



**Victorian
Skills Authority**

Strategic Plan

2022-25



VICTORIA
State
Government

Education
and Training





Contents

Minister’s foreword.....	4
Chief Executive Officer’s message	5
Strategic context	6
Our strengths.....	10
Our partners and stakeholders.....	11
Our values.....	12
Measuring our progress.....	12
Strategic plan 2022–25.....	15

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) proudly acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Victoria and pays its respects to all First Peoples. We acknowledge and respect that Aboriginal communities are strengthened by traditions, customs and knowledge sustaining 60,000 years of existence. We acknowledge the significant disruptions to social and cultural order and the ongoing hurt caused by colonisation. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life.

The VSA is committed to reconciliation through Treaty to create the pathway forward for the Traditional Owners of our land.

Minister's foreword



As the Education State, the Victorian Government places education and training at the core of economic growth and prosperity for all.

As we rebuild after the disruptions of COVID and embark on new areas of growth and social investment, triggered by investment of this Government, accessible, contemporary and relevant post-school education and training is more critical than ever.

Since 2014, the Government has made a record \$3.2 billion investment to rebuild TAFE, universities, Learn Locals and other training providers.

Vocational education has a fit-for purpose TAFE and training sector. Revitalised student services, training innovation, Skills and Jobs Centres at every TAFE and \$457 million for TAFE capital improvements across the TAFE network. From 2023, the Free TAFE initiative will offer more than 80 courses and short courses. More than 122,200 Victorians have signed up to Free TAFE courses since 2019. Free TAFE is making training and skilled jobs a reality for every Victorian, including 59 per cent more women, 46 per cent more students from culturally diverse backgrounds, 42 per cent more learners with a disability, 50 per cent more unemployed students and 22 per cent more students in regional Victoria participating over the last three years.

At the outset of the pandemic the Government invested in our universities, including \$350 million for the Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund and new partnership agreements with each university. These partnerships between the Government and each university signify an ongoing commitment to foster Victoria's economic prosperity.

These foundations set Victoria up for a new focus on the Education State to drive growth. The review conducted by Hon Jenny Macklin – Future Skills for Victoria – highlighted skills as central to industry advancement, and inclusion as the pathway to open opportunity for more Victorians to access good paying jobs. It sits alongside the reforms of vocational and

applied learning in senior schools, following the review conducted by John Firth.

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) and the Advisory Board have been established to analyse and advise on skills for Victoria. \$85.9 million was provided to establish the VSA, which opened its doors on 1 July 2021.

In the first six months of 2021 the Government sought to build a connected up system through the establishment of Apprenticeships Victoria and the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery, working with other areas of the Department of Education and Training including a dedicated Adult, Community and Further Education Division.

The VSA is working alongside these new arrangements to deliver a shared mission of collaboration and collective impact. The Advisory Board, appointed in October 2021, brings expertise and independent advice to Government spanning the journey to skilled employment and endeavour for all Victorians.

I have commissioned the VSA to develop an annual Victorian Skills Plan to lay the foundation for skilling for Victoria's future success. The inaugural plan, launched on 22 August 2022, sets out a skills roadmap.

Collaboration and collective impact are the foundations of this vision and core to the strategic mission of the VSA. Joint effort in Victoria and with the new Federal Government, especially in shared funding and priority setting, sets Victoria's approach to skills on a strong footing.

My commitment is to accessible skilling pathways for all Victorians, known for high quality, that meets industry, community and student aspirations.

The Hon. Gayle Tierney MLA
Minister for Training and
Skills Minister for Higher Education

Chief Executive Officer's message



The Victorian Government is setting new directions for post-school education and training focused on future skills.

Changes in the way we are expected to work, how industry and businesses operate and the stronger desire for people to connect in communities calls for a new approach to skilling. Victorians should expect to access education and training after school that works in a coherent way to build their capability for success in work and life. Vocational education and training has too often been narrowly prescribed and has struggled to prepare people for future success.

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) has that role of planning for skills for the future and success – for Victorians and Victorian industry and communities. The authority will work across the education and training spectrum, with industry, regions and communities to identify those skills for the future and define the change to approaches to skilling, especially within vocational education and training.

