



PUBLIC SKILLS
AUSTRALIA
PUBLIC SAFETY SKILLS AUSTRALIA LTD

Public Skills Australia

Networks

Terms of Reference (ToR)

BACKGROUND

The Public Skills Australia Board (the Board) will establish groups with specific functions to achieve strategic objectives and enable the delivery of workplans. Each group will have a Terms of Reference, agreed by the Board, which will clarify roles and responsibilities and how members will be appointed.

When setting up consultative Networks, the Board (or a Board delegated committee) will consider:

- how the needs and views of priority will be sought, considered and balanced
- how memberships reflect appropriate expertise, experience and skills, priority cohort insights and geographic participation
- how actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed
- the extent to which membership will support the work of Public Skills Australia in relation to priority cohorts.

The Networks will not exactly mirror the government identified priority cohorts but instead reflect a mix of those cohorts and particular focus areas of Public Skills Australia work.

Public Skills Australia staff will:

- facilitate Network meetings by providing administrative and logistical support, briefing group Chairs and preparing papers
- manage Network correspondence and mail-outs
- maintain records or insights and information shared by Networks
- share information relevant to Networks
- coordinate members' input on work and deliverables and seek group input
- coordinate Network insights to inform the work and deliverables of Public Skills Australia
- present any opposing Network views and insights to the relevant Subcommittee and Industry Advisory Group (IAG) for consideration.

The Board will continue the following five Networks (from 1 July 2025 for a period of 12 months), after which the Public Skills Australia Board will undertake an evaluation of how the refreshed governance arrangements are working. The

1. First Nations Network
2. Careers and Pathways Network
3. Diversity and Inclusion Network
4. Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Network
5. Volunteer Network.

The role of the Networks

The role of a Network is to:

1. advocate for the importance and value of this Vocational Education and Training (VET) reform with their industry-sectors that has given rise to Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs).
2. work collaboratively with the Public Skills Australia Board, staff, company members, and other groups established by the Board.
3. provide particular Network views on the content of work and deliverables to Public Skills Australia (specific to their perspective e.g. using a First Nations or diversity and inclusion lens). Specifically, how the cohort their Network represents may:
 - participate in Public Safety and Government workforces and/or
 - access and participate in training derived from the Training Packages that Public Skills Australia is responsible to develop, review and maintain and/or
 - use the work and deliverables of Public Skills Australia to support learners, career pathways or national priorities.
4. form part of the internal consultation process of Public Skills Australia.

The responsibilities of Networks

The responsibilities of Networks include:

1. operating in a transparent and ethical manner, understanding they represent the views of the cohort their Network represent not individual perspectives.
2. identifying workforce planning challenges (where relevant) and identifying valuable strategies in support of their Network cohorts' participation in Public Safety and Government workforces.
3. providing views about the content, implementation, uptake, access and promotion of Training Packages for priority cohorts.
4. supporting access to their Network's cohort for consultation purposes and facilitating communication and consultation where relevant and possible.
5. actively promoting Network cohorts and providing supported views of Network cohorts to inform the work and deliverables of Public Skills Australia.
6. promoting, wherever possible, inclusive practices for relevant priority cohorts such as (but not limited to) First Nations people, people living with disabilities, gender diversity, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
7. declaring any real or perceived conflicts of interest.
8. attending Network meetings regularly.

Network membership

Network membership may include nominations from a cross-section of organisations, including employee organisations, employer organisations, federal or state and territory government agencies, lead organisations advocating for government priority cohorts, Network areas of focus, or for career promotion. Individuals who hold significant expertise or lived experience may also be nominated by themselves or others. Preference will be given to nominating organisations that are able to present national government priority cohort or Network areas of focus views and represent a large volume of a specific government priority cohort or Network focus area.

Membership of the Network is owned by the nominating organisation not the individual. It is acknowledged that nominating organisations may or may not be company members of Public Skills Australia and that a nominee may be the nominated representative on more than one group.

Nominating organisations may nominate new individuals to replace previously nominated members at any time. Nominating organisations will be required to re-validate nominations as and when required, particularly when their members move to different roles, may be on extended leave, retire or transition to retirement, or may not be able to attend several meetings. Periodic re-validations to ensure correct administration may also be required. Nominating organisations will be required to nominate a substantive Network member and may elect to nominate a substantive proxy.

The Board (or a Board delegated committee) will assess applications from organisations to accept nominated individuals to form part of Networks. This assessment will include considering whether the nominating organisation or individual nominee:

1. represents a government priority cohort or Network focus area.
2. promotes inclusive practices.
3. represents significant expertise or lived experience within a government priority cohort or Network focus area.

This assessment will further consider whether the individual nominated holds:

1. the relevant authority of the nominating organisation to represent the views of a government priority cohort or Network focus area or be able to share relevant lived experience.
2. applicable and relevant knowledge and expertise of government priority cohorts, or Network focus area, or holds lived experience of a government priority cohort or Network focus area that should impact the workforce planning or delivery of training within the Public Safety and Government industry.

