data source: DESE, Program administrative data and post-program monitoring survey	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. It is anticipated that new performance measures and targets will be developed when the current jobactive Deed (including NEIS) ends in June 2022.

jobactive[3]

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1 Proportion of provider appointments attended by activity-tested job seekers	90%	Number of provider appointments attended over the sum of attended appointments, appointments not attended for an invalid reason and appointments where misconduct occurred Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1 Proportion of job seekers (with mutual obligation requirements) who are actively looking for work	90%	Number of active job seekers meeting their job search requirement or have no job search requirement set/it is no longer required to be met over the total number of job seekers who may be required to undertake job search as part of their mutual obligation requirement Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1 Proportion of employers satisfied with the assistance provided by a jobactive organisation	80%	Number of employers who used an employment service provider who said they were satisfied with the assistance provided over all employers who used an employment services provider who were surveyed in the same 12-month period Data source: DESE's Survey of Employers Recruitment Experiences	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1 Proportion of jobactive organisations that meet their service delivery commitments	80%	Number of jobactive providers that meet at least 80% of their assessed Service Delivery Commitments over all jobactive providers In each six-month period, department account mangers review 25% of each provider's service delivery commitments, with all commitments reviewed over two years Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1 Cost per employment outcome	$2,500	Total expenditure on jobactive job seekers within the relevant reference period, over the estimated number of job seekers who are employed three months after participating in jobactive Data source: DESE, Program administrative data and DESE Post-program monitoring survey	✔	✔	✔	✔

3. It is anticipated that new performance measures and targets will be developed when the current jobactive Deed (including NEIS) ends in June 2022.

New Business Assistance with NEIS[3]

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1 Proportion of NEIS participants off income support or working 20 hours per week three months after participating in and then exiting NEIS	68%	Number of NEIS participants off income support or working 20 hours per week three months after exiting NEIS over all NEIS participants who exited NEIS at least three months ago Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓

ParentsNext[4]

Program reference and Performance measure	Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1 Proportion of ParentsNext participants who increase their work readiness	Overall: 75% Indigenous: 75%	Number of parents who increase their work readiness based on their results in the Work Star assessment tool over the total number of parents who have had more than one work readiness assessment using the tool Data source: Work Star Online Service User Report	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.1 Number of participants who improve their education (completion of an education course higher than the participant's previous education level) or find employment	Overall: 5,000 Indigenous: 1,000	Number of parents who improved their education or found employment within the performance period Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.1 Proportion of early school leavers who are in or have completed education or training	25%	Number of parents who are referred to the program due to being an Early School Leaver, who: • commences, or is expected to commence, in an accredited education course; or • completes an accredited education course higher than their previous level of education; or • achieves an education outcome over the total number of parents who are referred to the program as an Early School Leaver Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. It is anticipated that new performance measures and targets will be developed when the current jobactive Deed (including NEIS) ends in June 2022.

4. It is anticipated that new performance measures and targets will be developed when the current ParentsNext Deed ends in June 2021.

Time to Work Employment Service

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1	Proportion of eligible prisoners who participate in the service	50%	Number of participants over the number of eligible prisoners where providers have commenced delivering services in a prison Data Sources: Eligible prisoner numbers provided by state and territory governments. Participant data from service providers	✔			
4.1	Proportion of participants who exit the service with an approved transition plan	25%	Number of participants who exit the service with an approved transition plan over the total number of participants who have exited the service Data source: DESE, Program administrative data which captures participant data, including exits and transition plans from providers	✔			

Transition to Work[5]

Program reference and Performance measure		Targets	Methodology	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
4.1	Proportion of placements sustained to a 12-week employment outcome or hybrid outcome, or an education outcome	65%	Number of job placements that led to a 12-week employment outcome, or a hybrid employment outcome, or a 26-week education outcome being achieved over all job placements recorded in a 12-month period Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1	Proportion of placements that are converted to sustainability outcomes	40%	Number of job placements converted to a 26-week sustainability outcome over all job placements, that can achieve a 26-week sustainability outcome over a 12-month period Data source: DESE, Program administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔
4.1	Proportion of Transition to Work participants moving off income support, reducing their reliance on income support, or moving on to Youth Allowance (student) six months after participating in the service	30%	Number of Transition to Work participants: • moving off income support • reducing their reliance on income support (defined as a reduction of 60% or more) • moving onto Youth Allowance (student) six months after participating in the service over all Transition to Work participants on income support who participated in the program during the reference period Data source: DESE, Program and Services Australia administrative data	✔	✔	✔	✔

5. It is anticipated that new performance measures and targets will be developed when the current Transition to Work Deed ends in June 2022.