New arrangements for skills in Victoria include the Higher Education and Skills Group, as the steward of post-secondary education and training in Victoria; the VSA, which brings a structured approach to setting priorities for skills; and the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery, creating a TAFE network which can deliver against priority skills, including those critical for economic growth.

The VSA is the focal point for evidence-based skills planning and we will work across Government as the authoritative voice on skills issues. We aim to be the centre for evidence and insights on skills in demand for Victoria. We will establish platforms to make skills data and other information available to support decision making by industry, regional bodies, education providers and students.

The VSA is setting itself up to be the point of collaboration, particularly through its engagement processes. We aim to engage openly and connect with all stakeholders. The expertise of TAFEs and other providers needs to be harnessed, alongside industry

advice. Stronger connections need to be formed between adult community, vocational and higher education providers to assist students on the best path to success.

Inclusion is key to our work, bringing wider community perspectives into planning and empowering students in preparing for their future.

We respect and honour Victoria's First Peoples and their traditions, and we will work with aboriginal communities in support of self-determination.

The Advisory Board to the VSA will guide our work. It brings together a broad perspective on skills and workforce needs and working together we plan to set new directions for skilling.

Our people are ready to embark on this new approach.

Jointly, we commit to act with integrity and bring integrity to skills planning and delivery driven by the common good and benefit to Victoria.

We look forward to working with you to harness the collective knowledge and efforts of employers, providers, students and communities to improve skilling and employment outcomes for Victoria.

Craig Robertson
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Skills Authority

Strategic context

The Victorian Skills Authority is key to the Victorian Government's revitalised approach to planning for future skills to support the Victorian economy and citizens.

We are a new agency established to bring an expert view on skills needs across Victoria. We will clearly articulate priorities to Government for skills delivery based on data analysis and insights which are tested and validated through extensive engagement and collaboration.

In recommending the establishment of the VSA, the *Skills for Victoria's Growing Economy Review*, conducted by the Hon. Jenny Macklin and released in February 2021, recognised the long term and wide-ranging impacts of a more targeted and effective skills system.

The VSA will also provide advice on skill priorities to inform vocational and applied learning for senior secondary students. Following the Review into Vocational and Applied Learning in Senior Secondary schooling, led by John Firth and released in November 2020, the Victorian Government is targeting vocational learning in school to areas of critical importance to Victoria and with the highest job prospects.

The Macklin and Firth reviews identify the need for Government to work collaboratively with industry, communities and individuals to identify the skills needs critical to Victoria's future.

Technological progress, new business models, pursuit of net zero emissions and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic are changing every aspect of Victorians' lives, including education, workplaces and expectations of work.

Unanticipated and unprecedented change requires us to adapt quickly, to think and do things differently, and to be responsive.

These changes impact the education and skills Victorians need for jobs and life.

The Government's economic agenda is driving growth in critical and emerging industries which require a skilled workforce if they are to prosper.

The VSA recognises these shifts and that Victoria is well placed to respond to these changes. Victoria is committed to the Education State and has a skilled workforce which has adapted to economic disruption in the past. New senior secondary pathways and qualifications will encourage a new generation of young people into higher order roles which require well developed skills and capabilities.

This form of vocational education stands as an equal, even preferred destination for secondary school students.

Through skills, the VSA will help Victorians to take advantage of these new opportunities, better prepare for jobs of the future and support industry and social partners to have access to a skilled workforce. This includes the Department of Education & Training's own large workforce in early childhood, schools (specialist, primary and secondary education and wellbeing practitioners), and Higher Education and Skills.

Integrity Framework

The Macklin review identified that competition and self-interest in the vocational education and training sector often compromised the broader outcomes expected of the sector. Some training focused too heavily in areas that did not support Victoria's priorities.

The VSA and the Advisory Board will set a new benchmark for vocational education set against public interest expectations and underpinned by integrity across the system. The VSA Integrity Framework sets out how the VSA and the Advisory Board will operate to ensure impartiality and that the advice to the Government is balanced and serves the common good.

Future Skills

Planning for future skills and enhanced outcomes needs a new approach built on collaboration.

A future skills focus includes forecasting the occupations key to successful future workforces and identifying the critical skills needed for those occupations and for work and life more generally. Skills which are transferable across jobs and those which give individuals the understanding and tools to adapt and learn over the longer term are also critical in contemporary societies.