Chair

A Chair may be directly appointed by Public Skills Australia or nominated by the membership of the Network. The term for the Chair is at the discretion of the CEO. The Chair is required to work closely with the CEO and staff to promote and support the work of Public Skills Australia. Should a Chair be unable to chair a Network meeting, the CEO or an appointed member of staff will chair.

The Chair is required to:

1. consider Agendas for meetings
2. chair meetings
3. liaise with the CEO or relevant staff on important matters
4. review the notes of meetings.

Network Support

Public Skills Australia staff will manage the planning, governance and administration of Network meetings in collaboration with the Chair. This will ensure that Networks are supported and are able to focus on their responsibilities.

Proxies and Observers

Proxies and observers are not required for Networks.

Quorum

Quorums are not required for consultation groups such as Networks and meetings may proceed even if several Network members not be available.

Rules of Engagement

Members are expected to engage in a professional, respectful and collaborative manner and are expected to:

1. Work within the remit of the JSC work program.
2. Prepare thoroughly: review all relevant meeting papers prior to meetings.
3. Participate actively: contribute to discussions, share expertise and lived experience and provide constructive views and perspectives.
4. Respect opinions: value diverse perspectives and engage in open, respectful dialogue
5. Maintain confidentiality: keep all discussions and meeting papers confidential.

6. Support the final versions of IAG endorsed work or deliverables should views and perspectives provided within a Network or between Network(s) differ.
7. Follow procedures: comply with established communication and consultation processes of Public Skills Australia.

Consultation

Networks will provide views and perspectives on work and deliverables of Public Skills Australia to promote inclusion of government priority cohorts and Network cohorts. The CEO will appoint a staff member(s) to support the administration of Networks. Networks do not have any power to commit Public Skills Australia or its Board to any views or perspectives.

Frequency of Network meetings

Networks will meet twice a year as a group to provide Network cohorts' specific insights, views and perspectives for Public Skills Australia to consider in the development of its work and deliverables.

Attendance

Attendance can either be in-person or through online means, or a combination of both. Members are expected to attend as many Network meetings as possible. Frequent non-attendance will be noted, with the Chair required to discuss this with the member. Frequent non-attendance may be communicated to the nominating organisation (at the discretion of the Chair and CEO) if the member was nominated by an organisation.

Out of Session Network consultations

Out of session Network consultations may be called to consult on urgent matters efficiently. Members will be notified via email, receive required out of session meeting papers (and a deadline for when advice and feedback is required). Views and perspectives will be put forward to the relevant Subcommittee if supported by the majority of the Network members.

Agenda, notes and meeting papers

Agenda: will be developed in consultation with the Chair.

Notes: will be taken by Public Skills Australia staff and reviewed by the Chair before being circulated no later than 10 days after a meeting. Notes will contain views and perspectives on work and deliverables for consideration by Public Skills Australia and any relevant governance group (if required).

Meeting papers: will be distributed at least 5 days before a Network meeting.

Conflict of interest

Members must declare any potential conflicts of interest. Members are required to declare and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest at commencement of a Network meeting. Any conflicts will be recorded in the notes of the meeting and members must refrain from participating in an agenda item for which they have declared this conflict.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

Members must declare any gifts, benefits or hospitality that may influence or be perceived to influence their decision making as a Network member. If a gift, benefit or hospitality has been declared, it will be recorded in the notes of the meeting and treated as a conflict of interest.

Dispute Resolution

Members may raise disputes through the Chair in meetings or communicate any disputes in writing to the Chair. The CEO must be informed in writing by the Chair or by the member themselves of any disputes raised. Disputes will be managed in accordance with the *Public Skills Australia Dispute Resolution Policy* and will be recorded and reported to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relation (DEWR). In instances where consensus cannot be achieved, Public Skills Australia will invoke the [*Dispute Resolution Policy*](#).

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Appendix B: Acceptance of the ToR

Careers and Pathways Network Membership

NAME	NOMINATING ORGANISATION	ROLE OR POSITION (CHAIR/MEMBER)	DATE	SIGNATURE

Appendix C: Acceptance of the ToR

Diversity and Inclusion Network Membership

NAME	NOMINATING ORGANISATION	ROLE OR POSITION (CHAIR/MEMBER)	DATE	SIGNATURE

Appendix D: Acceptance of the ToR

Registered Training Organisations Network Membership

NAME	NOMINATING ORGANISATION	ROLE OR POSITION (CHAIR/MEMBER)	DATE	SIGNATURE

Appendix E: Acceptance of the ToR

Volunteer Network Membership

NAME	NOMINATING ORGANISATION	ROLE OR POSITION (CHAIR/MEMBER)	DATE	SIGNATURE