Capability

The department has in place the people, structures, processes and technology to ensure we have the capability to undertake our functions.
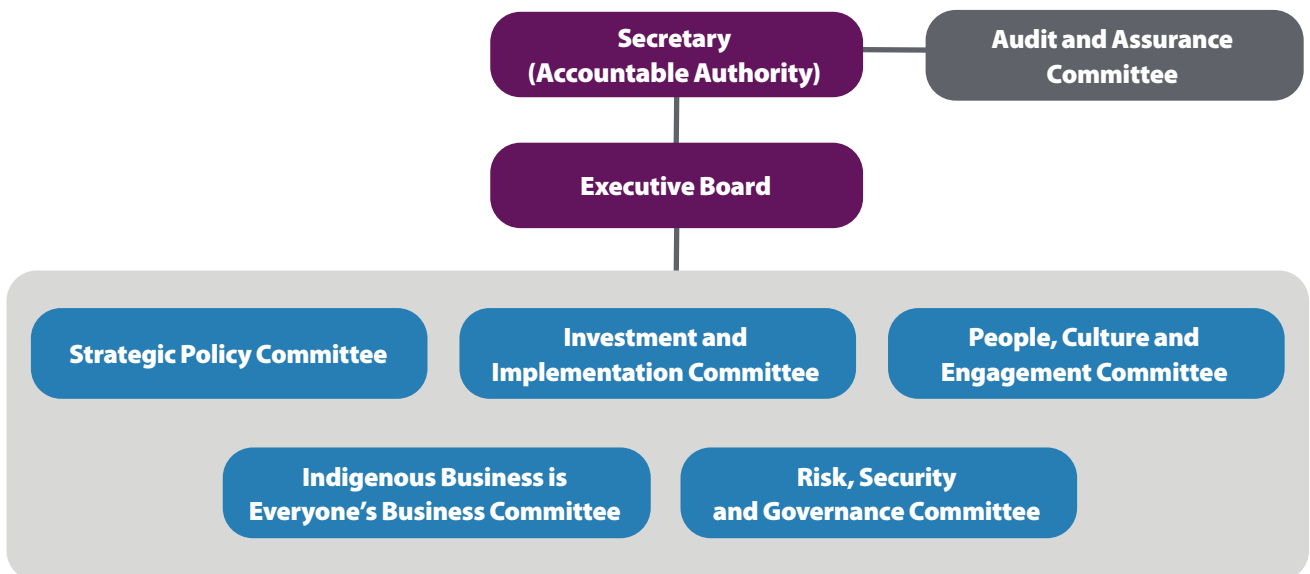
We look for opportunities for continuous improvement to enhance our existing capabilities and, in particular, we want to take full advantage of our broader functions and capabilities following the department's formation in February 2020. We have commenced an integration work program specifically designed to strengthen connections across the department.

Governance

The department has governance committee arrangements in place to support the delivery of our purpose. The department's governance committees play an important role by overseeing and managing risk, monitoring our performance, providing a forum for consultation and overseeing reporting.

In addition, each group has internal governance and coordination arrangements in place.

The department's governance committees

Secretary (Accountable Authority)

Audit and Assurance Committee

Executive Board

Strategic Policy Committee

Investment and Implementation Committee

People, Culture and Engagement Committee

Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee

Risk, Security and Governance Committee

Evaluation and research

The department continues to strengthen its evaluation and research capability to support an evidence-based approach to policy design by gathering accurate and meaningful evidence and insights. Strategic and informed evaluation and research activities will strengthen our evidence base and inform policy advice and implementation strategies.

Data and analytics

We are progressing a range of initiatives to improve and build our data analysis and management capabilities. These include:

- delivering a program of data-driven analytical research to support education, skills and employment policy development
- connecting data to better understand education and employment transitions and lifelong learning through the National Education Evidence Base
- delivering innovative projects such as the New Employment Services Model (due in July 2022) and the Jobs and Education Data Infrastructure project
- developing and implementing a new department-wide data strategy.

We ensure that all our data is safe and secure; safeguarding individual privacy and ensuring compliance with all legislative obligations.

People

The upgraded People Strategy 2020–23 will set the direction and priorities for how we support and develop our people over the next two to three years. This will place us in the best possible position to deliver on our new department's purpose. Priorities that are central to attracting, engaging and retaining our people are:

- a positive workplace culture
- a safe workplace that values wellbeing
- harnessing, building and mobilising capability.

The department's workforce planning over the next four years will identify critical roles, analyse skills and knowledge gaps, and plan for recruitment and succession. In 2020–21 we will analyse our job family composition including benchmarking against other agencies. We will map the core and job-specific capabilities required for departmental roles and assess these against the capability needs identified in the Enterprise Workforce Plan. This will help to define learning and development requirements, succession pathways and entry level programs such as the graduate program and the VET entry level program.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Delivering quality ICT projects to the department's stakeholders is our priority, as this will help to deliver improved educational, skills, and employment outcomes. A new technology strategy, that extends the work begun by the two former departments, will be developed in 2020–21 to reflect our approach to technology solutions that are modular and responsive to our stakeholders' needs. This strategy will position the department to deliver the modern and innovative technology solutions required to achieve our outcomes. The strategy will also focus on the skills and capabilities required of our staff to deliver these outcomes.

To further protect our clients and their data entrusted to us, the department continues to invest in and strengthen the security of the department's IT network, systems and data holdings by implementing the Australian Cyber Security Centre's eight essential mitigation strategies to prevent cyber incidents.

The department runs ICT infrastructure across its on-premises data centres and public cloud networks in accordance with the Australian Government Secure Cloud Strategy. In 2020–21, the department will continue implementing a hybrid cloud environment, an infrastructure architecture that integrates our on-premises resources with that of public cloud computing providers.

Financial management

The department is committed to financial sustainability and sound financial management. Effective budget management helps the department achieve its purpose and meet the expectations of Government. A new finance strategy will be developed in 2020–21, which will describe our priorities in relation to financial management, the activities to provide support for effective financial decision making, and continue to build financial literacy in our workforce.

Our sound financial governance is enabled by a skilled workforce that uses budget management processes and reports, combined with regular oversight by governance committees, to oversee, allocate and manage funds.

We are leading a program of continuous improvement to ensure our internal business practices are efficient. The department is a CPA Australia recognised partner, underlining our commitment to investing in the financial capability of our employees.

Communication

Our end-to-end communication services support the department and our ministers to deliver and communicate employment, skills and education programs and policies to the community.

Our digital communication channels, through websites and social media, will continue to be enhanced during 2020–21. Digital channels remain one of our key methods of promoting programs and policies directly to the community with innovative and engaging content.