Skills range from general to specific, covering foundation skills such as literacy and numeracy and increasingly digital skills that underpin all aspects of life and work, to technical skills determined by levels of knowledge and expertise. Advanced skills are difficult to achieve without well-developed general skills and deep knowledge. Technology-driven transformations in many aspects of work and life mean that skills to use, operate or build digitised tools and systems are also critical for the future.

A deep understanding of these domains of skills, including new skills required in industry, is central to the VSA's mission. Bringing contemporary education



This Review offers its report and recommendations in the belief that they can have a profound and beneficial impact on our economy and society, on Victorians of all ages, but especially the young. Victoria has a great opportunity to achieve lasting change. If we fail, all Victorians will pay the economic and human price of a slower recovery. If we succeed, we can skill our workers and businesses, prepare our economy for the future, and enable all learners to lead rewarding, contributing lives. ”

The Hon. Jenny Macklin

Future Skills for Victoria

Driving collaboration and innovation in post-secondary education and training, Feb 2021

practice to the sector and considering the perspective of students and their aspirations are keys to successful outcomes and central to the VSA's work.

Collaboration

Success in identifying and planning for future skills is built on collaboration. The many aspects which lead to success in skills for the future need to be brought together. Future skills are identified through deep engagement and analysis with industry, employers and educators.

Lifting participation in education and training and improving outcomes such as employment, improved job performance or further education and training all require joint commitment and action, with a focus on the student.

The VSA has established a Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration approach to ensure all perspectives are considered and to bring all players together. The Macklin review also identified Skills Labs as the process for co-design to plan for the future.

Inclusion Plan

The work of the VSA is directed to improve the skills base in Victoria to assist employers to access skilled workers or to grow enterprises. A high skills base in turn leads to skilled employment for more Victorians.

To meet this challenge we must work collaboratively to ensure that everyone has fair and affordable access to skills development.

The priority in the VSA's planned approach to inclusion is to lift participation in post school education and training, including through structured support and guidance available through Skills and Jobs Centres and the Victorian Skills Gateway. Its focus is ensuring all vulnerable, disengaged and disadvantaged Victorians have a voice in shaping the skilling they need to secure a good job with opportunities to pursue a long-term career.

Inclusion extends to how the VSA operates. The VSA reaches out to prospective students and groups representing those who face barriers to participation to identify strategies to draw more students into education and training.

Our aim is to consider skills from all angles, including that of students and prospective students. These views help shape skilling solutions to fulfil the aspiration of the student. This includes identifying and addressing gender barriers in education and training and working with industry to create welcoming and supportive workplaces.

Advisory Board

The Government has appointed an Advisory Board to guide the work of the VSA and provide advice to the Minister for Training and Skills and the Minister for Higher Education. Through the Advisory Board, the VSA brings together people from different sectors, regions, subject matter expertise and lived experiences. This diversity ensures it provides rich and contemporary advice about skills.

The Advisory Board has a separate workplan to inform its advice to the Minister and the VSA.

Strategic Objectives

The VSA's priority areas, aligned to the key actions articulated in the Victorian Skills Plan, contribute to five strategic objectives:

- Provide a forward view on skills requirements
- Enable increased participation in training that leads to good jobs and career pathways
- Lift quality and performance
- Develop innovative solutions to skills design and delivery
- Create connections and impact

Our strategic plan outlines how we will work over the next three years to bring these objectives to life.

Our strengths

The Victorian Skills Authority has been established with a clear mandate to deliver against our vision, mission and strategic priorities.

Drive change and create impact

As a new entity with a strong government mandate, the VSA has the authorising environment needed to drive change in the skills system and create impact for learners, industry and providers.

Lead action to improve Victoria's skills system

The VSA is an anchor organisation, equipped to lead on innovative partnerships and collaborations with government, providers, industry and learners through a seamless post compulsory education and training system to lift outcomes across the sector.

Be data-driven and evidence based

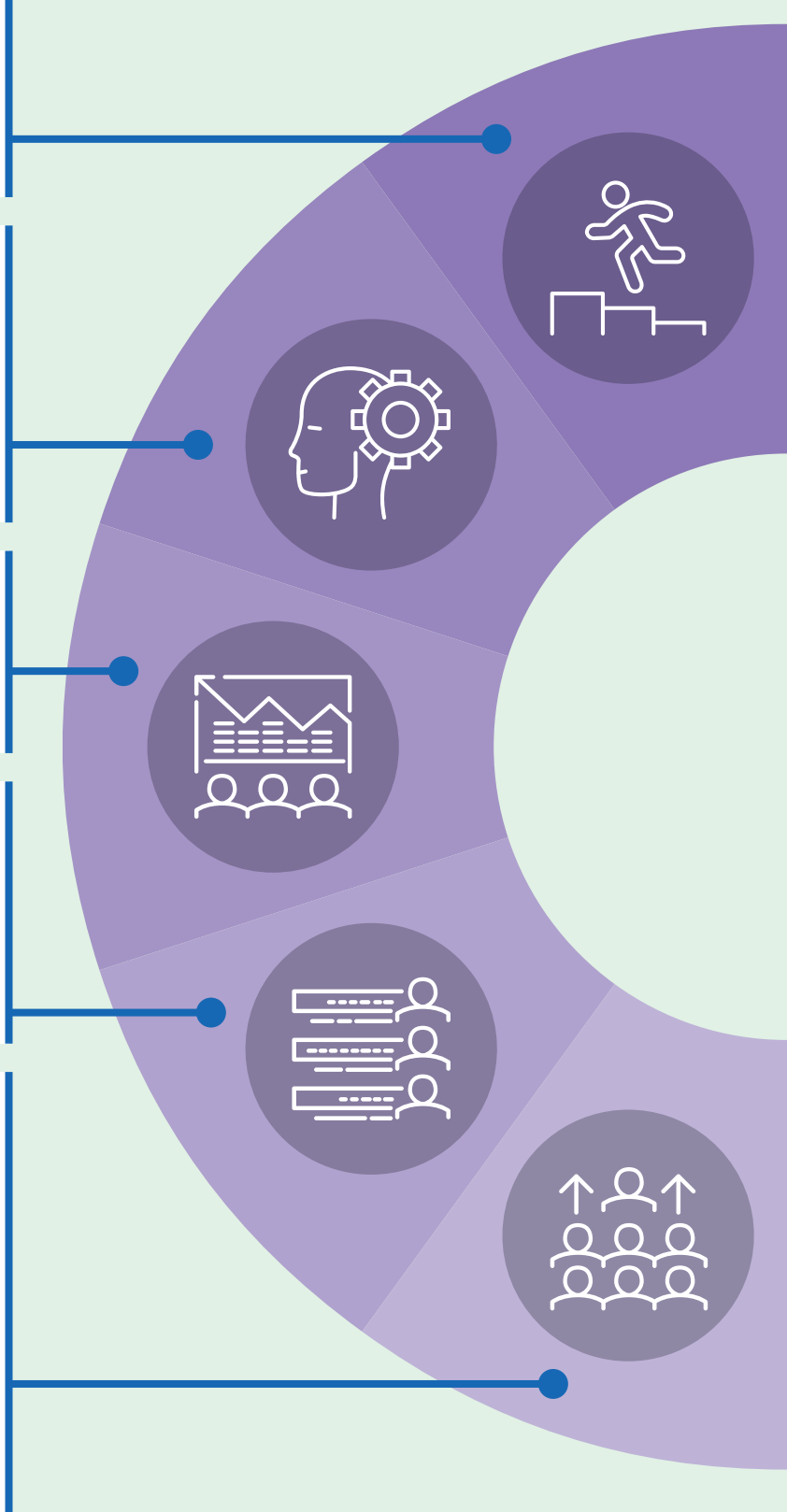
We are evidence based, generating and sharing robust and comprehensive data and insights to inform decision making across Government and the skills system.

Address skills needs across Victoria

The VSA is structured to operate at the state, sector, regional and local level to respond to immediate skills needs and deliver relevant skills supply where it's needed. Our services are targeted to meet the needs of different communities and regions.

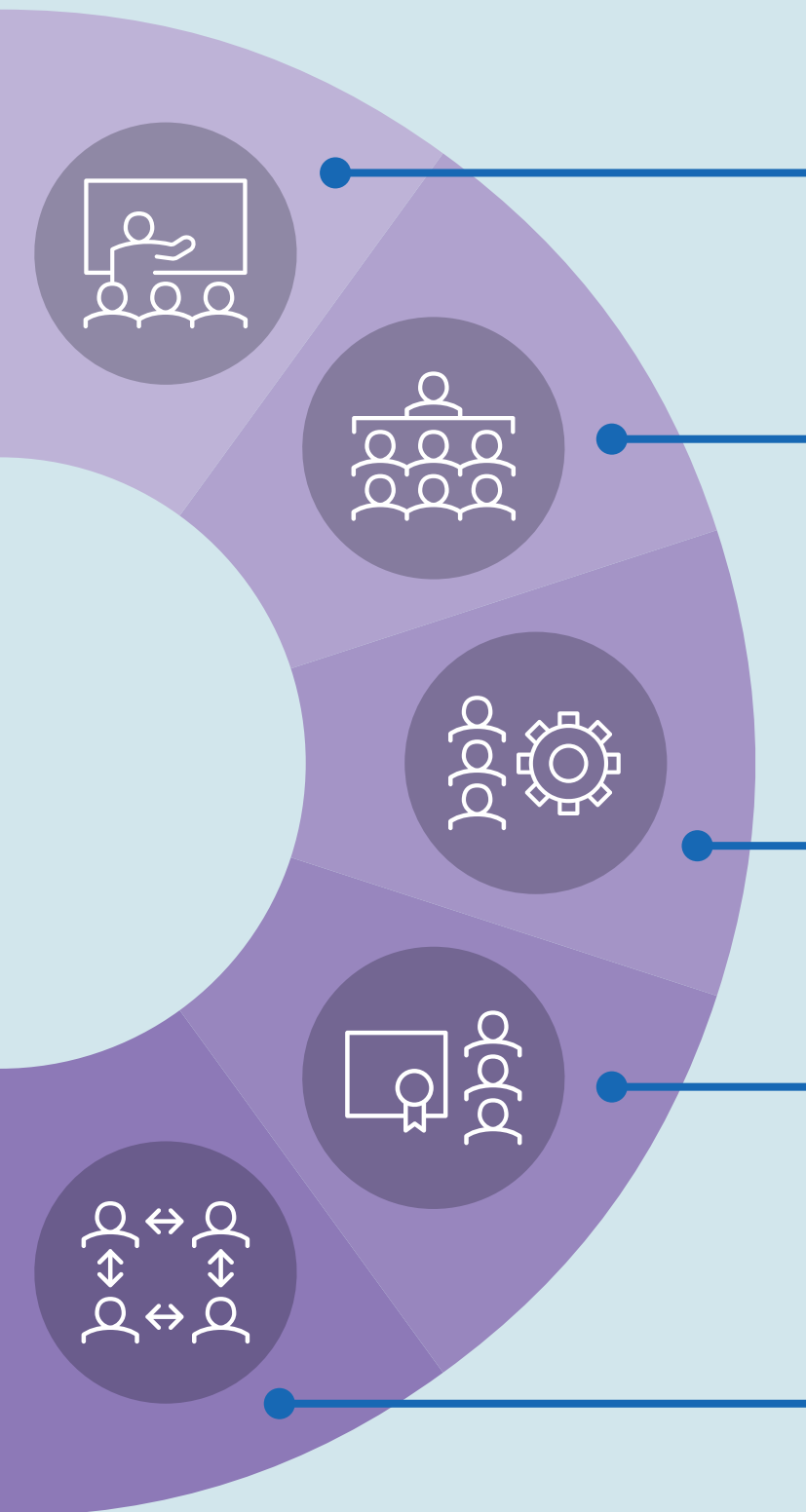
Work collaboratively with committed partners and stakeholders

Our stakeholders are engaged and highly committed to working with us. The expertise of the Advisory Board and the VSA Integrity Framework is harnessed to test, explore and validate the Victorian Skills Plan ensuring system and individual learner priorities and outcomes are at the forefront of all decision making and other core deliverables. Advisory Board members are champions of change, supporting our opportunity to drive change and create impact in the skills system.



Our partners and stakeholders

We cannot do it alone. We work with students, industry, employers to reach a shared understanding and commitment to support the prosperity of all Victorians.



Current and prospective students

We work to empower and enhance lifelong engagement with the skills and learning system. Students receive just-in-time, relevant and accurate information and advice from the VSA to make informed choices about the right training to achieve their goals, be it a first job, new job, promotion, career change or pathway to further study or training. Student attitudes and outcomes are also captured through our performance surveys.

Employers

The VSA can assist employers to access the workforce, training and support they need. The VSA can also lead the way on a new approach to 'skills-based hiring' and advise and co-design new qualification structures, skill sets and other skilling solutions to address skills gaps.

Community, industry and unions

Industry has direct knowledge of the skills gaps facing their sectors, regions and businesses. We have strong advice and collaboration channels, including through Industry Advisory Groups, enabling us to bring a wide range of perspectives together to facilitate shared action to address skills for the future at sector, region and industry levels.

Education and Training sectors

The VSA will collaborate with providers across vocational education and training, learn local, universities and school sectors to ensure common challenges faced in the delivery of skills are accommodated in planning and advice. The VSA will also lead the capability development of existing and new VET teachers and workforce.

Cross-Government

The VSA works across government to develop skills solutions that support government priorities including mental health, NDIS, Family Violence, Education and Training and the Clean Economy taskforce.

Our values

Our values focus on empowering the learner for success.

Responsiveness

We're open to all views that advance skills in Victoria, are clear on our priorities and commitments, and support one another to achieve them.



Integrity

We act fairly with openness and transparency in everything we do.



Impartiality

We are independent and our actions are guided by evidence.



Accountability

We stand by our work and we do what we say we'll do in the best interests of stakeholders.



Respect

We value unique and diverse contributions of our staff and stakeholders.



Leadership

We lead through our actions, empower others and celebrate our achievements.



Human rights

We strive for inclusive and equitable access to skills and learning opportunities, improving prosperity for Victorians.



Measuring our progress

The Victorian Skills Authority, Department of Education and Training (particularly Higher Education and Skills and the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery), and our advisory and delivery partners are accountable for improving the skills system in Victoria.

Opportunities to work together to make improvements are available to us every day. This underpins the VSA's collaboration for collective impact. The formal measurement of impact is set out below.

The VSA's performance aligns with the Department of Education and Training's objectives and performance statements, measured by the Budget Paper 3 (BP3) Performance Objectives for the Victorian Training System. The VSA's survey data is the basis for the following BP3 measures:

- Proportion of employers of apprentices and trainees who are satisfied with training
- Proportion of VET completers who are satisfied with their training
- Proportion of VET completers with an improved employment status after training
- Proportion of VET completers who achieved their main reason for training

The VSA's performance measurement focuses on outputs and outcomes. To help drive improvement, performance measurement includes:

1. Trends over time which show performance direction and variation
2. Targets that forecast the expected performance which can be reflected through annual workplans
3. Benchmarks that allow performance to be compared in relative terms
4. Performance thresholds which highlight where intervention should be undertaken

The performance criteria and measures below highlight the contribution the VSA is making to the social and economic outcomes of Victorians.

A consistent and shared understanding of performance expectations and accountabilities will help to drive the continuous improvement of the work of the VSA as it completes its establishment tasks and transitions to full functionality. Over time our performance criteria and measures will be further developed, and data points will be available against which to consider trends, targets, benchmarks and thresholds.

Performance criteria

Provide a forward view on skills requirements

We measure our performance against this objective through the following:

- The annual publication of the Victorian Skills Plan
- The provision of useful data insights (with usefulness measured through user surveys)
- Qualitative information on skills needs gathered through engagement with stakeholders (with supporting data and insights)

Enable increased participation in training that leads to good jobs and career pathways

We measure our performance against this objective through the following:

- Greater awareness of the connections between senior secondary school and the post compulsory education and training sector
- Publication of skills advice and data insights through the VSA's communication channels: Skills and Jobs Centres, the Victorian Skills Gateway, the TAFE and Training Line and our website

Lift quality and performance

We measure our performance against this objective through the following:

- Delivery of new skilling, professional development and teaching strategies for the VET workforce
- Innovation in skills design and delivery attuned to student aspirations and future skills
- Roll out of a continuous improvement framework for TAFEs, based on VSA survey data

Develop innovative solutions to skills design and delivery

We measure our performance against this objective through the following:

- Priority Skills Strategies - agreed approaches to responding to prioritised industry and community skills needs are delivered within budget envelope
- Development of new skilling and engagement strategies to assist at-risk Victorians into work they value
- Establishment of industry compacts and Skills Labs to stimulate collaboration in addressing skilling issues for industries undergoing significant change and/or facing crucial skills shortages

Create connections and impact

We measure our performance against this objective through the following:

- Implementing and demonstrating the tenets of the VSA Integrity Framework by activating the VSA Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration system
- Showcasing excellence in vocational and adult and community education
- Establishment of a culture where industry and education and training provider leaders prioritise the greater good and build influence and authority in ways that develop a strategic forward view of skills guided by the VSA Integrity Framework

Vision

Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity through Skills

Mission

To provide evidence-based advice to advance Victoria's skills planning and delivery, and engage to drive collaborative solutions for businesses and people

Values



Responsiveness



Integrity



Impartiality



Accountability



Respect



Leadership



Human rights

Strategic Objectives

Provide a forward view on skills requirements

Enable increased participation in training that leads to good jobs and career pathways

Lift quality and performance

Priority Areas and Skills Plan actions

- Develop the evidence base on skills needs, employment demand, training outcomes and future skills
- Monitor employment demand and skills and workforce shortages and the alignment of education and training.
- Collaborate with Jobs and Skills Australia and state and territory industry skills bodies to inform Victorian solutions.
- Work with local, regional and national stakeholders, Industry Advisory Groups and Regional Skills Taskforces to understand the skills landscape, generate evidence, and validate findings.
- Publish the Victorian Skills Plan and Regional Skills Demand Profiles to drive skills responses and contemporary education and training responses

Action 1: Start the VET journey at school

Action 2: Enable learners and workers to make informed skilling and career choices

- Enhance advice available to provide tailored career support at all ages and stages of life
- Strengthen Skills and Jobs Centres
- Promote connections from senior secondary school to post compulsory education and training, the community sector and industry
- Support clear and seamless pathways that build on prior learning and support individuals' career ambitions, including at-risk Victorians
- Advocate and partner across government to remove barriers and increase opportunities for all Victorians to participate in education and training and the workforce

Action 3: Expand opportunities and approaches for students to put theory into practice during their course

Action 4: Build foundation skills to enhance workforce participation

Action 5: Bridge the gender gap

Action 10: Expand reskilling and upskilling opportunities through skill sets

- Celebrate excellence and achievement across the skills system
- With the VDC, develop a VET workforce strategy, professional development framework and new skilling and teaching strategies
- Engage TAFEs and other training providers in forward planning for skills, continuous improvement and quality delivery
- Influence state and national regulators to establish a differentiated approach to teacher qualifications to meet contemporary skills needs
- Support DET to manage vocational education supply by linking economy-wide demand factors to VET systems responses.

Action 9: Build the VET workforce

Action 5: Bridge the gender gap

Strategic plan 2022–25

Strategic Objectives

Develop innovative solutions to skills design and delivery

Create connections and impact

Priority Areas and Skills Plan actions

- Through skills lab and taskforce models, partner to shape the skills needed for key government priorities, including Clean Economy priorities, the revitalised Care Economy and digital transformation of businesses
- Design delivery of future skills that support new industries and new capabilities
- Advocate for qualifications reforms that improve the supply of future skills and increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the system

Action 6: Build skills to support Victoria's clean economy intentions

Action 7: Create innovative solutions to support future skills development


Action 8: Align qualifications to new needs

Action 11: Drive for higher skills and progression through education and training

- Communicate proactively to position the VSA as the authority on skills, especially for the Government's industry, infrastructure, health and community objectives.
- Activate the Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration approach and broker industry investment and buy-in
- Partner with the Department of Education and Training, including the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery, to integrate the various offerings across the ACFE, VET and Higher Education sectors
- Harness local, sector and state-wide solutions through the VSA Advisory Board, Principal Regional Advisors and Regional Taskforce Managers to identify opportunities for systemic reform
- Bring people, business and employers into relevant skilling solutions at the local, industry, and system level
- Broker industry investment and commitment to resolve critical employer and community skilling issues
- Embed and champion inclusive practice across the skills system
- Maintain a high performing organisation, and support the VSA Advisory Board

Action 7: Create innovative solutions to support future skills development

Action 5: Bridge the gender gap



Victorian Skills Authority

Level 3, 289 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne, VIC 3002

www.skillsauthority.vic.gov.au